

Pawtuxet River Authority and Watershed Council

8 Hope Furnace Road, Hope, RI 02831

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Monthly Board Meeting

PRA Office, Hope – January 7, 2013

Board Members Present: Bob Nero, Michael Brault, Jack Donovan, David Finnegan, Scott Goodinson, Rita Holahan, Jack Lancellotta, Ginny Leslie, Paul Lockett, Brian Manning, Steve McAllister, Bridget Skuce

**Board Members Absent: Tara Digre, Arthur Langlais, Mike Maddalena
- all excused**

Associate Members Present: Ross Adrain, Jimmy Johnson

Call to Order/Approval of Agenda

Mr. Nero called the meeting to order at 6:47 p.m. A quorum was present. The agenda was distributed and on a motion by Mr Goodinson, seconded by Mr. McAllister, it was approved with three additions: an update on the Howard Conservation Area land sale, a report on Randall Pond and announcement of an additional conference.

Approval of December, 2012 Meeting Minutes

On a motion by Mr. Brault, seconded by Mr. Donovan, the board approved the minutes as submitted with corrections regarding

attendance. Ms. Leslie will be listed as absent and Mr. Lancellotta will be listed as absent and excused. The minutes were prepared by Mr. Goodinson in Ms. Leslie's absence.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Holahan distributed copies of and reviewed the report, which included updates on the savings and checking accounts. It was noted that Warwick and West Warwick have not submitted their payments for the current fiscal year; Ms. Skuce reported that the West Warwick check will be cut this week. Warwick officials had asked for confirmation that all the other municipalities had paid; Ms. Holahan will notify them after receipt of West Warwick's payment and seek payment in full from Warwick.

We will submit a legislative grant application for improved fund-raising activities and communications, including an e-newsletter.

Ms. Holahan also distributed a review of the operating budget (both expenses and revenue) for the first six months of the fiscal year, including full-year budgeted amounts, year-to-date totals, variances and percentages of budget expended.

Old Kent Road Property Land Sale

Mr. Nero reported that he has spoken with a representative from The Nature Conservancy; they will meet soon to visit the property. Mr.

Nero is interested in having a discussion with representatives of The Champlain Foundations about funding possibilities. Ms. Holahan wants to clarify our designation with the IRS as our current designation may be a hindrance to getting funds from Champlain.

Fallen tree at Phenix Harris

An enormous tree fell during or soon after hurricane Sandy and did some minor damage to an abutting property owner's house. Mr. Nero agreed to allow a volunteer to remove branches; he instead removed the tree, which would not have been covered under our liability coverage if he had been injured. According to our insurance agent, we do not have any liability in this case; the fallen tree would be considered an act of God.

Harris Dam Update – Fuss & O'Neill Bills

We have already paid about \$10,000 and have an additional bill of \$5,880. The report has been submitted to RIDEM but RIDEM has not taken any action on it.

Howard Conservation Area land sale

Mr. Nero spoke with a representative from Gannon & Scott who told him that the subdivision of the property is on the desk of Cranston Planning Director Peter LaPolla. There may be concern over a parcel that is zoned Open Space having its zoning changed to Industrial. Mr. Donovan pointed out that the addition of the acreage at Randall Pond now owned by the PRA would more than compensate for this

loss of open space-zoned property at Howard. Ms. Holahan agreed to contact Mr. LaPolla.

Mr. Goodinson said that many trucks have been going in and out of the landfill abutting the Howard Conservation Area. Mr. Nero explained that they are creating new contours to prevent rainfall from penetrating the landfill.

Pawtuxet Falls Update

Ms. Holahan provided an update on the modification of our RIDEM permit for the Rhodes-on-the-Pawtuxet boat launch improvements and run-off control. There is some money left over which may be used to improve access to the falls and/or make landscaping improvements on the PRA property next to Hunter's. This issue will be discussed further at the February board meeting.

Randall Pond

We have submitted a Recreational Trails Grant application to the RIDEM for an elevated walkway and fishing pier at Randall Pond.

New Business

a. Land & Water Conservation Summit: This year's summit will be held on Saturday, March 9 at URI. The PRA would pay for up to three people to attend; Messrs. Donovan and Adrain and Ms. Skuce expressed interest in attending.

b. R.I. Salt Water Fishing Show: The show will be held from March 8

through 10 at the Providence Convention Center. Mr. Nero asked for volunteers to man a PRA booth.

c. R.I. Historic Preservation Conference: The conference will be held on Saturday, April 27 in West Warwick. Ms. Leslie will attend and will moderate a workshop about the Scituate Reservoir. Mr. Nero wants the PRA to have a display there.

It was agreed that we should update our brochure for distribution at these events. We should form a committee to work on projects related to communications and fund-raising activities which can be funded with the legislative grant. Mr. Nero will send out an e-mail to organize the committee.

d. Bylaws: Ms. Skuce made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Goodinson, about re-opening the revision of the bylaws to clarify/revise the attendance policy. It is not now clear what constitutes an excused absence. Discussion followed and it was agreed that a separate meeting of the Executive Board should be held to formulate options of a policy. The motion carried. Ms. Skuce agreed to prepare and submit some notes; other board members were invited to do the same. Other organizations' policies on attendance/excused absences will be reviewed.

e. Coventry canoe launch at the Anthony mill pond in Coventry: Mr. Brault provided information that the Town of Coventry built the facility with federal funds. Additional launches will be built at Sandy Bottom Road, Stump Pond and at additional sites. Guy Lefebvre, Coventry Recreation Director, is willing to make a presentation to the

PRA at our February 4 board meeting regarding the town's plans for canoe accesses. It was agreed to delay his presentation to March so that we can identify recreational and open space opportunities in the town.

Adjournment: On a motion by Mr. Goodinson, seconded by Mr. Donovan, the board voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ginny Leslie, Secretary