



Connecticut River Joint Commissions Meeting  
Monday, April 20, 2015  
CRJC Office, 10 Water St. Lebanon, NH  
2:00 – 4:00 PM

### **Commissioners Present:**

Vermont: Jason Rasmussen, SWCRPC; Samantha Holcomb, TRORC; Chris Campany, WRC; Rick Hopkins, VTANR; At large members Tara Bamford, Jameson Doig; Steve Lembke, and Kurt Staudter.

New Hampshire: Mary Sloat, Dick Sanders, Elaine Levlocke, Jennifer Griffin, Jim McClammer.

Guests: Thomas Berry, Senator Leahy's Staff, Glenn English, Connecticut River Byway Council, and Sharon Francis. Staff: Patricia Crocker.

### **2:00 PM Convene/Introductions**

Commissioner Bamford convened the meeting at 2:00 PM and introductions followed.

### **Connecticut River Byway Council**

Glenn English, a member of the Connecticut River Byways Council presented the new Byway brochure and website for the members of the Commission. It was agreed that CRJC and the Byway Council should maintain regular communications and identify opportunities for collaboration.

### **Strategic Plan Follow - Up - Michele Tremblay**

Ms. Tremblay described the process and the work products from the day. She explained her hope that the table of goals and objectives might be an evergreen document used to chart progress and update goals in the future. A discussion of creation of an annual work plan followed and potential changes in the committee structures and governance that might be needed to make CRJC a more agile organization. She emphasized having the by-laws provide a process for establishing work groups as needed rather than putting all of the committee details in the by-laws themselves. Some of the work might be accomplished by using "Leads and Champions" that are not necessarily committee members, but influential community members that support the work of the Commissions.

The concept of having members of the local river subcommittees play a larger role in the overall operation of the Commissions governance was considered.

As the Commission is charged with representing diverse interests, it was suggested that the CRJC see if there were opportunities to partner with the Byways Council and tourism related businesses along the Byway. Commissioner Campany asked what kind of time commitments the Commissioners were able to make as the organization has evolved from high staff to low level staff support. Discussion followed along the lines of best use of available staff resources, how the mission or the organization was defined, and what expertise Commissioners could share.

Among the 11 high priority items, focus on the top 3 or so of those would be practical but there may be opportunities to implement some lower priority item implemented as it might be more fruitful.

Improving public involvement and attendance at CRJC presentations could be focused as a cabin-fever/ spring lecture series or listening sessions about the public's concerns along the river might encourage them to participate. This could also serve as a recruitment tool to LACs and Commissioners. The LACs could use the Local Water Resources and Recreation Management Plans and look to implement those recommendations locally.

Consistent management of the resources allocated for the management of the river subcommittees was identified in the RFP as a preference. Having Commissioners commit to participating in each of the Local River Subcommittees was recommended. Commissioner Sanders suggested CRJC should have an active finance (development/advancement) committee but in addition, some of the intellectual funding that might be available. Commissioners chair subcommittees but don't need to over populate subcommittees with Commissioners. It was suggested that a copy of comments made by the LACs on permits be shared with Commissioners

#### **Consent Agenda Items – December Minutes, March 2015 Financials, Progress Report**

As a quorum was not available, with Commissioner Levlocke's early departure, the consent agenda items were tabled.

#### **Discussion of RFP for Administrative Services**

Commissioner Bamford recused herself for the discussion of the RFP. Commissioner

Rasmussen reported that the Executive Committee along with the help of Commissioners Dick Sanders and Chris Campany redrafted the RFP. It was issued on April 8. Letters of Intent were to be received by the close of business on Monday, April 20, 2015. Responses were due by Friday, May 8 at the close business. The Executive Committee will meet the following week on Thursday, May 14 to review the proposals and make an award. Commissioner Bamford rejoined the meeting.

### **Annual Meeting**

The Meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 15, 2 – 4 PM, Kilton Library in West Lebanon, NH. Possible speakers were discussed. The Connecticut River Watershed Council will be presenting the results of the Sample-palooza and talking about their new Power of Water campaign. Gus Speth at Vermont Law School was suggested as a speaker about what can be done about commenting on projects that can be pre-empted by the federal regulatory process. Commissioner McClammer committed to contacting him.

Commissioner Campany suggested that CRJC might coordinate with Conte National Wildlife Refuge to leverage federal assets. Another concept was explained by Tom Berry where, similar to the Champlain Basin Funding has a regular line item in the federal budget. The funding level from the two states is currently the only source of revenue for CRJC and it has not been adequate to ‘help stand up’ a reasonable organization that might then go on to engage in additional project work. The opportunity for federal funds, however, does not let states off the hook, but it was possible that some of their funds be used to leverage the activities of the CRJC or used as match. This possibly could help to CRJC be mission driven rather than opportunity driven. Commissioner Campany suggested state funds could be used as non-federal match.

The importance of involvement of the FERC process was discussed. It is currently in the study process but once these are published, CRJC would need funding to analyze and comment appropriately on the plans. Commissioner Lembke praised ‘Where the Great River Rises’ and suggested its role as an invaluable resource on the richness of the Connecticut River Valley.

Commissioner Sanders moved to adjourn seconded by Commissioner Staudter at 4:00 PM.

Minutes Adopted June 15, 2015