

Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild and Scenic Committee Minutes
Thursday, September 15th, 2022 6:30 PM – Berkshire Town Hall

Attendees: Lindsey Wight, John Little, Susan Staples, Carol Hickey, Helene Croteau, Jim MacCartney, Dan Seeley, Wendy Scott, Russ Ford, and Jacques Couture

- 1) **Welcome and catching up.** Meeting was called to order at 6:38pm.
- 2) **Review of August Meeting Minutes.** DS motioned to approve; SS seconded; minutes were approved as discussed.
- 3) **Administrative business:**
 - JL updated us on the progress of the office building: the front door is on; the brickwork is nearly done – next up are roofers, and John is seeking a sheetrocker
 - The FY23 funds have been dispersed; we will start operating with those next month.
- 4) **River Community and Town Infrastructure Grants**
 - 2022 grants: FNESU LEAPS program project with the Youth Council got derailed this year, but they are still interested in completing the project – are we willing/able to offer them a full-year extension? RF motions/SS seconds/motion approved. Lindsey will request an updated application with the new timeline.
Could we partner with them to hold a youth-led river clean-up?
 - 2022 grants: North Troy has requested another 1-year extension for the Hill Rd Culvert replacement project – they were not able to source the culvert this summer. WS motions/RF seconds/motion approved.
 - 2022 grants: North Troy has asked for a small extension for the Hill Rd Ditching project; Arrowwood has asked for a small extension for the mussel survey project; MRBA has asked for a small extension for the Abenaki film project. DS motions to extend these until January; JL seconds; motion approved.
 - We received the final report for this year’s Teen Week on the River camp – they had some hiccups with presenters and with not enough video footage for the PSAs, but have lessons-learned, and still had a successful week.
 - 2023 grants timeline: River Community Grant applications are due on Oct 1! Who will be on the subcommittee to consider these projects? SS, RF, CH, WS, SL, and LW.
- 5) **Swimming Hole Clean-up THIS SATURDAY, Sept 17.** Meet at Riverwalk Park; pick up trash; earn a gift card to a local business. (Barn Owl? Pine Cone?)
- 6) **Film Fest**
 - 9 films for a total runtime of about 130 minutes.
 - Please hang flyers, share via email, social, FPF. Other marketing ideas?
 - Pleasant Valley Farms sponsorship? CH requested.
- 7) **2022 Events (ours and others):**
 - Sept 17 Swimming Hole Clean-up in Montgomery
 - Oct 15 Wild and Scenic Film Fest at Clips and Reels at Jay Peak
 - Sept 19, 21, 23, 27 Lake Lessons in St Albans
 - Oct 1 MRBA’s 25th Anniversary Celebration – Watch for Lindsey and Corrina speaking about the MRBA on Tuesday’s Across The Fence on PBS.

- Oct 2 Richford's Harvest Fest – SS will man the NFCT table, and there could be room for some UMATR display – L will put together pictures of Richford projects.
- Nov – possible MRBA knotweed bonfire

8) 2023 event priorities: winter webinars – in Jan, Feb, Mar, April

Paddle Lessons – longer?

Paddle and Picnic – yes, hold

Paddle-Pedal – July 15

WSFF – check in next month and decide about 2023

9) Other/Public Comment

Sampsonville remains removal: matching our federal funds to other sources is somewhat problematic – may have to search around a bit.

Partnership Rivers meeting in Florida (Wekiva River) this December (7-9). Who wants to represent UMATR?

JL talked with Vtrans folks – there's a ditch along 105 that gets filled with toilet paper. Septic issue? Would be good to have a conversation with the folks; or to submit an ANR report so that it gets investigated, if the conversation route doesn't go anywhere. (there is available funding to help with septic issues).

Social Marketing Workshop that Susan and Sarah attended: impacting social norms to encourage certain behaviors – i.e. "clean, drain, dry": use visual cues (signage), personal interactions (steward), and social pressure – signs alone don't work! Susan is now being asked to join a workgroup for projects – do we have any to suggest?

- Swimming Holes: Don't litter
- Raise can deposit amount – get people to stop throwing them out
- Recruitment: why is it important for our towns to have a rep on our committee? Name recognition; could town reps go to other towns and show how we have benefited?
- Would be good to have more "human interest" stories in newspapers.

Legislation introduced to approve studies for the Nulhegan River, the Deerfield River, and for designation of the York and Husatonic Rivers.

Big Falls: has gotten more popular; could we connect with the state to do more here? Lindsey needs to follow up with VRC about the below-the-falls Management Plan and improvements project.

Need to pursue Stewardship Position.

Jay Peak was purchased, so snowmaking expansion will be a priority. Lindsey and Jim will meet with Walter, Director of Operations, in October to discuss.

10) Upcoming Meetings

- October 20th, 2022 – Westfield

11) Wrap Up and Adjourn: RF motioned; DS seconded; meeting adjourned at 8:25pm.