



# The Rhode Island Rivers Council

c/o RI Water Resources Board  
235 Promenade Street  
Providence, RI 02908

Minutes of the Council Meeting held September 9, 2009  
Conference Room B  
William E. Powers State Administration Building  
One Capitol Hill, Providence, RI

## **Attendance:**

### **A. Member Present**

Paul Gonsalves  
Guy Lefebvre, Co-Chair  
Will Riverso  
Jane Sherman, Co-Chair  
Claudia Staniszewski  
Charlie Vandemoer

### **B. Members Absent**

Joe Baer  
Ted Callender  
Mike Walker

### **C. Guests in Attendance**

Ann Morrill, Kickemuit River Coalition  
Bill Aldrich, Paul Earnshaw, and Michael Zarum. Buckeye Brook Coalition  
Chris Fox, Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association  
Harriet Powell and Barry Martasian, Friends of the Hunt River Watershed  
Jim McGwin, Hunt River Watershed Association

## **1. Call to Order**

Ms Sherman called the meeting to order at 4:05pm and noted a quorum was present.

## **2. Public Hearing on Designations and Redesignations of Watershed Councils**

Ms Sherman noted that a legal advertisement appeared in the *Providence Sunday Journal* on September 9, 2009, stating that comments would taken at this hearing for the redesignation of the Buckeye Brook Coalition, the Salt Ponds Coalition, the Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association and the designation of the Friends of the Hunt River Watershed.

Ms. Sherman indicated the hearing would commence by taking comments for the Buckeye Brook Coalition (BBC) application.

William Aldrich was recognized. He identified himself as the treasurer of the BBC. He said maintains the records of BBC which are in good order. He also said the BBC has engaged in a large variety of projects over the past five years since receiving designation from the Rivers Council and looks forward to the five years ahead. He encouraged redesignation.

Paul Earnshaw was recognized. He identified himself as the current and second president of BBC. He acknowledged the recent passing on August 30, 2009, of BBC founder and first president Stephen Insana. He said the community of Warwick is feeling the loss of Mr Insana as noted by articles and an editorial in the *Warwick Beacon*. He said Mr Insana was an inspirational leader. Mr Earnshaw said that he was not part of the BBC's founding, but first became involved by participating in the Rivers Council's Watershed Steward Program held in Warwick in the spring of 2005. He named a variety of projects that BBC has conducted over the years such as encouraging TF Green Airport to invest in glycol capture equipment. BBC is currently working with a Bishop Hendricken High School student who is making assessments of five sites in the upper portion of the watershed near Spring Green Pond. BBC is also working on a restoration project in the vicinity of West Shore Road to assess and reduce phragmites. He said BBC's partners in the project include Save the Bay and the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Also, URI hydrology professor Art Gold is an advisor on the project. Mr Earnshaw described a number of other BBC initiatives, said he is looking forward to having BBC work on similar projects in the future, and encouraged the Rivers Council to redesignate BBC.

Michael Zarum said he has worked as an engineer for many years and has been a resident of Warwick. He said he became a BBC board member early on and said the organization was good at effectively pursuing many goals at the same time. He encouraged redesignation.

Ann Morrill said she worked with Mr. Insana and Ms. Michelle Komar of BBC on the airport glycol issue and found BBC to be an effective advocate. She encouraged redesignation.

Barry Martasian said he has worked with BBC and also has found them helpful to mentor his efforts in the Hunt River Watershed. He encouraged redesignation.

There being no further comments on the BBC application, Ms Sherman asked if there was anyone present to testify in regard to the Salt Ponds Coalition application. No one came forth. Ms Sherman then moved on to the Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association application.

Chris Fox identified himself as the executive director of the Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association (WPWA). He said the WPWA application for redesignation

included extensive background material about the work of WPWA. He said they have 45 sampling stations to monitor watershed health and have many public outreach and recreational programs as described in their newsletters and on their website. He said WPWA successfully manages many grants in pursuit of their goals. He encouraged WPWA redesignation.

Harriet Powell said she was from the West Bay area, but she has been a member of WPWA for many years, praised their efforts and encouraged redesignation of WPWA.

Bill Aldrich said he has a summer cottage just upstream from the WPWA office, has been a WPWA member, lauded WPWA programs and encouraged redesignation of WPWA.

There being no further comments of the WPWA application, Ms Sherman then moved on to the Friends of the Hunt River Watershed application for designation.

Barry Martasian identified himself as chair of Friends of the Hunt River Watershed (FHRW). He noted that FHRW submitted an application with many descriptive materials of their activities. Barry said that FHRW has worked for several years with URI Watershed Watch to monitor streams and ponds in the watershed. He said FHRW has also worked with the Audubon Society of RI on several projects and they have an agreement for the Audubon Society of RI to be their fiscal agent. He said FHRW has conducted a variety of educational programs with several middle school teachers and their students. He said both he and vice chair Harriet Powell have served on the Town of North Kingstown groundwater resources committee. He said he was part of the original Hunt River Watershed Association, but FHRW felt compelled to organize a new organization due to a difference in perspective. He said the FHRW application requested designation for the Hunt River watershed only and perhaps the other group might want to request designation for the Annaquatucket watershed. He said FHRW was open minded toward this possibility. He encouraged FHRW be designated for the Hunt River Watershed.

Harriet Powell identified herself as vice chair of the FHRW. She said FHRW has done much good work including organizing Earth Day cleanups, participating in the Town of North Kingstown's Pride Day, and working with the town on watershed protection issues. She encouraged designation of FHRW.

James McGwin identified himself as chair of the Hunt River Watershed Association (HRWA). He noted that HRWA submitted an application for designation by the June 1, 2009, deadline. He said he received an explanation that the application did not get electronically forwarded, and this situation would be properly addressed in the future. He said his group's focus has been on the sole source aquifer under the Hunt, Annaquatucket and Pettaquamscutt watersheds more than on surface water conditions. He said his group has been active with both the Towns of East Greenwich and North Kingstown on aquifer issues as well as on Post Road redevelopment plans. He

described a number of other HRWA initiatives. He said he looks forward to working with the parties on proper procedures for further consideration of the matters involved.

There being no further comments, Ms Sherman brought the hearing to a close.

### **3. Discussion and vote on minutes for the July 8, 2009, meeting**

The minutes were distributed to the board prior to the meeting. With a motion by Ms Staniszewski, seconded by Mr. Vandemoer, the minutes of the July 8, 2009, meeting were approved.

### **4. Friends of the Hunt River Watershed application designation**

Mr. Lefebvre said he has been overseeing the designation process. He said the request for applications was made in March, 2009, and a deadline of May 1<sup>st</sup> was initially set. Upon a request from several applicants, an extension was made to June 1<sup>st</sup> for all potential applicants. At the time of the deadline, it appeared one application for designation was received from the Friends of the Hunt River Watershed along with applications for redesignation from the Buckeye Brook Coalition, the Salt Ponds Coalition and the Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association. A legal ad was placed in the August 9<sup>th</sup> *Providence Sunday Journal* for the September 9<sup>th</sup> public hearing for these applications. In mid-August, Mr. Lefebvre said he learned that the Hunt River Watershed Association had also made an application on June 1, 2009, but their application did not get forwarded to him from the Rivers Council server. He further explained that the committee of three people appointed by the Rivers Council to review designations now had only two members due to the loss of RIDEM representative Eric Schneider to the Rivers Council, taking another job at RIDEM. The committee is now comprised of Mr. Callendar as chair, and Mr. Riverso as member. Mr. Lefebvre made a motion, seconded by Mr. Gonsalves, to appoint Ms Staniszewski to be the third member of the designation review committee. Ms Staniszewski said she was willing to serve on this committee and the motion was approved. Mr. Lefebvre made a second motion, seconded by Ms Staniszewski, to have the designation review committee consider applications received for designation of the Hunt River watershed and make a recommendation of how to proceed, and the motion was approved by all.

### **5. Buckeye Brook Coalition application for redesignation**

Mr. Gonsalves, chair of the redesignation review committee, made a motion, seconded by Mr. Vandemoer, to redesignate the Buckeye Brook Coalition to be the designated watershed council to represent the Buckeye Brook watershed for a period of five years, and the motion passed unanimously.

### **6. Salt Ponds Coalition application for redesignation**

Mr. Gonsalves, chair of the redesignation review committee, made a motion, seconded by Mr. Riverso, to redesignate the Salt Ponds Coalition to be the designated watershed

council to represent the Salt Ponds area watersheds for a period of five years, and the motion passed unanimously.

### **7. Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association application for redesignation**

Mr. Gonsalves, chair of the redesignation review committee, made a motion, seconded by Mr. Rivero, to redesignate the Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association to be the designated watershed council to represent the Wood and Pawcatuck Rivers watersheds for a period of five years, and the motion passed unanimously.

### **8. Allocation of funds from FY2010 budget for grants and operating expenses**

It was noted the RI General Assembly appropriated \$22,444 to the Rivers Council for the current 2010 fiscal year. Ms Staniszewski, made a motion, seconded by Mr. Vandermoer, to allocate \$21,000 toward grants to watershed councils. The motion was approved by all. Ms. Staniszewski moved that the RIRC transfer \$1,444 to the WRWC for operating expenses with a provision for 10% overhead to be paid to the WRWC. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gonslaves and passed unanimously.

### **9. Adoption of guidelines for grant applications**

Ms Staniszewski noted that reports for grants previously issued to watershed councils are due by September 15, 2009. There was discussion about the document and if the workplan should be included. Ms Staniszewski made a motion, seconded by Mr Gonsalves, to adopt the current guidelines, with a reformatted workplan, for grant applications to be used for the forthcoming grant round, and the motion passed unanimously.

### **10. Co-Chairs Report**

Mr Lefebvre noted subsequent to the Water Resources Board moving to smaller quarters, that the Rivers Council would need to address care and storage of its records and materials. Ms Sherman noted that Mr Baer indicated that he intends to resign from the RIRC due to his work commitments. This issue needs to be addressed at a future meeting.

### **11. Finance Committee Report**

Ms Sherman reported that she would obtain a written report from Mr Baer for review at the next meeting.

### **12. Status of Annual Report**

Ms Staniszewski reported she has successfully gathered materials from the watershed councils and has updated administrative materials to bring about a draft annual report. She said she would appreciate council members advising her on the proper listing of

partners of the Rivers Council as well as any necessary revisions to the report. Council members thanked Ms Staniszewski for generating a draft annual report. Ms. Staniszewski will distribute the draft report (without pictures) to the members of the council for their review.

### **13. Adjournment in honor of Steve Insana**

Mr. Lefebvre made a motion for the Rivers Council to adjourn in honor of Stephan P. Insana who passed away unexpectedly on August 30, 2009, at the age of forty-six. Mr. Lefebvre noted that Mr. Insana was the founder and first president of the Buckeye Brook Coalition (BBC). Mr. Insana led efforts to have the BBC designated by the Rivers Council in 2004 to represent the Buckeye Brook watershed. Mr. Insana also led efforts to have BBC host the first offering of the RI Watershed Stewards Program in the spring of 2005. Mr. Insana also led BBC efforts to protect and enhance the Buckeye Brook watershed in many ways such as sponsoring spring fish counts, organizing cleanup days and convincing the TF Green Airport to invest in glycol capture technologies. Mr. Lefebvre especially praised Mr. Insana's enthusiasm, diligence and genuine charisma to lead BBC in defining its vision and implementing its program to improve the Buckeye Brook watershed. The motion was seconded by Ms Staniszewski and passed unanimously at 5:40pm.