

MWA February Meeting Notes

4:30 p.m. Wednesday February 2, 2022

President Dave Converse opened the meeting at 4:32 a.m. Present: Officers- Jennifer Hopkins (treasurer). Board members – Doug Coutts, Tom Latta, Hillary Potter, Beth Torpey. Members: Valerie Dillon, Mary Pat Goulding. Staff: Patrick Hurley, Bevin Barber-Campbell. (via ZOOM.)

New Staff Introduction

Dave introduced Bevin Barber-Campbell as our new executive director.

Secretary's Report Meeting Minutes – 1/5/22

Edits: Mary Pat commented that in the future, when referring to Tom & Laura, we should indicate who they are. Doug noted that under the "Partnership Updates," the correct working title is Memphremagog Maritime Education Center, not museum. Doug made the motion to accept the minutes with corrections. Jennifer seconded, motion passed.

Treasurer's Report-Financials for 1/31/22

We received a donation to the Ginnie Bowman Memorial Fund. Notable payouts were the scholarship and the newsletter printing cost.

Current Grant Status Updates

Regional Aquatic Nuisance Control

We are still waiting for last year's final payment. This year's applications are due in end of Feb; the information was sent to the towns who participated through MWA last year.

Riparian Buffers – VT F&W/GLRC

Patrick reported that he and Pete Emerson presented a conservation acquisition proposal to the Town of Derby. VT Fish & Wildlife Dept is interested in acquiring and conserving a town-owned parcel, the Town approved having an appraisal done and Pete is making that happen. Patrick is doing follow-up outreach to develop riparian restoration projects, Northwoods will do the implementation, if landowners would respond. He is working on GIS deliverables, populating the Batch Import File. He is meeting with Northwoods and Pete to determine the scope of work for Clyde and John's, along with other discussions. He developing a proposal for round two of Riparian funding to start in April. MWA now has a canoe, additional accessories are on order.

Other recent work includes: developing an internship job description for NVU. Patrick was asked to give a presentation at the upcoming Riparian Buffer Practitioners meeting, March 30-31. He was offered a \$100 stipend, but declined it as not appropriate. He will ask them to instead make a donation for MWA.

WUV Tactical Basin Planning Workplan Grant

This grant includes stormwater collaborative, Act 76 engagement, lake association and municipal outreach, Stearns Brook sediment evaluation and Stream Geomorphic Assessment (SGA) reviews, gully identification and stabilization review, and more. The SWC met for the first time since March 2021 and discussed ongoing and new projects, received valuable insight from participants about project challenges and opportunities. Patrick is wrapping up a basin-wide review of SGA work and conjunction with Basin Planner and River Scientist is developing a list of areas in need of more assessment. Ongoing coordination with WUV and other watershed groups to review Act 76 guidances and rules; partake in operations and maintenance subgroup and formula grant funding subgroup. MWA needs to identify who can provide capacity for some Lakewise-related outreach for the tactical basin plan. Lots of ongoing regional coordination talking with conservation district and other partner orgs to coordinate and strategize on responsibilities and gaps by each sector.

Patrick also mentioned that we are getting requests to do Lakewise, but there is no monetary support out there. Yet this week, a bunch of lake water action plans went out to bid; why do more planning when we are ready to design and implement lakeshore enhancement. Beth noted that Northwoods usually gets the funds to do the Lakewise assessments and evaluations. Patrick noted there has been no funding available for over a year.

WUV Project Development Grant – Barton, Glover, Wetlands

Wetlands - Patrick reported that MWA applied for supplemental funding to expand the wetlands restoration outreach in this scope of work. Drafts the wetlands polygons he developed are being shared for review and input. He is drafting a memo of methods and conversations that went along with ID-ing the potential wetland restoration polygons for submittal to Ben Copans. He thinks this is a good opportunity for an intern - assisting with GIS mapping and outreach.

Glover – Patrick is meeting with the select board about the next steps re the town Hall/school rain garden; they need to decide what they want to commit to and whether to do the work themselves. They will need to request design funding, but MWA may do the design in-house, and can go straight to implementation.

WUV Implementation Grants – Barton and Newport

Barton - The RFP has been out for a month, with proposals due on Feb 11. He needs to sit down with Nate and work through the proposal and select the consultant. Patrick mentioned that it will be nice to hand it over.

Newport Marina Project – is a quickly evolving project. Mary Pat, Jennifer and Patrick met with Doug Spates/landowner and Tom Bernier/City, Andres/Watershed Consulting, and Jim Pease & Ben Copans from the state to iron out a track forward. The City Attorney is drawing up a ROW for maintenance. Patrick confirmed with Act 250 the project does not affect the current permit but the rules might change in the future. It was noted the project might go over budget. MWA is working with Watershed Consulting about providing some project oversight. There are still details to work out. We should have a fee and scope estimates soon.

Committee Reports/ Other Activities Updates

Clean Water Service Provider (CWSP) – Board Rep & Alternate

In December we had an email vote to appoint to our CWSP rep – Mary Pat. At the time, we didn't fully think about Patrick's involvement in Act 76 activities. Jennifer suggested the board might want to reconsider and make Patrick, the rep and Mary Pat the alternate. Jennifer made that motion, Beth seconded, motion passed.

Leachate Symposium – Recap

There was a general discussion and compliments about the symposium. Mary Pat was thrilled with how it went and that it came together beautifully. Links to the zoom and presentation pdfs will be posted on the website. Jennifer asked about gifts for our facilitator and panelists.

Ducks Unlimited

Mary Pat followed up on Patrick's serendipitous reach out to Patrick Raney. DU is still interested in MWA managing the property. A preliminary call is scheduled, to be followed by a board Zoom.

Partnership Updates: MCI, MCM

MCM – received only the \$20k grant, not enough for education center. They will submit to the Northern Borders Commission. The MCM is trying hard to come up with floating classroom plan for this season. Coventry hasn't committed to dates, Doug suspects there will be less on boat and more to do at beach.

MCI – Doug noted that MCI remains concerned about the drinking water, this subject wasn't addressed by symposium. MCI is also promoting a wakeboard initiative, including moratoriums on speed levels as well as distance from shore.

Downtown Development group is working on a wayfinding signage initiative from the Gateway to the border. There will be \$16k to fund it. The goal is to promote use of the path. Doug sees this as a low hanging fruit project.

Tom asked about the lake level. Mary Pat shared it wasn't any lower than treaty levels, but the level can impact cyanobacteria levels. A couple people asked if this aspect of the treaty could be revisited - the proper way is to approach the VT/Quebec Steering Committee.

Other Business:

Cross country ski & snowshoe event – Feb 27

Mary Pat reported that the event is on VLT is ok with the date. Bevin and Patrick are confirmed to lead the event. The plan is to start at the farm, three stops/ talks about the bridge and farm, shoreline riparian protections, with a stop at the pavilion for snacks.

Kendall's Departure

Mary Pat shared that Kendall and James are moving to Wells River, and she suggested giving them a going-away gift of a house cleaning service. Contact Mary Pat if you want to contribute. Kendall will continue as the Memphremagog Clean Water Program Manager.

Letters to Approve

To Secretary Moore re staff who participated in the Leachate Symposium and one supporting Shadow Lake Association's request to reclassify the lake from B2 to A1. Tom moved to accept the letters. Doug seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Siting New Landfill

Beth chatted with Representative Ingalls. He asked about landfill, so Beth emphasized the need to start siting a new one. Hillary and Doug agreed that this should become a primary issue for MWA. Doug stated that we should be constructively starting a conversation while distinguishing ourselves from DUMP.

Creating Wake Boat Zones

Jennifer has been attending the Responsible Wakes for Vermont Lakes meetings, they are petitioning for a rule change to limit the use of wakeboats to certain areas 1000 feet away from shore and would like MWA's support. These restriction will have little effect on our end of Memphremagog, MCI is working to restrict their use on the Canadian side, but this could lead to a ban on smaller lakes in the basin. David said he is in favor of MWA signing the petition. Jennifer motioned to sign the petition. Tom seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Valerie mentioned the Senate Commission on environmental justice (see VTDigger article).

David noted there is Fish & Wildlife grant for education. Two years ago MWA received this grant for Trout in the Classroom but we didn't accept it; Doug suggested we apply for Youth Discovery possible in conjunction with MCM. David will email Bevin the information.

Meeting closed at 6:11 PM

Next Meeting - Mar 2, 2022 04:30 PM