



The Rhode Island Rivers Council

c/o RI Water Resources Board
One Capitol Hill
Providence, RI 02908

Minutes of the Council Meeting held

November 12, 2008

Conference Room B

William E. Powers State Administration Building,
One Capitol Hill, Providence, RI

ATTENDANCE:

A. Members Present

Ted Callender
Claudia Staniszewski
Sue Kiernan (for Eric Schneider)
Jane Sherman (Co-Chair)
Guy Lefebvre (Co-Chair)
Charlie Vandemoer

B. Members Absent

Joe Baer
Paul Gonsalves
Mike Walker
Will Rivero

C. Guests in Attendance

Ann Morrill – Kickemuit River Watershed Council
Christopher Tompkins – Narrow River Preservation Association

1. Call to Order:

Ms. Sherman called the meeting to order at 4:10 and noted a quorum was present.

2. Discussion and vote on minutes for the October 8, 2008 meeting

The minutes were distributed to the board prior to the meeting.

With a motion by Ms. Staniszewski, seconded by Mr. Callendar, the minutes of the October 8, 2008 meeting were approved.

3. Discussion and Recommendations for RIRC 2009 Grants

Ms. Staniszewski distributed the grant proposals and a summary report with Program Committee recommendations to the members of the RIRC prior to this meeting. We received 5 applications from 6 watershed councils. The summary sheet includes information about each proposal, questions posed by the Committee to the applicants, and the applicants' response to these inquiries.

a. Friends of the Mosshasuck: The FOTM requested \$400 to enable them to continue their innovative strategy plan suppressing the growth of invasive knotweed in a 1 acre area. As trees are

planted and a shade canopy is created, the knotweed is beginning to be suppressed. The total cost for this project is \$500 with a significant contribution of volunteer time. Ms. Staniszewski recommends fully funding this project for \$500. The motions was seconded by Mr. Vandemoer and unanimously approved.

b. Kickemuit River Council: This project continues the KRC initiative to identify illegal or unauthorized connections to storm drains resulting in fecal contamination of the river. The total cost for this project is \$71,250. The RIRC request is \$4000, with the remainder of the costs to be raised from other sources. The first phase of this project was well done and this second phase will continue the KRC partnership with DEM. Ms. Staniszewski moved that the RIRC award the \$4000 request, with the understanding that if the KRC is unable to raise the rest of the funds, they will reapply to the RIRC for an alternate use of the grant award. The motion was seconded by Mr. Callendar and unanimously approved.

c. Narrow River Preservation Association/Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association: This joint application for \$8,000 proposes to offer a three credit graduate level course- Science for Educators - through the URI Feinstein College of Continuing Ed special courses. The target audience is primarily middle school teachers who will receive basic watershed science instruction. Denise Poyer (WPWA) and Veronica Berounsky (NRPA) will teach the class. There was extensive discussion about this proposal including what is the registration fee and to whom does it go (there is a discrepancy between the information in the grant application and general knowledge about credit costs at the Feinstein campus), the minimum numbers of participants required to offer the class (answer is 8), and is there a contract with URI (answer is no). After discussion about the various questions, Mr. Vandemoer moved that the Program Committee be authorized to approve a grant of \$7,500 to the WPWA/NRPA subject to the Program Committee receiving satisfactory responses to our questions. We will also request that a limited number of Watershed Councils be able to attend the classes without charge and without credit, understanding that this may not be feasible and that the grant not be contingent upon a favorable response to this request. The motion was seconded by Ms. Staniszewski and unanimously approved.

d. Salt Ponds Coalition – Mr. Callendar recused himself from discussion and vote on this application. The SPC submitted a request for \$3,955 to purchase a YSI model 85 water quality monitor and pay a SPC board member to compile the large amount of data collected over the 2008 testing season and organize it to facilitate analysis of the health of the ponds. Ms. Staniszewski noted that paying a board member to do this work is not perceived as a conflict since routine board responsibilities continue to be done as a volunteer effort. This grant continues to build on the broad based monitoring work successfully sponsored by the SPC. Ms. Staniszewski moved that the RIRC award a grant of \$4000 to the SPC. Mr. Vandemoer seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

e. Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council: Ms. Sherman recused herself from discussion and vote on this application. The WRWC requested a grant of \$4000 to build on the paddling program initiated in 2008 and to test out charging a nominal fee for participation to see if the program can pay for itself. The funding is for a trip leader and supplies (paddles, life jackets, materials for a storage box for the canoe trailer, water and light snacks). In addition to the paddle program, the RIRC grant will support 3 watershed watch stations and the design and printing of a canoe guide. The program committee questioned the need for a guide when we invested in the explorer website to provide this information. In response the WRWC indicated that a map/guide will allow more detailed focus on this river, similar to guides available for the Blackstone and Wood-Pawcatuck. The WRWC also answered questions relating to the nature of the testing completed at the three watershed watch stations. Ms. Staniszewski moved approval of a \$4000 to the WRWC seconded by Mr. Vandemoer, and the motion was passed unanimously.

4. Adoption of 2009 Meeting Schedule

Mr. Riverso prepared a meeting schedule for 2009, which continues our practice of meeting on the second Wednesday of every month at 4:00 pm. Ms. Sherman suggested a change in the November meeting date from November 11, 2009 (which is a holiday) to November 18, 2009. Ms. Staniszewski moved adoption of the calendar as amended, seconded by Ms. Kiernan. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Reports

The RIRC accepted the 10/08 financial report submitted by Mr. Baer.

Mr. Lefebvre reported that Walt Galloway is willing and able to facilitate a retreat for the RIRC on January 14, 2009. The tentative plan is to meet for approximately 3 to 3.5 hours to discuss the role and focus of the RIRC. Ms. Sherman will try to find a meeting space, with the first choice being the EDC conference room at ALCO.

Ms. Kiernan stated that the RI DEM is interested in presenting the Phase II Stormwater regulations at a future meeting of the RIRC. We will plan on providing agenda time at our February or March meeting.

The WRB is moving its office from the DOA building to spaced leased by RI DEM at the Foundry.

Mr. Callendar reminded everyone that it's time now to plan for the RIRC exhibit at Narragansett Beach Day. We can follow up with Mr. Millar at DEM, who has a watershed model available for our use.

We are still waiting for the NRPA Book, funded by last year's RIRC grant.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 pm.

The next meeting of the RIRC is scheduled for Wednesday, December 10, 2008 at 4:00 p.m.