

**DEERFIELD RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION
MEETING MINUTES**

DATE: **Monday, March 20, 2023** **TIME:** **6:00 pm - 8:00 pm**

LOCATION: **Google Meet this month.**

x	Bruce Lessels	x	Chris Bathurst
x	Charlie Olchowski	x	Ryan O'Donnell
	David Boles		Sheila Kelliher
x	Jim Perry	x	Terry Atkinson
	Chris Curtis	x	Patrick McCoy

Special Guests:

- **Jack Widness** - VT Representative; (will be a bit late)
- **Bruce Lessels** (former DRWA VP and former owner of Zoar Outdoor) *Bruce was former owner of Zoar Outdoor and sold to Berkshire East. He's a member of American Whitewater and feels their interests are intertwined. He has lived in Buckland for 35 years. Patrick thinks his knowledge of the river will be very helpful to our board. Bruce also co-wrote a guide to the Deerfield. The board nominated him to be on the DRWA board and all voted in favor. Jim will send him a list of areas of interest. Patrick wants him to send bio info for website.*

PURPOSE: Regular Monthly Meeting – **Please let Jim know if you cannot attend.**

LIST OF TOPICS TO BE DISCUSSED

--Call to order

--Review past minutes – **February 20, 2023** (Jim Perry) *Minutes accepted.*

--Identify **New Agenda Items** not included in this proposed agenda. *Jim is adding Green River Festival booth for DRWA*

Board Member Reports -

- **President & Vice Presidents:** (Jim Perry – President; Chris Curtis – 1st VP; Charlie Olchowski 2nd VP)
 - Our signed **Affiliation Agreement** with CRC for 2023 - 2024 has been uploaded to our Google Docs account, *and emailed to board members*
 - **VOTE:** Vote on Board Membership, Bruce Lessels.
 - Jim and Bruce completed a phone interview on Feb. 23.
 - *Bruce was voted in as a Board Member.*
 - DRWA Search for Additional Directors (ongoing): *Not currently*
 - Mail & Email Call: Do we have any? (Jim)
 - CRC Liaison: Latest news. (Ryan) *Ryan says Chris sent out something, but not a full financial report. Progress is being made. 2023 budget expected in early April this year.*
 - Was our mini-grant \$250 check received/cashed by Mohawk Trail Regional School? *Email just sent to Alia.*
- **Watershed Projects:**
 - Northern Watershed Update - Update on what types or issues and actions are occurring in the Vermont end of the Deerfield River watershed. (Jack Widness)
 - Importance of involving the recreation community in the pursuit of Wild & Scenic River designation. *Jack says David Deane, a whitewater kayaking group on Deerfield River (Eastern Caucus of Hydropower Reform Movement?) was missed in being included. He is a guide. Chris is out of contact until early April; advised Jack to let Chris know. Jack says nothing new with dam removal at present.*
 - Discuss film about fly-fishing with the proposal to become a cosponsor. *Jack says this is used for fundraiser, is 2.5 hours long, and Deerfield River is featured in the film. Harrison Brothers produced video; Jack thinks it might be attractive to DRWA to fundraise, could add that a portion of proceeds go to Wild & Scenic River efforts. Jack's TU chapter is willing to pay for the rental of the film at Latchis Theatre on Thursday evening May 4th 5 or 6 p.m.. Does DRWA want to co-sponsor? They are seeking other commercial co-sponsors (eg. Sam's in Brattleboro). If we can help in any way, with publicity especially. There will also be raffles & gifts, donated by co-sponsors, possibly refreshments. Jim says we will donate to raffle. Jack thinks they'd charge \$15 tops per ticket. Patrick thinks we should support this and knows there are only 2 other showings so far in MA (Boston, Williamstown). It might be worthwhile partnering with Deerfield River T.U. and presenting at*

*the Garden Theatres in Greenfield (they support other non-profits).
DRWA board voted to co-sponsor Jack's event.*

- *Jack mentions reservoirs on Deerfield River Responsible Wakes group: DEC agrees there needs to be a change in the rules regarding water craft. Jack's group is pushing for 1000' distance from shore; DEC says only 500'. Over 60% of attendees at meeting agreed it should be 1000'. Jack thanks us for our help & support to the state of VT. It would be the first place in VT to enact these requirements.*
- Franklin County Rivers Source to Sea Cleanup (formerly, The Green River Cleanup) and the Greenfield City Cleanup. – Status Update. (David Boles, Charlie Olchowski)
 - *BLUE BAG APRIL is all set to go in Greenfield ! Bags will be at the Department of Public Works on Wells St, as well as the Jon Zon Senior Center on Pleasant St. Should be an article in the paper soon. Charlie has nothing to add but that they'll start gearing up soon. Patrick will post on website when details are known.*
- Green River Watershed Alliance - Status Update. (Ryan O'Donnell and David Boles) *Nothing new at present.*
- Monitoring – Status Update. Progress on 2021 and 2022 Annual Reports? (Ryan O'Donnell)
 - *Water Quality of Beaver Brook & the North Branch of the Deerfield River Public Program - Wednesday March 29 at 6:30pm * Online via Zoom (be there or be square) Ryan is doing this presentation; please come! He sent it to all of us. Jack says this area was singled out as very important in VT.*
 - *Ryan presents his water quality testing. E-coli is the first thing they test. These results will be available to us soon. Nitrogen is less affected by rain, but in VT they still qualify by low, moderate, high flows. Ellis Brook is near the site of a recently upgraded wastewater treatment plant. Total phosphorus is all forms of phosphorus and affects turbidity, susceptible to rainfall. Chloride only currently monitored in VT, naturally found in fresh & salt water, mostly due to runoff, road salt, fertilizer. Conductivity also includes road salt and other dissolved stuff in water. Turbidity or clarity is currently looking good. Jack asks if nitrogen is a salt water problem that will be experiencing a big move to restrict nitrogen loads in the water, especially wastewater treatment plants. Ryan just sent out monitoring results today. Not sure if he can add more sites yet until*

her hears from DEP. Is taking suggestions for new sites; please email him.

- Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82358518514?pwd=SE9UOTdsK2lZdXA1azBtM3NGeWplQT09> Meeting ID: 823 5851 8514

Passcode: 358232

- Wild & Scenic Rivers – Status. Next steps. (Chris Curtis with Charlie Olchowski and Patrick McCoy)

- **Chris Curtis' Report:**

- *As discussed at the last board meeting, I have taken the following actions:*

- *Contacted the entire MA/VT Congressional delegation to request their support for a re-filed Deerfield River Wild and Scenic study bill in the new Congress;*
- *Also requested that they send a letter to the National Park Service to seek funding for a Reconnaissance Study for the Deerfield (provided draft letter);*
- *Requested the McGovern and Markey re-file the bill itself;*
- *Contacted our Vermont co-sponsors (Windham Regional Commission) to request that they reach out to new Representative Balint to bring her on board with our initiative*

- *I have now received some good news from John Swords, Senior Legislative Assistant for Congressman McGovern. Here are the key points:*

- *John and Paige Rodrigues (Markey) have gotten everything in order for reintroduction of the bill itself, with Rep. Neal, Rep. Balint, and Senators Warren, Sanders, and Welch as original cosponsors to show again full support within the watershed. They are going to reintroduce both House and Senate versions on Wednesday.*
- *John also noted "I know that our Natural Resources Committee staff is excited about working with us to find a path forward this year. They're really great partners, so I'm hopeful that their collaboration will be helpful in approaching the Republican majority about considering the bill".*
- *John will follow up with Rep. McGovern next week to see if he is open to taking the lead on a Reconnaissance Study for the Deerfield. John thinks it's a great idea, and felt the draft letter was enormously helpful, and that our inclination that it will help keep up momentum for local support is right.*

- **Woodlands Partnership of Northwest MA** – Status Update. (Sheila Kelliher)
Sheila is not present.
- **Trout Unlimited** – Updates on what Trout Unlimited has been up to on the Deerfield River. (Sheila Kelliher)
- **Mass Rivers Alliance** - Current issues. (Chris Bathurst) *Chris B attended a small watershed group meeting about a month ago; will possibly attend another tomorrow. People from Millers R., Hoosac, the Cape present. He wonders if we'd be interested in having any of these folks do short presentations that might be of interest to us. He approached a couple of people about this; thinks the networking would be good. Jim agrees; thinks it would give us an idea of things to work on, suggests getting in touch with Brian Yellen.*
- **Trail Maintenance** – Status. (Chris Curtis, Chris Bathurst, Jim Perry)
 - **VOTE:** Co-Sponsor with Shelburne Open Space and Arm's Library, a May 20, Audubon's High Ledges Wildlife Sanctuary - Lady Slipper hike. *Jim thinking of adding yellow ladyslipper. He'd like us to co-sponsor on Facebook, other media, website. Board voted in favor of this.*
 - **Mohican-Mohawk Trail - Bardwells Ferry** - On March 10, Jim sent to the Board Chris Curtis' Draft proposal to CSX for Mo-Mo Trail realignment at Bardwell's Ferry. Chris will be back in April to discuss the process and the Board can vote on the project at that time.
- **Website Maintenance, Google Docs, Email System:** (Patrick McCoy) Status -
- **Financial Report:** Review Mallory's Financial Report. (Patrick)
 - Waiting on a 2023 Budget Spreadsheet from CRC showing our total account balance and planned expenditures for 2023. *Should happen in April. CRC came back a little later than deadline but were able to come back with 2022 Income/Expenses report but no carry-over; still trying to find out what we really have in bank. Seems that CRC has been really getting the financial system cleaned up. Jim thinks we have about \$28,000 in the bank and made about \$4,000 last year. Patrick says that balance includes \$5,000 from Cromack property grants.*
 - **Last Updated: March 2023**
 - **2022 Budget - End-of-Year Report:**
 - Donations/Income: \$7,932.18
 - Expenses: \$3,070.08 (**includes** Monitoring cost)
 - Net Income: \$4,862.10
- **Secretary:** (Terry)
- **Relicensing:**
 - **Gardner Falls** - (Jim)
 - **Draft - Revised Recreation Management Plan:**
 - Comments on Draft Due to Central Rivers Power: **Friday April 17**
 - Due to vandalism of the building and people blocking the service by parking on and along it, the proponent proposes to eliminate public vehicular access along the power canal to the power station parking area. This will eliminate a lot of parking in a highly used

area. Due to the dangerous conditions present, they also plan to discontinue a currently closed loop trail across the power plant tail race. As mitigation, DRWA proposes increasing or improving recreational access to the river, boosting needed trail maintenance, and new and improved recreation signage, etc...

- February 28: A video call was held with the Gardner Falls owners and managers on February 28 to discuss potential changes we would like to see to the Draft - Revised Recreation Management Plan. Jim Perry and Bruce Lessels attended as well as Kelsey Wentling - CRC MA River Steward. *Jim et al will send out proposed comments to their draft proposal. Charlie mentions that Gardner Falls should come up with improved parking situation, but Jim says this is problematic due to confined physical constraints of the location; thinks if we adopted/repaired a foot bridge in Buckland, that would possibly solve the problem with offsite parking. Bruce mentions that putting in a recreation plan is all some of these stakeholders are willing to do. Bruce thinks Gardner Falls should propose a bridge or some alternative to make it a loop trail not just one way. Jim is working on ways to mitigate that loss.*
- March 17: Jim Perry and Kelsey Wentling - CRC met with Luke Wright, the Owner of **Ware River Power**, the company managing the **Gardner Falls Hydroelectric project** for **Central Rivers Power MA, LLC** and Miley Kinney - Associate Compliance Specialist for **Patriot Hydro**. We discussed potential changes we would like to see to the Draft - Revised Recreation Management Plan.
- March 18: Jim Perry and Bruce Lessels visited the site to discuss potential mitigation options.
- **Membership & Community Outreach:**
 - DRWA Instagram Account – (Sheila & Ryan)
 - Facebook Account – (Ryan)
 - Newsletters - (Jim)
 - A draft fundraising appeal was sent to the Board for review and then sent to Nicole at CRC for review and finalization.
- **Education:** (Terry Atkinson)
 - Education Outreach:
 - Mini-Grants – Did Mohawk Regional School receive and cash the \$250 check?
- **[Science]:** (Lead?)

New and Old Business:

Next meeting: April 17, 2023, 6:00 PM

Assignments & Adjournment:

Robert's Rules of Order (condensed)

Types of Motions:

Main motion; Substitute motion; Friendly amendments; Call the Question; Motion to table; Motion to reconsider.

How the Motion is Brought Before the Assembly

- A member makes the motion: *I move that (or "to")*
- Another member seconds the motion: *I second the motion*
- The chair states the motion: *It is moved and seconded*

The President puts the motion to a vote

1. The President asks: *Any further discussion?*
2. The President says: *Those in favor, say 'Aye'.* (Pause for response.)
Those opposed, say 'Nay'. (Pause for response.) *Those abstaining, please say 'Aye'.*

The President announces the result of the vote.

1. *The ayes have it, the motion carries, and ...* (indicating the effect of the vote) or
2. *The nays have it and the motion fails.*

HOST Initiating Google Meet

1. Log into the DRWA Google profile using the username/pswd (e.g., login to DRWA's gmail account).
2. Once logged in Google as DRWA, click the Google Meet link and join the meeting.
3. Once in the meeting, you'll get a pop-up window asking you to grant access to each attendee looking to join.