



The Rhode Island Rivers Council
 c/o RI Water Resources Board
 One Capitol Hill
 Providence, RI 02908
 www.ririvers.org



Minutes of August 12, Meeting - 4pm
 Blackstone Valley Explorer River Boat
 Cold Spring Park
 Katherine Road, Woonsocket, RI

ATTENDANCE:

- A. Members Present:
 - Veronica Berounsky, Chair
 - Robert Billington
 - Ken Burke
 - Rachel Calabro, Vice Chair
 - Kathleen Crawley
 - Walter Galloway
 - Paul Gonsalves
 - Chuck Horbert
 - Lisa McGreavy, Secretary
 - Elise Torello

- B. Guests in Attendance:
 - Kassi Archambault, Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council
 - Debbi Baker, Blackstone River Watershed Council
 - Walter Berry, EPA Narragansett
 - Tom Borden, Narragansett Bay Estuary Program
 - Peter Coffin, Blackstone River Coalition
 - Greg Gerritt, Friends of the Moshassuck
 - Richard Grant, Narrow River Preservation Association
 - Diane Mailloux, Blackstone Valley Tourism Council
 - Eivy Monroy, Narragansett Bay Estuary Program
 - Arthur Plitt, Blackstone River Watershed Council/Friends of the Moshassuck
 - Steve Roth, Kickemuit River Council
 - Kathy Rourke, Friends of the Moshassuck
 - Courtney Schmidt, Narragansett Bay Estuary Program
 - Captain Sean, Blackstone Valley Tourism Council

Call to Order: Dr. Berounsky called the meeting to order at 4:13 pm.

Review and approval of June 10, 2015 meeting minutes: Mr. Galloway moved to approve the minutes. Mr. Horbert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Reports of activities in Designated Local Watershed Councils:

-Blackstone River Watershed Council/Friends of the Blackstone as reported by Mr. Coffin and Mr. Billington: The Campaign for a Fishable-Swimmable Blackstone River was recently launched to create a bi-state watershed action plan with stakeholders to improve water quality with a focus on nutrients and to expand the role of public education. Efforts are under way to develop a greenway along the river. The River Rats school program is progressing extremely well. <http://blackstoneriver.org/blackstone/>

-Buckeye Brook Coalition: No report <http://www.buckeyebrook.org>

-Friends of the Moshassuck as reported by Mr. Gerritt: Work continues on several objectives including efforts to get others to think about amphibian habitat when planning green infrastructure; the program to film amphibians and other wildlife in Providence's North Burial Ground; and tree mapping program at Collier Field. A meeting was recently held with representatives from the Providence City Park Division who are trying to obtain land from a private owner to extend the existing park at Collier Field. <http://www.themoshassuck.org>

-Kickemuit River Council by Mr. Roth: There was a recent discovery of several dead blue crabs in the north section of the river and the council is assisting DEM in the investigation to hopefully identify the cause. As part of the RI Rivers grant to the KRC, a "no discharge" buoy was installed at the mouth of the river and oil booms were delivered to the Bristol and Warren Fire Departments. <http://www.kickemuitriver.org>

-Narrow River Preservation Association as reported by Mr. Grant: The NRPA and local teachers organized and hosted an educational event for 100 sixth graders from the Narragansett Pier Middle School on June 9. The Narrow River marsh restoration project led by the US Fish and Wildlife and Save the Bay is underway. Three major fundraising events were held this summer and were extremely successful. They include the 29th Narrow River Road Race, the Tenth Narrow River Turnaround Swim, and the Full Moon Paddle. An "Art On The River" day is scheduled for Saturday, August 15. NRPA is grateful to the RI Rivers Council for funding a project now underway to assess indicators of human discharges to the Narrow River through the use of optical brighteners. <http://www.narrowriver.org/>

-Pawtuxet River Water Authority as reported by Mr. Horbert: Water quality monitoring of Tongue Pond will be starting soon. A feasibility study for fish passage restoration is underway. A project to repair canoe access to the river at Knight and Pontiac Avenues is under construction. Last week's storm severely impacted the river near the Riverwalk area where 40 to 50 trees were downed. Clean up plans are underway.

-Salt Ponds Coalition as reported by Ms. Torello: The South Kingstown Zoning Board denied the proposed condominium development planned for Potter Pond. The SPC's 30th year anniversary celebration was held last night and was a big success. Several paddling events are underway. Water quality sampling is going well. Several aquaculture projects are being proposed in the Salt Ponds. <http://www.saltpondscoalition.org/>

-Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association as reported by Mr. Galloway and Ms. Torello: The WPWA Board of Trustees has three new members including Joseph MacAndrew, Alyson McCann, and Donna Walsh. Staff is busy preparing for the October kick-off meeting for the National Park Service 3-year study to assess whether the Wood, Pawcatuck, Beaver, Chipuxet, and Queen Rivers meet standards to be included in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. Interns are also busy measuring culverts for the Pawcatuck Watershed Flood Resiliency and Management Plan Project with reports due in November. A paddle is planned this fall at the White Rock Dam removal site. Also under way are several kids programs, paddling events, water quality sampling, and a membership drive. The newsletter is now available online at <http://www.wpwa.org/>

-Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council as reported by Ms. Archambault: Several major events are coming up including the 6th Annual Woono River Ride Bike-A-Thon on Saturday, September 19. There are a few dates left for the historic paddling series and bike tours which have been very popular. Summer Bike Camp was a great success and filled to capacity each week. Campers received a bike and all necessary accessories and training. The WRWC recently received a grant from the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program to develop and educational program with a focus on stormwater discharges to restore the urban sections of Woonasquatucket River and Narragansett Bay. The program includes public school curriculum, Trout in the Classroom, public art with North Providence High School, and youth leadership development for high school students in science education at the Met School in Providence. Staff is busy preparing for new education programs starting in September. <http://www.wrwc.org/>

Speaker Series:

Aboard the Blackstone Valley Explorer Riverboat, a Narrated Tour by Dianne Mailloux of the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council

The narrated tour of the Blackstone River aboard the *Blackstone Valley Explorer* with Captain Sean and Dianne Mailloux was generously made possible by Mr. Billington and the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council. *The Explorer* left the new Cold Spring Park dock in Woonasquatucket and motored south past old mill neighborhoods and notable industrial sites to Market Square as far as Thundermist Falls. The boat then traveled north to the Massachusetts state line along wildflower and tree-covered banks to the town of Blackstone before heading back to Cold Spring Park. Mr. Billington,

Mr. Coffin, and Mr. Gerritt told stories about the river's past and its importance during the industrial age as well as the challenges facing the river today. Photos provided by Mr. Borden are posted on the RI Rivers new photo gallery at <https://rircblackstonerivermeeting82015.shutterfly.com/>

Reports by RIRC Representatives on State Committees:

-Narragansett Bay Estuary Program – Mr. Borden reported that staff is wrapping up the recent grant awards for projects in the Narragansett Bay watershed and is busy preparing the Status and Trends report due out next summer. A new funding of up to \$900,000 is being announced in coordination with the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPCC) for water quality grants within the Greater Narragansett Bay Watershed as part of EPA's Southeast New England Program and is funding nutrient, pathogen, and stormwater management projects within both Massachusetts and Rhode Island. For more information, see <http://www.nbep.org>

-State Guide Plan Advisory Committee – Ms. Calabro reported that a draft will be completed soon.

-Bays, Rivers, & Watersheds Coordination Team (BRWCT) – Dr. Berounsky reported that while the Coordination Team no longer exists, funding for the BRWCT stormwater grant to the Rivers Council is being administered by DEM with the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council (BVTC) acting as fiscal agent for the sub-grants the Rivers Council awarded to six grantees. BVTC has mailed out the sub-grant agreements so that work can now proceed.

Officer Reports:

L. McGreavy distributed a RIRC account summary showing a balance of \$4,409.

Chair's Report:

-Dr. Berounsky reported that she is meeting with Sue Kiernan of DEM next week to plan the work to add stormwater content on to websites of designated watershed councils as part of the BVTC stormwater grant to the Rivers Council.

Adjournment: There being no further business, Mr. Horbert moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. McGreavy. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:56 pm.