

Meeting Minutes Thursday, November 4th, 2021: Enosburg EMS Building, Enosburg, VT

Attendees: Paul Stanley, John Little, Cynthia Scott, Craig Cimmons, Sarah Lunn, and Lindsey Wight; Wendy Scott, Brian Jerose joined via Zoom.

- 1) Meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm.
- 2) CS made a motion to accept the minutes from our October meeting as written; JL seconded. All in favor.
- 3) Events:

Tree planting took place in Lowell over the course of two days. Five people were in attendance on the first day, and seven people on the second day including two ECO Americorp members and two new community members. 220 trees in total are left to plant.

Tactical Basin Plan meetings were poorly attended. Public comments on the plan are due by November 12, 2021. BJ suggested that MRBA could make a comment regarding the importance of an integrated plan. Discussions about the focus on phosphorus levels in the plan is not holistic enough of an approach towards getting members of the community involved with tactical basin plan input. Discussion about how the MRBA could also tie in our projects to incentivise community members into being more involved in the plan. Craig will start an email thread regarding comments to be submitted as well as report back a summary of the plan.

Small tree “boutique” plantings on private lands in Montgomery. 33 Trees to plant on Gary Labounty’s land, 20 trees on Joe Sherman’s land on Black Falls brook, 6 trees on a new land owner’s property neighboring Joe Sherman. The benefits of boutique plantings were made clear from this project which allowed direct contact and opportunity for education with land owners. The landowners are usually heavily involved in the planting process, such as choosing which species they desire to be planted. Allows for landowners to be invested in protecting the weather without the financial burden of acquiring trees. Funds were provided through the Pur Project. Suggested to look into local landscaping companies to spread the word that these funds are available for local landowners.

- 4) Quarterly Report for Q3, July 1, 2021 - September 30, 2021 walked through with CS.
- 5) Office Update:

Internet services have been officially transferred over to MRBA from John Cote. Suggestion that we pay John Cote the full amount of rent he requested (\$716/month). JL Made a motion to accept, WS Seconded. All in favor.

JL had a building inspector look at John Cote’s building to gauge the cost of repair. A lot of work needs to be done from insulation, rewiring, septic tank work, etc. Plans to get in contact with potential contractors and building engineers to further the process and dive into the numbers of cost.

There was discussion about some possibilities for other office spaces. Might be some possibilities in Jay Village, CS wondered about the building where Fiber Fold used to be, though it may be an apartment by now. The old Dick and Pam’s store in Berkshire was also mentioned as a possibility, but would require complete renovation. BJ suggested contacting Paul Godin in Enosburg who owns a lot of properties for potential office space.

- 6) Administrative Assistant position:

Lindsey reported that we do have enough money in the budget to hire someone part time.

Discussion about what this person's responsibilities would be, what their tasks are. The most important tasks identified were administrative tasks, such as budget tracking, and community outreach, especially in increasing attendance to events as well as social media management.

7) Grant Updates:

Champlain Valley National Heritage Partnership (CVNHP) wants to work on water insight. We Plan to partner with Peregrine Productions to have a video about the river and how it relates to the cultural heritage of the Abenaki tribe.

Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP) invited to partner for a larger education and outreach project. Perhaps to do teacher training about river issues and activities by providing kits for teachers to be able to use for activities with students. JL brought up that teachers get bombarded with options and opportunities and that COVID will add another layer of complication since there is limited entry allowed into schools. Suggested to maybe wait until after COVID, or until normalcy returns for schools. BJ made a motion to apply for the grant. WS seconded. All in favor.

8) Membership

Donations are way down compared to last year. LW suggested developing a newsletter with updates and asking for donations. LW asked if we should mail it out or use email. ES made a motion to have a holiday newsletter for this and to get it out as soon as possible. WS seconded. All in favor.

25th year celebration/ fundraiser update?: Local bands list was given, need to pick a date. CS will be meeting with his contacts at Jay Peak to further this along once they are able to meet again.

9) Other business?

PS found line systems in Brian Westcom trees meaning they had high survival.

10) Next meeting will be at Cynthia's at 6 PM for a potluck on December 2nd, 2021.

CS motioned adjournment; JL seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:54 pm.