



## MINUTES – Executive Committee Meeting

Monday, December 19, 2011

2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

CRJC Offices, 10 Water St, Suite 225, Lebanon, NH

Present: Dr. Robert Christie, Glenn English, Chris Campany, Tom Kennedy, Mary Sloat

Administrative Staff/Consultants: Rachel Ruppel and Yutian Zhang

Members of the Public: Nat Tripp, CRJC representative to 15 Mile Falls Fund from St. Johnsbury; Bernie Folta, interested citizen from Claremont

Chris Campany, President, called the meeting to order at 2:10 pm.

Minutes of the October meeting were approved unanimously, on a motion by English and seconded by Christie.

Zhang presented the November financial report and reported that CRJC currently has \$10,000.87 in the checking account. English moved to approve the November financial report, with a second by Mary Sloat – the motion passed unanimously. Zhang reported that this month, CRJC will invoice New Hampshire for \$7,500 in initial payment and in January, CRJC will invoice both states for costs incurred during the second quarter of the year.

Campany reported that Ammonoosuc and Colebrook projects are being wrapped up – John Field is preparing the final deliverables and Zhang and Ruppel plan to submit final invoices by the end of December. For the Ammonoosuc project, there was a question of finding sufficient match; Ruppel reported that John Field's finance manager has provided a detailed spreadsheet of expenses, which shows ~\$30,000 in unreimbursed costs. Ruppel noted that \$810.29 has not been allocated from NHCf funds to this project based on calculations done by Theresa in May 2010; Campany stated that he will contact NHCf to see how these funds should be handled. The Committee discussed the status of the Byway signs project and the installation of signs by town staff, and requested a status update from Peter Gregory on this project and the ramifications of some signs not being installed until spring 2012.

The Committee discussed whether to establish a Finance Committee. Mary Sloat stated that it would be valuable to be able to consult with other people to assist her in her role as Treasurer. The Committee decided to have Zhang explain how to read a financial report at the next CRJC meeting, to educate all members on financial management of the organization. The question of establishing a Finance Committee was not decided.

Ruppel reported that all publications have been moved from Bob Harcke's building in Westmoreland; there are a large number of "Proud to Live Here" and fewer of "Where the Great River Rises" and there are also a large number of riparian buffer brochures. Sloat requested an inventory of all publications now on site at the CRJC offices. The Committee also suggested that the brochures, etc. be used to compile packets for new Commissioners and subcommittee members. The Committee discussed ways to sell these books, including online sales. Kennedy reported that he has a buyer for the copier and asked the Committee what the asking price should be. Sloat moved that the CRJC offer \$50 for the copier if it is

working; if it is not working, the copier is free, seconded by English – the motion passed 4-0, with Kennedy abstaining. Ruppel will pass on Bob Harcke’s contact information to facilitate the movement of the copier. Company stated that he would like to make a conscious effort to work through the remaining files in Westmoreland this spring, to identify what needs to be kept, what can be recycled, and what can be donated to the State Archives. Ruppel noted that she cannot locate the 2006 financial audit at the CRJC offices and that Larry Reed’s office lost its archives in flooding from Hurricane Irene; she will send an email to all CRJC Commissioners to see if this audit can be located.

Ruppel gave an update on the local river subcommittees – four out of five subcommittees have met at least once in the past six months; the Mount Ascutney subcommittee’s meeting was postponed due to low response and will likely meet in winter 2012. The Committee discussed that the Local River Subcommittees need some tangible work beyond permit review and Ruppel recommended that they become engaged in the update of the strategic plan. Recruiting new members is another common theme for most subcommittees; Ruppel agreed to distribute a sample letter to all subcommittees that asks towns to appoint new representatives.

Company reported that the January CRJC meeting will serve as a session to discuss and prioritize the existing strategic plan to make the plan manageable. Ruppel will distribute all relevant materials on the strategic plan. Christie asked that his mission-based funding report be re-sent to all Commissioners in advance of this meeting. The Committee discussed that an upcoming issue is the relicensing of several dams on the Connecticut River in 2018 and that CRJC will want to gain party status to be able to comment on the relicensing, which is a 4-6-year-process. Nat Tripp noted that The Nature Conservancy is developing an independent flow model of the Connecticut River. Ruppel reported that the meeting location has not been confirmed, but will likely be held at the Kilton Library in West Lebanon. Company and Ruppel will organize the agenda.

Ruppel briefly explained The Watershed Marketplace, an innovative “direct appeal” approach to funding conservation projects. Instead of the Charitable Foundation where people contribute money to a cause-specific fund and then organizations apply for those funds to accomplish projects, the Watershed Marketplace has organizations pitch their projects and ask for funding directly from the public via a website. Ruppel opined that this approach might work well for smaller or very specific projects, such as fencing materials, purchase of signage, or contributions to a specific conservation easement, but that it might be more difficult to secure funding to cover the administrative expenses for administering the project. Kennedy likened it to Heifer International, where you contribute money for a small but tangible piece of a larger project. The Executive Committee stated its support for this concept, and asked that this information be distributed to the local river subcommittees, as this may be a useful source of funding for small, on-the-ground projects.

Company reported that Glenn English will be resigning at the end of his term in February 2012 and thanked him for his years of service to CRJC. Discussion of nominations to the NH Commission ensued; Rebecca Brown’s nomination is slow but in process. English noted that the NH Governor’s office would like a complete list of nominees, rather than a piecemeal one-by-one approach. Sloat and Christie agreed to recruit Cleve Kapala or another current member of the NH Commission to serve as NH President and Vice-Chair to CRJC after February. The VT Commission was also discussed; Company will send a letter to non-attendees to gauge their interest in remaining Commissioners. David Deen may be a helpful resource in member recruitment. Ruppel will review the status of all appointments.

Nat Tripp reported that he has been serving as CRJC's representative to the Fifteen Mile Falls Mitigation and Enhancement Fund, which is administered by the NH Charitable Foundation. \$3.5 million in applications have been submitted and will be reviewed in January 2012. The former Executive Director had attended these meeting with Tripp in the past, and Tripp would like another CRJC member to attend; meeting are typically in Hanover. This fund is available for projects in the White River watershed and the Connecticut River watershed from Wells River north. Tripp stated that many projects are related to Irene-related flood recovery. Bob Ball was recommended as a potential representative; Ruppel will pass on his contact information to Tripp.

Tripp also reported on the Connecticut River Byway Council. They have completed a business plan, which shows that they need about \$50,000/year to operate, with about \$25,000 for a part-time employee and \$25,000 for communications and marketing. They would seek this funding from the two states, half from NH and half from VT. Tripp noted that there is an overlap in CRJC's and CRBC's territories and that it may be advantageous to both organizations to share administrative staff between the two organizations. English stated his favor for this proposal, but cautioned that in the past, the Byway overwhelmed the CRJC and stated that he would like a more balanced approach in the future. Kennedy noted that there is a 20% match requirement for Byways funds, which can be difficult to obtain for projects involving construction. Bernie Folta stated that it may be a good idea to consolidate, as public and private funds are increasingly scarce. Christie recommended that it would be helpful to summarize the missions of the two organizations and to distribute this information to the commissioners and local river subcommittees to bring them up to speed on the current status of the two organizations. Tripp stated that the CRBC's first priority is to gain NH and VT legislature's support for an annual appropriation. This remains an item for futher discussion in the future.

Campany wished all a happy holiday season. Meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm.