

Memphremagog Watershed Association Fall Retreat

10 a.m. to 3 p.m. September 10, 2016

Mary Pat welcomed everyone. **Present:** Ben Copans, Lynn Jenness, Mary Pat Goulding, Don Hendrich, Dave Converse, Kendall Lambert, Peg Hollander, Bill Round, Pat Vana; later joined by Robert Benoit, Beth Torpey, and Gail Lynch.

Moved (Don Hendrich) and seconded (Bill Round) to have Gail Lynch in as a director until the next annual meeting. Passed.

Highlights from the last ten years: Quebec/ Vermont steering committee for Lake Memphremagog, buffer plantings, clean-ups, boat rides for third graders, water sampling, reaching out to towns, grants for storm water checks, training for Vermont Invasive Patrolling, rainbarrels, Lakewise, cyanobacteria monitoring. Shore Land Protection Act and Act 64.

Stormwater retro fit study – 20 sites for storm water mitigation; from that 4 sites – conceptual design, permitting requirements, grant coming to an end. The next step would be to look for money to implement the designs

Challenges and accomplishments: (Ben Copans) Three issues – nutrient enrichment (impairment of Lake Memphremagog, cyanobacteria), increasing impairment of upland lakes, total maximum daily load – current level 17-18, standard s 14, (8 % from dirt roads, 40% from agriculture, also from paved roads, septic systems) development of shore land) ; Aquatic Invasive Species – try to do spread prevention. Bill mentioned that many invasives are spread by migrating birds.

Discussion about lake vs. watershed association – MWA was formed as a watershed association, although some people see it as a lake association; there are various lake associations within the watershed association. MCI is considering changing from a lake association to a watershed association.

MWA should be an umbrella for all lake associations in the watershed - co-sponsor events , connect through annual events. General consensus that we should be a watershed association, but still do lake activities as that is part of the watershed and there is no Lake Memphremagog Watershed Association.

Is membership necessary? Are grants available for a part-time employee?

10th anniversary celebration

List of accomplishments, map of project locations, annual poster of summer events, 10 years 10 lakes, watershed award for most improved farm (call it success story). Add rivers – event on **each of the major rivers.**

Robert suggested having a flag exchange on the water on pontoon boats with publicity to coordinate with MCI's 50th anniversary celebration next year.

10 lake-wise awards in the watershed for the 10 years

Challenges and changes needed

Keep members feeling connected, especially former board members. Have a consistent place to meet and a consistent time. Perception problem – some people think it is an elite group...some think it is only a lake association. Suggestion to meet in various places in the watershed.

Suggestion to involve some people from Lyndon, Sterling College, CCV, AmeriCorps volunteers, h.s. students.

Structure of the organization: going back to original committees vs. current structure; could we have a part-time administrative assistant/coordinator? President has too much responsibility and projects chair was too much. Ecosystem restoration grants are a possible source of funds for a paid position. September 22 training meeting for grant applications and cooperation among groups will be encouraged. Vermont Community Foundation has a Northeast Kingdom component which might be a source of funds for us.

Action items:

Make list of accomplishments – Don Hendrich, passed off to Ben Copans, then to whole board for possible additions

Map of where actions/accomplishments occurred – Ben Copans

Involve other lake associations- later board meeting

Revisit structure committees vs. project based – email thread with possibilities – decide at next board meeting which will also include planning for 10th anniversary

Grant list – Kendall will start this and send it around

Petition towns to be in their budget – committee to be formed

*Evaluate coordinator position – wording of this to come from possible grant opportunities at 9/22 meeting

September 22 meeting – Mary Pat, Bill, Kendall – who will decide if there is anything we have time to apply for

Next meeting – October 12 - place to be decided

Find a treasurer – Mary Pat

