



Connecticut River Joint Commissions Meeting
Full Commissions Meeting Minutes
Monday, August 17, 2015
Kilton Library, West Lebanon, NH

Commissioners Present: New Hampshire – Jennifer Griffin, Mary Sloat, Jim McClammer, Donna Drouin, Elaine Levlocke, Brendan Prusik; Dick Sanders ; Vermont – Jason Rasmussen, Tara Bamford, Peter Blodgett, Kurt Staudter, Jim Doig, Chris Campany; Staff – Pat Crocker, Nate Miller.

Vermont Water Quality Bill and Impact on the Connecticut River

Commissioner Deen presented information on the new legislation and provided a summary/outline for reference. (See Attached) Deen provided background information on the Clean Water Act Section 404 process for Commissioners to review before the meeting in September. Attached.

Update on FERC Relicensing

Commissioner Griffin reported that FERC granted a license extension to TransCanada of one-year through April 30, 2019. Because of the change in water temperature conditions of the river due to the closing of Vermont Yankee, the aquatic studies were pushed back a year. FirstLight did not apply for a similar extension due to the restrictions in their license agreements.

Report on Local River Subcommittees

Tara Bamford reported on the work of the local river subcommittees. (See report attached.) Discussion followed about the number of individuals that are on the subcommittee rolls, but that do not attend meetings. Commissioners suggested that the bylaws state that persons can be removed after failing to attend 3 meetings. A list of non-participating members will be compiled and presented to Commissioners for review at a future meeting.

Jim McClammer spoke about relocation of about 12 miles of highway along the CT between Charlestown and Walpole. Increase in impervious surface and concerns about meeting best management practices of terrain alteration along the river. Project

information on the Walpole–Charlestown Project #14747 is available on the NH DOT website. That roadway is very problematic because of its narrow road geometry that sits between Fall Mountain and a rail line. All the resource agencies have been collaborating to work on a project plan. Process has been challenging and ongoing for 8 years on this high fatality section of road.

Business Meeting

Update on Contracts from the states

June 2015 Meeting Minutes

Jim McClammer moved and Elaine Levlocke seconded a motion to approve the minutes with a correction to the attendee list noting that Peter Blodgett was present. Minutes Adopted.

June 2015 Financials

Staff presented the June financials and statement notes with revisions. Commissioner Campany moved and Commissioner Deen seconded a motion to accept the financials as presented. Motion Adopted.

FY 2016 Budget

Commissioner Sloat moved and Commissioner Staudter seconded a motion approve the budget as presented. Discussion followed.

The status of the Byway signs project was reviewed. Signs must still be installed in 3 communities: Brattleboro, White River, and St. Johnsbury. The signage installations had been delayed due to roadway projects that needed to be completed prior to installation. About \$13,000 remains in that fund. Some of it will be used for fabrication of signs and administration of the contract but the largest remaining expense will be for and engineering certification for installation of the signs required by the FHWA agreement.

FY 2016 Work Plan / Letter from Commissioner Brendan Prusik

Commissioner Prusik presented a letter with his questions and concerns about the way the Commissions are managing its activities. *See Letter Attached.*

Commissioner Deen stated that the local river subcommittees are pivotal to accomplishing the CRJC mission. He sees this as a significant avenue for the State of Vermont to be involved in the review of projects on the NH side of the river. In his view LRS activity puts a structure in place to deal with 275 miles of river and the grassroots work of each of the Local River Subcommittee is an essential activity. Commissioner Prusik suggested that the Commissioners think about what the Commission should be accomplishing. Commissioner Sloat explained that Executive Committee talked about Prusik's letter at great length. Projects should be among the work of activities of CRJC. Commissioner Sanders suggested that each Commissioner provide 3 specific projects that they believe would improve the health of the river. Commissioner Campy requested that CRJC consider what can be done with the limited funding and what roles the Commissioners are we willing to play.

Commissioner Sanders suggested that CRJC meet more frequently to work on some of these priority items. Commissioner Doig stated that he would prefer to have a list of the activities/projects suggested by Commissioners before additional meetings are scheduled...

Following discussion the motion on table to approve the budget as presented was voted and adopted with one NO vote by Commissioner Prusik; one abstention by Commissioner Doig, and Commissioner Bamford abstained as she is also an employee of the subcontractor for the Local River Subcommittees.

Commissioners Committee Assignments

Three Subcommittees were suggested at the February Retreat: Communications Committee, a Planning Committee that undertake oversight of the implementation of the corridor plan, and a Development/ Grants Committee to undertake grant-writing activities to support projects.

Deen explained that the Commissioners represent interests of their appointing authority such as the Governors and therefore, individuals on committees can't act without the support of the full Commissions. Subcommittees would be established to

bring recommendations to the Joint Commissions, but could not be empowered to act on the own.

There was a consensus of the Commissioners that it is a good idea to create these committees. Send out which of the three areas would they like to take part in choice and which committee. Committee meetings will be at one o'clock prior to the Commission meetings.

Commissioner Campy suggested that not everyone will have time to volunteer.

Commissioner Sanders has offered to serve on the Development/Grant writing Committee and Commissioner Thayer, who was not in attendance, had advised staff in an email that he would be willing to serve on the Communications Committee.

Other Business/Announcements

Nate Miller announced that Marion Allen will fill the UVLSRPC seat on the Commission at future meetings. She represents the town of Wilmot on the RPC Board.

The Commissions adjourned at 4 P.M

CRJC Local River Subcommittee Update

8/17/15

Headwaters

Last Meeting - May 21 - Met with VANR to learn about Vermont's new shoreland regulations and what they can do to help get the word out to Connecticut River towns.

Next Meeting - September 24 - Discuss Northern Pass Draft EIS and Draft Conte Refuge Management Plan if available.

Support needed from CRJC - Assistance raising issues of concern with Northern Pass.

Riverbend

Last Meeting - July 23 - Met with Conte Refuge to learn about the refuge and its upcoming draft management plan and opportunities for input. Report from Tara Bamford on participation on SB 325 rules workshop on behalf of Connecticut River. Reviewed and commented on draft Basin 14 plan.

Next Meeting - October 22 - Discuss draft Conte Refuge management plan if available.

Support needed from CRJC - Removal of inactive members.

Upper Valley

Last Meeting - June 15 - Reviewed riverbank restoration plans near Kmart plaza.

Next Meeting - August 17 - Joint meeting with Mascoma River LAC to discuss board development, opportunities for collaboration, riverbank restoration near Kmart plaza.

Mt. Ascutney

Last Meeting - July 14 - Outreach plan for septic workshop.

Next Meeting - September 8 - Continued planning for September 26 septic workshops.

Support needed from CRJC - Help getting word out for septic workshop. Support for updating land use element of corridor plan.

Wantastiquet

Last Meeting - June 17 - NH Rivers Council provided invasives training for River Runners program. Began planning for Source to Sea clean-up participation.

Next Meeting - August 19 - Continued planning for Source to Sea clean-up.

Support needed from CRJC - Help getting word out for Source to Sea Cleanup