



**Sudbury, Assabet and Concord
Wild and Scenic River Stewardship Council
September 27, 2016 Meeting Minutes**

Present: Anne Slugg (Sudbury-RSC Chair), Sarah Bursky (NPS), Cindy Delpapa (State), Lisa Eggleston (OARS-alt), Bill Fadden (Framingham), Alison Field-Juma (OARS), Ralph Hammond (Bedford), Libby Herland (USFWS), Jim Meadors (Lincoln), Tom Sciacca (Wayland), Kate Tyrrell (SVT).

Guests: Paul Marcus (Bedford) , Jim Lagerbom (Framingham), Ron Chick (Framingham), Conor Wisentaner (Bedford)

Absent: Mary Antes (Wayland- alt), Elissa Brown (Concord), Nancy Bryant (SuAsCo Community Council- resignation accepted at this meeting), Betsy Gallagher (Billerica-alt- resignation accepted at this meeting), Karen Pelto (State), Steve Perlman (Carlisle - switching to alternate accepted at this meeting).

Meeting called to order at 7:01 by Chair Slugg.

Introductions- Several attendees were invited to attend the meeting to learn more about the RSC and consider becoming a RSC alternate. The visitors were encouraged to share a bit about their background and their interest in the river. Ron Chick lives on the river in Framingham and is concerned with invasive aquatic plants in the river. Paul Marcus grew up on the river in Bedford and serves on the town's trail committee. Conor Wisentaner, an Eagle Scout candidate, is from Bedford and has worked on projects related to the river. Jim Lagerbon is from Framingham and is considering becoming the SVT alternate. S. Bursky welcomed the potential new RSC alternates and offered to meet to discuss roles, responsibilities and the work of the RSC.

Minutes:

No questions or corrections offered. Motion made to approve the RSC 26 July, 2016 meeting minutes, (Sciacca/ Field-Juma). MSV with 1 abstention.

Conor Wisentaner, Eagle Scout Project Presentation

Mr. Wisentaner prepared an inventory of possible Eagle Scout projects followed by a consultation with the Bedford Trails Committee. Replacing the dilapidated kiosk adjacent to the popular river access site in Bedford was selected as a suitable undertaking. For his Eagle Project, Mr. Wisentaner plans to build a pressure-treated wood kiosk able to withstand NE weather, accommodate a changing display by having a lockable panel, incorporate a bench below the display area and include a recycling bin. L Herland mentioned the existing bin was installed by USFWS and can be reused. Mr. Wisentaner has been working with the Bedford Conservation agent and will be filing a Request for Determination of Applicability for his project though he anticipates no impact to resources areas. His intention is to build the kiosk before the ground freezes. Recommendations from RSC members included:

- * cleaning the existing information panel, if possible, as a replacement panel would be expensive,
- * map holders similar to the those used at Old Calf Pasture in Concord, (The Bedford Trails committee has a preferred map holder design)

- * have three holders to display all three river recreation maps
- * look into ADA height guidelines (48" minimum and maximum is 60" to center) for the display panel (note lowering the panel to ADA recommendations will likely interfere with the bench planned for the kiosk)

Mr. Wisentaner will provide the RSC with a final design and hopes to apply for grants including a request to the RSC for a Community Grant and may apply for funding from the Rotary Club. Mr. Wisentaner requested a formal vote of approval from the RSC so he may inform the town, the land owner, the RSC supports the project. Motion made to approve this project with R Hammond granting final approval of the design, (Fadden/Sciacca). MSV. (link to project information sheet https://docs.google.com/document/d/1s80qsBDp4B4_LiMol6a_wceA2L5nA3zhISSvKcZ9b9M)

Treasurer's Report and discussion of remaining funds:

K Tyrrell provided a written update of the SVT Cooperative Agreement (CA) through the end of the past fiscal year, (September, 2016). She noted there are funds remaining from the previous mod due to several projects coming in under budget/allocation. The cooperative agreement for the next funding round has been finalized. B Fadden explained the OARS CA has not been reported out in the past but he will provide the final OARS closeout report. The NPS has asked the RSC to move to a single CA so there will not be a separate CA with OARS in the future.

A late request was received from E Brown and the town of Concord for Community Grant funding to cover the hardware to install W&S road crossing signs recently approved by the town. Motion made to approve \$350 in Community Grant funding to the town of Concord for the cost of hardware related to the installation of Wild & Scenic signs at various road crossings, (Herland/Sciacca). MSV.

A second request is from SVT stemming from a recent review of SVT's insurance needs. As SVT serves as the RSC fiscal agent, a recommendation was made by their insurance company to purchase an *errors and omissions* policy to cover any mistake in accounting related to the RSC funding. The SVT Board is concerned about the potential for liability and has recommended the purchase of this insurance coverage. The cost of the policy is \$3,000 and SVT has requested RSC cover \$2,000 of the cost. In the future this cost could be included in the annual fiscal administrative fee paid to SVT for being the RSC fiscal agent. The request was discussed including employing a formal waiver of liability or investigating an acceptable alternative to insurance, but it was also noted that the RSC needs to support SVT's authority with regard to Kate's participation. It was requested that the cost of the insurance be investigated to identify if the cost of the policy and degree of coverage could be scaled down relative to the low risk of working with the RSC. K Tyrrell will further investigate with SVT Board as feasible. Motion made to approve up to \$2000 of Community Grant funds to SVT for the purchase of an *Errors and Omissions* Policy, (Delpapa/Slugg). MSV with K Tyrrell abstaining.

Discussion – Community Grants Announcement

The final version of the Community Grant announcement was sent with the meeting packet. S Bursky suggested the RSC have an initial due date for applications, (November) to allow for the review of a group of submissions. Applications thereafter would be rolling submissions. S Bursky requested reps let

her know where they will be disseminating the announcement. RSC reps volunteered to notify: SVT web site, Friends of Saxonville, OARS Constant Contact, T Sciacca will deliver to Wayland town boards and other pertinent entities, L Eggleston will do the same in Sudbury, Ralph will send to the *Bedford Citizen*, Friends of Assabet River, Mass Audubon will notify their school network. Updates on additional outlets should be made to S Bursky in a timely fashion.

Membership

Chair Slugg asked reps to sign-up to bring refreshments to one future meeting so the burden does not fall on one person for every meeting.

Based on the results of the Doodle Poll querying alternative meeting times, the RSC will test meeting from 6:30-8:30 pm for the October meeting knowing some people may arrive late.

- Members and attendance expectations: S Bursky reported Nancy Byrant has asked that the SuAsCo Community Council be removed as an official member of the RSC as the Council does not have the resources to be an active member. Motion made to accept SuAsCo Community Council request to be removed as an official organizational member of the RSC, (Fadden/Slugg). MSV. Motion made to modify the bylaws to reflect this change in RSC membership, (Field-Juma/Tyrrell) MSV. Long time Billerica alternate Betsy Gallagher has also stepped down from the RSC. Reps are asked to help identify potential members from Carlisle and Billerica. S Bursky encouraged the potential alternatives attending the meeting to please let their town rep know of their decision as soon as is convenient. In a slight change to process, S Bursky asks reps to notify her if unable to attend a meeting and invite the town alternate to attend in their stead.
- Responding to comment letters: The RSC is occasionally asked to sign on to a 'group' comment letter (e.g. MA Rivers Alliance). In these instances every effort will be made to summarize the topic/issue/request and all reps are asked to respond even if the response is to decline participation. B Fadden asked reps to share any comments they may have on the issue/request with the entire RSC.
- October, November and holiday party meeting dates: The October meeting will be on the 25th at the 'trial' time of 6:30 pm. The November meeting is proposed for the 29th (5th Thursday) to avoid meeting Thanksgiving week. Chair Slugg inquired about having an informal holiday gathering in December in lieu of a meeting. A Doodle Poll will be sent to gauge interest and potentially select a date.
- Subcommittee needs- This topic requires a lengthy discussion which this meeting does not allow but there is a pressing need to have active committees. The 20 year anniversary publication needs attention especially researching the history of the RSC. T Sciacca agreed to be a part of this effort. C Delpapa would be willing to help. A Field-Juma will also try to help. L Herland will try to develop a list of notable achievements.

Middlesex Canal Bills (Alison)

A Field-Juma reported there are two bills before the MA Legislature related to the Middlesex Canal and its historic role as a transportation route prior to the rise of the railroads. One bill relates to restoring

the canal. This House bill has been sent to committee for study. The second bill focuses on the Governor- appointed Middlesex Canal Committee. This bill was passed by the House and has moved to the Senate where it is likely to pass. A Field-Juma advocated the RSC reach out to the Middlesex Canal Committee to begin a conversation to identify how the groups can work together to achieve a satisfactory outcome for the historic canal and the river. A Field-Juma intends to talk with K Pelto about this issue.

Updates

- RiverFest – S Bursky Announced RiverFest will be Father’s Day weekend- 17 & 18 June, 2017. K Tyrrell will reserve the SVT Wolbach Farn barn for Friday 16th. A Slugg has agreed to work with S Bursky and J Khorana on Riverfest. Others wishing to be on an events sub-committee are welcome.
- Mass. River Alliance- Chair Slugg met with the new MRA Policy person, Gabby Queenan, showing her select river areas. Ms. Queenan was interested in knowing what MRA- hosted workshops were useful, not useful and additional topics of interest to the RSC for the MRA to consider for future workshops. She was also interested in knowing the issues the RSC would like to see MRA involvement. A Slugg invited MRA to host an event at Riverfest.

New business

Drought: There was an article in NY Times about the drought highlighting several areas in Eastern MA. The SuAsCo watershed is in dire state with significantly low ground water levels. Emergency connections to MWRA are being arranged. Current predictions are for the drought to continue through November continuing the long-term trend of drier weather. Communities, and MWRA, are working to manage water and use our water more wisely. Saxonville gage hit record low though the lowering of the impoundment for maintenance and clean-up will send water down the river for a time. Beaver activity has resulted in dams across the Sudbury.

W&S Road Signs: T Sciacca reports Wayland DPW is taking responsibility to install the signs. The Wayland DPW director take on the sign fading was signs fade and the W&S signs lasted a reasonable amount of time. The DPW director also report they worked on the River Road. R Hammond said Bedford W&S signs went up as well.

L Herland is looking for volunteers with help with the installation of a Refuge board walk.

Heartfelt thanks were expressed to B Gallagher for hosting another great evening on her boat. There was even enough water to navigate the river.

Motion made to adjourn at 8:51. (Eggleston/Fadden).