

**Connecticut River Joint Commissions
Wantastiquet Local River Subcommittee**

June 18, 2012
Approved Minutes

In Attendance

Members: Richard Schmidt, Town of Westmoreland
Dan Marx, Town of East Dummerston

Commissioners: Chris Campany, Commissioner/Vice Chair CRJC
Donna Drouin, Walpole
Bob Harcke, Westmoreland
Beverly Major, Westminster West

Guests/Public: Marie L. Caduto, Vermont DEC
Dinah Reed, WRC Staff

Meeting Summary

The meeting was convened by Commissioner Chris Campany at approximately 6:30 p.m.

- Review of Minutes – The draft minutes of the March, 2012 meeting were reviewed but were not voted upon due to the absence of a quorum.

Discussion of bylaws – Bylaw amendments that were approved during the CRJC annual meeting on June 4th were reviewed, including the new definition of a quorum for local river subcommittees (LRS). Under the new definition, a quorum is present when 50 percent of participating towns are represented at the meeting by LRS members. Those in attendance were reminded that LRS members are appointed by the Towns to be on the LRS. Commissioners are appointed by the Governor.

- Review of Strategic Plan
 - Goal 1 –
 - recruit new Members.
 - Chris is trying to recruit a commissioner candidates from Vermont who have forestry and agricultural backgrounds.
 - New Hampshire has vacant commissioner positions as well.
 - Hoping for a representative with an anadromous fisheries background.
 - Local River Subcommittee Members are welcome to attend any CRJC meeting.
 - Goal 2 – Importance of LRS
 - Rachel Ruppel is providing staff support to Upper Valley. RPCs are staffing most northern and southern LRS.

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- Idea is to come up with a common plan. LRS would give voice to main issues at the local level. Ask that Members talk to their respective towns and Selectboards.
 - Issue arises with permit applications and timeliness of the comment period. If comment period is sooner than we meet, we would poll the committee to see if you want to come together for a special meeting. (Dinah will follow up with Rachel on participating remotely/quorum/teleconferencing laws.)
 - The bond with CRWC is getting better.
 - To the extent that the LRS can have input in review is very important.
 - Town representatives know best what is happening at the local level.
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- Source to Sea
 - Dinah will research the benefits of joining another group or organizing an independent effort by the WLRS.

 - Dedication of Connecticut River watershed as the nation's first National Blueway
 - Chris attended the dedication ceremony. Benefits of designation have yet to be specifically defined, and there is no regulatory component associated with the designation. National Blueways are part of President Obama's Great Outdoors Initiative.

 - Review of Permits
 - The VT Mulch Company, Vernon, VT – LRS reviewed the WRC comment letter. It was explained that WRC only comments on Act 250 permits that have regional significance. WRC comments related primarily to impact of the noise from the exhaust of the mulch grinding machine, including concerns that the sound would project across the river, and stormwater treatment on the site. The WRC also asked that mitigation fees for agricultural soils be used within the Town of Vernon. Bev Major suggested the LRS could write a letter reinforcing the WRC's position. Dick Schmidt added that the management of mulch dyes also be addressed. There was consensus from both NH and VT members and commissioners that a letter should be sent to the District II Environmental Commission that would reiterate the WRC comments and add that the management of mulch dyes be addressed.
 - Question was asked if LRS would like to go through a WRC filter in responding to Act 250 permits, or if it would like to see all of the applications received for towns within the LRS area. This will be discussed further at future meetings.
 - Putney School Wastewater Permit Renewal – Given the school's "green" reputation and no mention of any system failures, there was consensus that no comments were necessary

 - LRS process for reviewing permits – it was discussed that we should make this a major item for our next agenda. Ideas or questions to consider:
 - Who would represent the LRS in hearings? LRS officers? Staff?
 - Appropriate staff role would seem to be research and drafting comments.

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- LRSs have dealt with VT wastewater permits, but not Act 250 or Section 248 applications. They've also received land alteration permits from NH, but not wastewater permits. We need to define what types of applications all LRSs should review.
 - Traditional purpose of LRS' was to have the town members monitor sites in their own communities and report to larger CRJC.
 - Need to reach out to all of the LRSs to learn about their process.
- The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Dinah Reed, WRC