



The Rhode Island Rivers Council
c/o RI Water Resources Board
One Capitol Hill
Providence, RI 02908
www.ririvers.org
info@ririvers.org



Minutes of RIRC Meeting
Wednesday, February 13, 2019 Meeting – 4 pm
DEM Office of Water Resources – Conference Room 280C
235 Promenade Street, Providence, RI

ATTENDANCE:

A. Members Present:

Veronica Berounsky, Chair
Alicia Eichinger, Vice Chair
Rachel Calabro
Walter Galloway
Paul Gonsalves
Charles Horbert
Eugenia Marks
Jenny Paquet
Elise Torello

B. Guests in Attendance:

Kassie Archambault, Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association
Michael Bradlee, Friends of Moshassuck
Caitlin Chaffee, RI Coastal Resources Management Council
Sara Canuel, Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council
Keith Gonsalves, Ten Mile River Watershed Council
Douglas Stephens, Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council
Mike Zarum, Buckeye Brook Coalition

Call to Order: Dr. Berounsky called the meeting to order at 4:05 pm

Review and Approval of January 9, 2019 meeting minutes: Motion to accept by E. Marks and seconded by C. Horbert. Douglas Stephens name to be corrected. Minutes approved pending that change.

Introductions: All attending board members and guests introduced themselves.

Discussion/Guest Speaker: Discussion of plans for the RIRC Annual Meeting that will take place March 13, 2019, and the debut of the completed Legislative Grant-funded RI River Council and Watershed Councils booklet and banner-map.

- RIRC Booklet Notes
 - Presented on screen via computer
 - Founding dates needed for the following two watershed councils:
 - 10 Mile River was founded in 2006.
 - Woonasquatucket founded in 2001? Needs to be confirmed
 - TYPO: Design services “provided” by Liz Garofalo.
 - Maybe add new RIRC members who are in the pipeline to the booklet. V. Berounsky will confirm with Sen. Sosnowski.
 - Add legislative districts to Mosshasuck.
 - TYPO: Senator McEntee’s name is spelt wrong. Has a “r” in it and it shouldn’t.
 - We have bids out to 6 printers right now.
- Banner
 - Presented on screen via computer – all present agree that it looks good. Incorporates watershed maps, RIRC logo, and state seal and coat of arms. Also includes acknowledgements.
- Schedule for Annual Meeting
 - Meeting Date: March 13, 2019, at the RI State house.
 - Displays from 3-4. RIRC Meeting begins at 4pm when session starts.
 - Displays in the mezzanine, meeting in the library.
 - What message do we want them to hear? Who we are – RIRC and watershed councils. Goal: Get a booklet in the hand of every legislator as they go into the chamber/committee meetings.
 - Need Name tags.
 - Booklet in mailbox with cover letter with follow up note and separate invitation to join us at the event– hand out brochure with note to look for booklet in it.
 - Have each watershed send an invite to their representative to come visit booth. Paper copies.
 - Distribute booklets at 2pm into mailboxes.
 - Have them recognize us during session? There is a booklet in your mailbox.
- Caitlin Chaffee – impromptu guest speaker:
 - There will be a session at Land and Water Summit for MyCoast. Used to document high tide events and storm events. New funding at CRMC to look at new shoreline adaptation projects – green infrastructure to address issue on the coast instead of hardened structures. Want to ID more and select 10 to do design for/technical assistance to get through permitting. MyCoast workshop will talk about how they plan to use the application to pinpoint these projects.
 - Session IIB at Land and Water Summit or contact Caitlin.
 - Going to try to hit all 21 coastal municipalities.
 - She is going to have a list of criteria for sites shortly.
 - Inventory should be done by the end of the year.

- No project is too small.
- Funding through NOAA from National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Part of the funding went to planning.

Reports by RIRC Representatives on State Committees:

Narragansett Bay Estuary Program: As reported by Walt Galloway:

- New Program Director has been on the job for a week now.
- February 11 – followup planning meeting on State of the Blackstone
- Another SNEP RFP will be coming out “soon”

State Guide Plan Recreation Committee: As reported by Mr. Paul Gonsalves

- Working group met last week. Draft of vision and goals has been written and will be presented to the advisory committee at the Feb. 22nd meeting. The website is: <http://dem.ri.gov/programs/planning/scorp/>.

Water Resources Board: As reported by Ms. Eugenia Marks:

- There will a meeting of the WRB at 9 on February 15. At the PUC offices in Warwick.
- No new news.
- Assume that the bill that is going to the legislature includes the Rivers Council, but we will see what happens with it.

Bays, Rivers & Watersheds Coordination Team (BRWCT) Funds: As reported by Dr. Berounsky

- No updates. Unanimous agreement to remove this item from the agenda and minutes going forward.

Officer Reports, Financial Reports:

- There were a couple of transactions. Compensation for:
 - Bruce Hooke doing follow-up work on banners.
 - Liz Garolfalo for working on the booklet.
- \$2,536.44 is current balance. \$25 charge pending for website.

Written Reports of Activities Received from Designated Local Watershed Councils:

-Buckeye Brook Coalition –Report given by M. Zarum. No written report submitted. Annual meeting is Monday March 4 at Warwick Public Library. John Torgen of TNC is the speaker.

<http://www.buckeyebrook.org/>

-**Kickemuit River Council** – No written report submitted.

<http://www.kickemuitriver.org/>

-**Friends of the Moshassuck** – Report given by M. Bradlee. No written report submitted. Annual Meeting was held recently and the new Board was voted in.

www.themoshassuck.org

-**Narrow River Preservation Association** – Report presented by Dr. Berounsky, written report submitted by Alison Kates.

Membership Drive

As we wrap up our 2019 Membership drive, we are very pleased to report that we have surpassed last year's membership campaign. We have reached 394 members with a total of just more than \$24,000 in donations.

2019 Sponsor Campaign

Our focus this month is on trying to get as many sponsors as possible for our 2019 event season. We are expanding the reach of our previous year efforts by adding to our mailing list 149 companies located at Quonset and about 60 organizations and individuals who have supported other environmental efforts in Rhode Island recently.

NRPA Presents to Narragansett Harbor Commission

On Tuesday, January 8, Dr. Veronica Berounsky and Annette DeSilva presented "Monitoring water quality and managing inputs for a quarter century (1992-2016) in the Narrow River (Pettaquamscutt Estuary) with comparisons to Lower Narragansett Bay and 1970s data" to the Narragansett Harbor Commission.

On Pettaquamscutt Winter Speaker Series Schedule

The Friends of Canonchet Farm, Narrow River Preservation Association, South County Museum and the Maury Loontjens Memorial Library along with generous support from Trio Restaurant, are collaborating for the eighth year to sponsor the Winter Speaker Series *On Pettaquamscutt: Presentations on the Environment and the History of the Narrow River Watershed*.

Winter 2019 presentations:

Sunday, January 27, 2019 1-3pm Friends of Canonchet Farm will present: "*Linear Park at Canonchet Farm*" by Randy Collins, BETA Group
Landscape Architect Randy Collins will discuss the design of a linear park on the east side of Canonchet Farm along Boston Neck Road.

Sunday, February 24, 2019 1-3pm South County Museum will present David Chidakel speaking on "*The History of Shadow Farm*."

Resident and local historian David Chidakel will trace the ownership of Shadow Farm from the Colonial times of the Hazards and Robinsons to its development as a condominium project in the 1980s.

Sunday, March 31, 2019 1-3pm Narrow River Preservation Association will present:

“Waves of Blue, Waves of Green” by Jane Hennedy, Site Manager of Historic New England’s Casey Farm

Casey Farm stretches from Narragansett Bay to the Narrow River. The talk traces centuries of changes to the land and compares it to its sister, Watson Farm. Their shared mission of historic preservation, landscape conservation, producing local food, and innovative educational programs comes through when following the seasonal rhythms of the farms in pictures and stories.

The presentations will take place on selected Sundays from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. at the Maury Loontjens Memorial Library, 35 Kingstown Road, Narragansett.

After each event, participants are encouraged to continue the conversation at Trio Restaurant, 15 Kingstown Road, Narragansett.

www.narrowriver.org

-Pawtuxet River Authority and Watershed Council – report written, submitted, and presented by Chuck Horbert:

Work is finally underway to rehab our Pontiac Ave parking lot and river access at our Howard Preserve. It will be done in plenty of time for the spring boating season.

We are actively looking to fill a vacancy on our board for the Town of Coventry.

A developer has been required by the Town of Scituate to donate or otherwise preserve a portion of property on which they are building a residential development at the former Hope Mills. The developer has chosen us to be the recipient of a conservation and recreation easement on several acres of riverside property on the North Branch Pawtuxet River.

We are starting to plan our spring cleanups and will likely begin with the trails accessible from our Pontiac Canoe Launch. Our Harris Dam property, which was recently surveyed, and the river along Belmont Park, are also high on our target list.

We have sent a comment letter to DEM with respect to renewing the RIPDES licenses of the three sewer treatment plants and have raised our concerns regarding the management of flows coming out of the Scituate Reservoir. Nothing may come of that, but this is an issue that we will be keeping track of in an effort to improve water quality and flood control in the watershed.

<http://www.pawtuxet.org/>

-Salt Ponds Coalition –Report written, submitted, and presented by Alicia Eichinger:

Dredging and placement of dredge materials on the marsh is completed on Quonnie Pond. The next step will be to plant marsh grasses in the late spring/early summer. SPC was very happy to be able to help raise the funds needed to complete the project as designed when contractor bids came in over what was budgeted.

Maintenance dredging was done in Charlestown Breachway because parts of it have shoaled unexpectedly. Our biggest concern was water quality – so we hope to see it improve after the area is re-dredged.

SPC has joined forces with members from the Harbor Island Improvement Association and the Town of Narragansett to plan for improvements along the Foddering Farm Causeway. We submitted a full application to CRMC's Coastal Habitat Restoration Fund and are waiting to hear back.

SPC are already starting to gear up for this year's water quality sampling. Our coordinator has reached out to volunteers to see if they will be returning.

SPC has begun planning for its summer activities – including dates for safaris and kayak trips. We have also begun to plan our summer fundraiser which will be held at the Matunuck Community Association Fieldhouse this year.

www.saltpondscoalition.org

-Ten Mile River Watershed Council – Report given By Keith Gonsalves. No written report submitted.

March 23 will be fish counting with DEM.

<http://www.tenmileriver.net/>

-Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association – written report submitted and presented by Kassie Archambault:

Water Quality:

Elise Torello drafted a report on all temperature logger (iButton and conductivity meter) data collected by WPWA and Trout Unlimited from 2003 to 2018. The maps and graphs make the data useful for determining suitability for trout habitat, identifying potential stormwater runoff sites and much more. Narragansett Trout Unlimited's Habitat Assessment Group is reviewing and plan on using results.

Education and Recreation:

Kayak Trip Leader Class ACA River Kayak Trip Leader Training – Level 1 & 2

This is for paddle guides who wish to renew their safety and improve their leadership skills. The course will be led by a professional ACA certified trainer and instructor. The setting is in beautiful Hopkinton, RI just five minutes off Route 95, exit three. Boats included. This is a three day course, May 5/17-19. The regular cost is \$450 per person.

Register online <http://wpwa.org/events.php>

Course details:

“This course is intended to provide the skills and training necessary for an adult leader possessing basic paddling skills to lead day trips for participants with beginner level paddling skills in calm water environments. The emphasis of this course is trip leading, safety education and rescue on water, but not specific to paddling instruction. The content is ideal for clubs, camps, scouts and other entities providing guided kayaking trips.”

A *Recreation Survey* was created and distributed to explore potential outdoor activities

<http://wpwa.org/events.php>

Beginners Fly Fishing Class

Increase your comfort and knowledge enough to catch fish! A life-long fly fisher will explain and have hands on practice for topics such as casting, equipment/gear/tackle, knots, reading water, flies/hatches and stream etiquette.

Six classes at two-hours each, cost is \$135, ten participants max.

For details and to register, visit <http://wpwa.org/events.php>

Wild and Scenic Rivers:

In January 2019, the Wood-Pawcatuck Wild and Scenic Rivers bill was reintroduced both in the House and Senate. Kassi is seeking representation from watershed municipalities, RI DEM, CT DEEP and the Narragansett Indian Tribe on the newly forming Wild and Scenic Rivers Stewardship Council. Many appointments have already been made.

<http://www.wpwa.org/>

-Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council – written report submitted by Sara Canuel and presented by Ms. Canuel and Doug Stevens

Greenway Maintenance & River Rangers

The Rangers completed installation of a green roof on their work containers at Riverside. Our Ranger program is winding down a bit now as colder weather approaches.

Outreach

Our “Dos and Don’ts” brochure is finally complete! We have printed 1000 copies of the brochure in both English and Spanish to hand out in the community. These brochures explain what you can

and cannot do safely near the Woonasquatucket, why the river is contaminated, and how you can help clean up the river.

Climate Resilience

WRWC is working with ONE Neighborhood Builders on the Olneyville Health Equity Zone Climate Resiliency Project. Two bilingual surveyors will be going door to door in the Olneyville neighborhood over the next month to see how prepared and aware the community is on the effects of climate change. Each participant will receive a \$15 Price Rite card for participation

Employment Opportunities

Our amazing community engagement coordinator is stepping down into the Riverside Community Garden Coordinator role so she can focus on family matters. We are actively seeking community members to fill her position, as well as River Rangers for the year.

Water Quality/River Monitoring:

Centredale Superfund: The WRWC Centredale Manor Superfund Technical Advisory Group (TAG) met with EPA, the team hired to do the final cleanup plan, and RIDEM to discuss the current plan to finish the cleanup study. They are seeking our TAG's advice on how to study and conduct the final cleanup. TAG team will be meeting regularly to work with EPA on the cleanup.

Water Quality and Electrofishing Monitoring: We plan to begin our herring return monitoring in Mid-March.

Green Infrastructure:

We are developing projects quickly now with RIDOT. Five exciting green infrastructure projects will be constructed this year.

Right now, we have agreements in place to design and install Citizens Bank and Manton Avenue Green Infrastructure. We are working on new agreements for Greystone Mill Social Club in North Providence, Pleasant Valley Parkway, and litter and maintenance. Our goal is to allocate as much of the \$1.5 M in our contract as fast as possible so it doesn't get swept with all other funds at RIDOT to go toward roads and bridges.

Education Programs:

K-12 programming will continue throughout the school year. Our Environmental Leaders (high school) are nearing the end of the research phase for their projects. Students are now creating project proposals and timelines in order to complete their awesome project ideas. We have hired two high school students as Environmental Mentors for the program. Maria and Layla, our EL mentors, are in 12th grade and have already completed the Environmental Leaders program.

Middle School programming ended on December 6th, and was very successful based on student feedback and post testing results. We have applied for a Spring session, and are waiting to hear back. The Fish in the Classroom elementary program has been running since November in two schools. The trout are now swimming fry and are cared for by students daily. Our elementary after school programming began in January at Johnston and North

Providence Elementary Schools, and has been going great. We are putting our focus for the program on the Do's and Don'ts of the Woony River.

Red Shed Bike Shop:

Youth bike educational program will start up in April and continue forever.

- We have Smart Cycling classes for adults scheduled throughout the winter.
 - A winter cycling basics class was held on February 7th at Dash Bicycle Shop.
 - The next bike safety class is scheduled for February 20th at the Olneyville Community Library. Sign up online!
- Our new grant with RIDOT on Bike Safety is underway. We received a fleet of adult and teen bikes for education programs. This fleet is currently in the process of assembly.
- Ongoing construction of the Woony Adventure Park – likely to be open in May.

Upcoming Events:

Clean Day on the Greenway Kickoff –Saturday, April 27th, Riverside Park!

<http://www.wrwc.org/>

-Blackstone River Watershed Council/Friends of the Blackstone – No report

www.blackstoneriver.org/blackstone/

Committee/Legislation Reports: No reports provided.

Other Business: None

Chair's Report: Through discussions with Representative Carol Hagan-McEntee – hopefully we will get another grant this year to update our website.

- Each watershed council should go to their watershed council to try and get a grant.
- Land and Water Summit – March 9th – RIRC will host watershed meeting.
- Elise is stepping down off RIRC board. Elise started in 2013. Need new treasurer and webmaster; need to nominate a replacement.

Adjournment: A motion was made by Mr. Galloway, seconded by Mr. Horbert to adjourn. Motion passed, and the meeting adjourned at 6:07 pm.