

MWA Meeting Notes (via zoom)

June 2, 2021

Present: Dave Converse, the president opened the meeting at 4:30 pm. Other board members present: Stan Chop, secretary; Jennifer Hopkins, treasurer; Louise Beaudry, Doug Coutts, Tom Latta; other members: Mary Pat Goulding, Patrick Hurley

Secretary's Report-Tom made the motion to accept the minutes and Doug seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Treasurer's Report

Financials for 5/31/21-We are still in the black. We were reimbursed for Patrick's grant. Jennifer updated the inventory. Jennifer will put the \$9,000 from High Meadows into a CD with other monies. Mary Pat thinks we should consider buying more T-shirts for adults. There weren't enough kid T-shirts to pass out to the Youth Discovery kids. Gail Lynch would know how to order them, but the tags would indicate the company that made them.

Current Grant Status Updates

Regional Aquatic Nuisance Control-Jennifer said the towns need to report in July. Tom said the city has started putting down the mats. They were put down closer to the docks, which Tom and Eric think could be a mistake because they are under the docks, not where the weeds are. We don't know who made that decision.

Johns River Riparian Buffers – VT F&W/GLRC- Patrick stated that he sent informational letters explaining the project to landowners and received two responses. One person specifically doesn't want riparian restoration folks walking on his property. Doug wondered if Patrick can do his job from a kayak. Public land is below the highwater mark. The waters in the Johns are too shallow, walking is option. Patrick taught six riparian zone lessons with Youth Discovery

WUV Prouty Beach Project- A walkway was installed on the hillside so guests won't walk through the pollinator plantings. The city demolished the old buffer zone with the construction of the bike path. We should be getting about 20+ trees from the urban forestry commission. The pollinator field is coming in nicely. The city is in charge of maintaining the area for 10 years.

WUV Tactical Basin Planning Workplan Grant- Patrick continues to work with Ben on updating the TBP. MWA is applying for another Workplan Grant for VT fy 2021-2022. This would be a one-year grant of around \$8,000 to 10,000.

WUV Project Development Grant - Patrick touch-based with Barton officials. Patrick spoke of the wetlands portion of this grant. He devotes 4hr per week to this grant, and spends about 20 hr for the riparian grant and 4 for the WUV grant. He works about 30 hrs a week for MWA.

Committee Reports/ Other Activities Updates:

Phragmites Pulling Party - Columbia Forest Products and the Land Trust volunteered to help pull phragmites. Mary Pat is hoping to hear from Columbia regarding volunteers soon. The date will be 9 August before the phragmites go to seed.

VIP - Patroller / Cyanobacteria / Lay Monitors- Some people are signed up for patroller. Chuck Goulding is doing the lay sampling.

Youth Discovery - Stan spoke of the 4 main activities and all the folks who contributed to making it a success. Sixty students from Derby and 12 from Newport Center participated over two days.

Youth Programing - Jim Davis is working on funding to involve Hillary's class on the Northern Star. Doug and Stan are reaching out to Rubenstein to see how we can adapt their boat activities to the Northern Star.

Other updates:

Annual Meeting - We should schedule an annual meeting. Usually, we do it in June. Can we connect the meeting with a theme?

Lake in Crisis – report on small meeting with DUMP- Doug mentioned that we need co-existence going forward. We should respect each other. We don't have different goals but we have different ways of reaching the goals. DUMP has a narrow focus. Mary Pat doesn't think we need to be diverted into a narrow focus. Doug mentioned that if it was a question of researching another dump location, we could support that. MWA has a broader agenda. Mary Pat stated that we have worked 14 years to develop partnerships and be inclusive. How can we move forward without declaring our lake a Lake in Crisis? We need constructive dialogue. The elephant in the room at the meeting was the idea of establishing a moratorium of leachate going into the lake. Will Casella be just treating local leachate or will it be importing leachate? Doug mentioned we need to be organized with partners for the state to start looking for another site when a second landfill is needed. Doug recommended that Mary Pat's note should be circulated to the other board members. (That note is attached to these minutes)

Partnership Updates: MCI, MCM - Doug joined the MCI meeting last night. Their focus is on the landfill. Doug believes the Ottawa and Quebec governments will be approaching the US federal and State of Vermont governments with concerns. MCI has been alarmed with the Owl's Head construction going on. Doug shared information on American Friends of Canadian Conservation. MCM- is off and sailing! Three banks funded three sailings for veterans.

Doug spoke with the city council regarding the use of the Gateway Center as an educational center.

OCNRCD Ecosystem Services art show -It starts 4 June. Jennifer and Mary Pat welcomed us to come!

Other Business-None

Next Meetings

We will plan to meet in person outside for our next meeting perhaps at the Gateway Center. The meeting adjourned at 7:15.

MWA's Monthly Board Meeting schedule:

Jul 7, 2021 04:30 PM

Aug 4, 2021 04:30 PM

Thoughts on DUMP meeting

Thank you, Stan, and Valerie, for your informative and concise notes of the meeting. Let me say first that I believe having the meeting was important and beneficial.

Now for the "But". As Doug says: there is always a but with Mary Pat" funny how that is because I really am an eternal optimist. Anyway.

I believe at this time the best relationship MWA can have with DUMP is mutual respect. Yes, I believe we both have the same goal ultimately. However, as Hillary said DUMP's agenda is "very narrow". MWA's agenda (goal) is a commitment to the health of the watershed which ultimately contributes to the health of the Lake. Over the past 14 years MWA has met this goal in a variety of ways and projects. Including some that have been Lake specific. MWA has performed these tasks with a view to being inclusive and not taking a NIMBY approach to solutions. MWA has developed respect and cooperation with partners in the watershed, VT State employees, local and state governments, and the State's congressional delegation. MWA has also gained the respect of local businesses and citizens. The MWA email page often has requests from citizens asking for advice or direction on how to do the correct activity to preserve our waterways. MWA through the dedication of its members has attended numerous meetings and raised our hand and said there is another Lake as important as Champlain. All these efforts are now paying off. Money is flowing Memphremagog's way and forces are being rallied for many of its stressors. Maybe not all, but MWA is being heard and slow but steady improvement in the Lake and watershed is taking place.

Admittedly, MWA has struggled with its own identity and is trying to address its future with a strategic plan. Currently MWA has a full slate of programs and projects that should not get sidetracked.

There are other stressors to the Lake that MWA could and should consider going forward and presumably can be addressed as the Basin Plan is updated and the Clean Water Service Provider program gets in full swing, or through other funding options.

DUMP's commitment to the Lake in Crisis legislation does not seem to match with their sense of urgency. The State of Vermont in denying the Petition opened a wide door for DUMP to become a partner in protecting and healing the Lake. An invitation to discuss and develop strategies to resolve DUMP's concerns based on good scientific investigation does not appear to be of interest to DUMP.

I would not encourage any collaboration with DUMP at this time but to respect their cause and agree that they have raised awareness about some issues. Some of which MWA has followed over the years and has voiced concerns or solutions to. In the future if DUMP has an initiative that coincides with MWA's strategic plan and goals I am sure the Board will be happy to endorse such an initiative with a letter of support or other commitments just as we do with all our partners and they with us. Accordingly, MWA would expect DUMP to respect MWA's initiatives and approach to solutions.

As for the leachate moratorium. Leachate has been a discussion for MWA over many years. DUMP has accomplished their goal of eliminating the leachate from the Newport wastewater treatment plant but signing a moratorium for a permanent ban does not solve the problem nor does it recognize that many decisions and technologies can be formulated in the future. Working to support a solution that will benefit many would seem more effective.

No matter what decision the board proposes regarding DUMP if it changes MWA's strategic plan the decision must be presented to the membership for approval.

Thank you for getting to the end my musings. I know some do not agree with me and I respect that and know we can work together.

Mary Pat

