

**DEERFIELD RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION
MEETING MINUTES**

DATE: Monday, March 18, 2024 **TIME:** 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

LOCATION: Google Meet this month.

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

Special Guests:

- **Jack Widness** - VT Representative ()

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

LIST OF TOPICS TO BE DISCUSSED

--Call to order (**by Chris Bathurst, acting tonight for Jim**)

--Review past minutes – **February 19, 2024** **Vote** to Consider Approval **“Approved”**
(Jim Perry)

--Identify **New Agenda Items** not included in this proposed agenda. *Terry added 3, below.*

Leadership Reports -

- **President’s Report:** (Jim Perry – President)
 - **Conflict of Interest Policy and Annual Disclosure Form** (Jim & Patrick)
Patrick cites the link and says it can be updated anytime. Jim answers that you should disclose your involvement in other boards, if there is a possible conflict, positive or negative.
 - Only 4 of the 9 Board members have filled out the Annual Disclosure form: *Now 5 have filled out.*
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdi8sTppdEkil1S75gAJ5oAljr4H3EvXS1kRBvfSR4enqXhUg/viewform>

- Patrick will revisit the budget for the next meeting, tighten up details, discrepancies, and confer with Ryan for help.
- Proposed Budget for 2024 (Vote:)

	DRWA Number 2023	CRC Finances Number 2023	Difference	2024 Proposed Budget	Notes
Revenue	8584.12 (includes \$100 refunded from TU)	7909.12	-675	Revenue necessary to break even (Including CRC's Admin. Fee (27.31%)):	Or, is it only -575 after you remove the \$100 sent to TU and refunded from TU
Supplies		19.99		100	
Dues & Subscriptions		75		(\$500?) 275	
Printing		1891.22		2000	
Sponsorships Events		100		(100)	Seems to be the same \$100 for the Fishing movie, which TU refunded to us and is included in the 8584.12 number.
Ongoing Projects: <u>Monitoring Contribution & Expenses to CRC</u>	2000 proposed	944.00	944.00	1000	Budgeted \$2k in 2023, Invoice late in arriving.
Ongoing Projects: <u>Franklin County Rivers Cleanup</u>					\$800 offset received from Greenfield Savings Bank and Coca-Cola in 2023 Budgeted \$900 in 2023
Special Projects:					Budgeted \$600 for educational grants (2 grants for up to \$300 each) and \$200 for W&S in 2023 Trail maintenance?
General Operations					Budgeted \$1,000 in 2023

					(Spent \$1,911.21 for Printing and Supplies, Above. (\$3,030.21 total, incl. Monitoring \$944))
Total Expenses		\$2,086.21 (\$3,030.21)			
Net Revenue		\$5,815.91 \$4871.91			
Total in Savings		\$48,105.87 \$47,161.87 CRC's numbers adjusted for 2023 Monitoring expense			

- **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)
 - *Jack Widness notes nothing major new; they are excited about Wild & Scenic. Southeastern VT TU Chapter is having its annual meeting with new officers later this month.*
- Franklin County Rivers Source to Sea Cleanup (formerly, The Green River Cleanup) and the Greenfield City Cleanup. – Status Update. (David B, Charlie O.)
 - *David says the weekend of Sept. 28th is the date of 2024 cleanup, They are working on preparation for that. Blue Bag event for the month of April to clean up roadways or any areas in Greenfield. Can pick up bags at John Zon Ctr or Greenfield DPW. David will do a short write up for the DRWA newsletter. He notes that expenses should be about the same for this year's cleanup. David would like to know if we should write a letter on behalf of DRWA to 5 hydroelectric facilities on relicensing. Public comment period is open. CRC has been actively involved per Ryan. Comment period ends in April. Jim remarks that there are 9 dams + pumped storage on Deerfield River; those folks have been quiet as we pursue Wild & Scenic. He does not want us to alarm these facilities and would like to continue to work with them, without being oppositional; Chris C concurs. Ryan cites CRC is not oppositional, but trying to promote fish passage. Here is the link:*

<https://www.ctriver.org/our-work/hydropower/> That link includes how to personally submit comments

- Green River Festival - (Patrick M)
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- Dragon Brook Climate Resilience Plan for the Town of Shelburne Municipal Vulnerability Plan (MVP) (Charlie)
 - Charlie has agreed to represent DRWA. *He has suggested they do not schedule meetings during the day. They've had 3 during the day so far, so if Charlie can't attend, Jim may attend instead, if Charlie cannot.*
 - Shelburne is focusing their first Municipal Vulnerability Plan (MVP) project on a nature-based solution to the inland flooding problem caused by Dragon Brook at the intersection of Bardwell's Ferry Road and South Shelburne Road. Ideally, Shelburne would like to cover the entire brook from its head in the northern reaches of Shelburne down to where it enters the Deerfield.
- Deerfield and lower Connecticut **Tactical Basin Plan** (Ryan O, Jim P)
 - No news *per Ryan*
- Monitoring – Status Update. (Ryan O'Donnell)
 - Still waiting on 2023 results from Vermont *Ryan :*
 - Will have something to present next month even if results still aren't received
 - CRC, DRWA, Fort River, and Chicopee 4 Rivers were awarded the MassDEP grant which covers material costs for all MA samples and staff time for processing through July 1 2024 *Ryan will let us know of any other presentations*
 - *Charlie says there is more interest in Maple Brook. Grad students interested in monitoring Greenfield water quality for the development of a Master Plan. Contaminants going into the Green River has been an ongoing concern. There is talk of testing for other things, such as petroleum, solvent, and insecticide chemicals.*
- Wild & Scenic Rivers – Status. Next steps. (Chris C with Charlie O., Patrick M, Chris B) *Chris notes good news from Senators Markey & McGovern. Funding will begin in the new fiscal year starting October. 1st; Thinks the National Park Service will do the initial assessment, or the available funding amount may be \$25,000, if DRWA enters into a Cooperative Agreement with the National Park Service.*
 - After much effort on the part of our organization and others, the National Park Service has agreed to conduct a **reconnaissance survey** which will serve as an “**initial assessment**” on whether

congressional authorization for a Wild and Scenic River study may be warranted.” (Per National Park Service Associate Director of Park Planning, Facilities and Lands Michael Caldwell) *Usually it will be a preliminary study.*

- *Chris C has been in touch with Jamie Fosdick, formerly of the National Park Service in Maine. In house staff meeting in April. 3 options to proceed: 1) Cooperative agreement for DRWA to undertake the work (preferred by Chris) 2) NPS would do study themselves, or 3) an outside organization to do it, or 4) Chris’s Team would like to do the full study: add funding to reach the requisite budget in part from our fundraising/part from Woodlands Partnership funding under their grant program. Chris doesn’t have a cost as yet; he thinks we could do it for less than \$100,000 for the whole thing. We need to decide what our position will be before the NPS meeting in April.*
- *According to Chris, the Cooperative Agreement approach gives us potential to accomplish reconnaissance + full study. We’ve made little progress in getting Congress to move on this, due to their dysfunctionality. Feels we should fish or cut bait, otherwise it could take another 10+ years. Downside is there’s a lot of paperwork/bureaucracy, but Chris is willing to do the work. Reconnaissance study involved whether DRWA & its main tributaries qualify for W&S, such as whitewater rafting, fisheries, scenic, attributes & qualities. We’d be working with communities to identify strategies to manage the river, local, state, and federal, such as bylaws, resources, partnership river funds. DRWA could play a role in how these monies are managed. Jack W is in favor of this effort, has a close friend who worked for Dept. of Interior to bounce things off; would be a good resource for him (Christopher Brown was head of rivers for Dept. of Interior for 10 years).*
- *Jim P is not opposed, but wants to make sure we do everything NPS requires and meets all of their standards; they can be finicky. He cites that Chris C & Sheila K should disclose their conflict of interest to the board (Chris C has already disclosed on the DRWA form).*
- *Chris C discloses: He’s interested in doing work as part of a team, for doing the work, to include Sheila plus a consultant recommended by NPS from VT Rivers. Chris and Sheila would need to abstain from any votes in this regard.*

- *Charlie asks for clarification: Areas of river to be designated W&S wants to know what is or will be the basis for this reconnaissance. What is the potential funding from Woodlands Partnership? Chris C says segments will be identified for study. Chris doesn't have that figure, but Jim says the maximum grant is \$75,000, and people have been getting grants they apply for.*
- *A motion is made by Jim Perry that DRWA pursues a cooperative agreement with the National Park service for the undertaking of the Wild & Scenic project. Discussion ensued. Ryan or someone else from CRC would be grant manager. Terry asks that we be apprised at all stages of the project. Jim said that this requirement would be in the Statement of Work. Charlie, Terry, Jim P, Chris B, & Patrick vote in favor. David B (left meeting) & Chris C abstained. **The motion Passes**. Charlie mentions David should advise us if he is going to leave the meeting early during a critical vote.*
- Trail Maintenance – Status. (Chris Curtis, Chris Bathurst, Jim Perry)
- Upcoming Planned Guided Partnership Hikes. We would partner with several other entities in Shelburne as we have done in the past: **VOTE**: Skipped due to time constraints.
 - May 5th nature hike on the Shelburne Wooded Loop Trails.
 - June 2nd hike to the Audubon High Ledges to see the Lady slippers.
 - July () hike and tour of invasive plant species in Buckland.
 - Others.... as they develop.
- Deerfield River - Recreation Management Planning - Status: (Bruce Lessels, Jim)
 - On April 4, Jim is meeting with Jon Gould of State Senator Paul Mark's office and two people from MassDCR on development and maintenance of **Wilcox Hollow State Park** and **Sunburn Beach** about maintenance and development needs as Wilcox and opening/closing the area to swimming and development needs at Sunburn.
 - The Town of Charlemont, Town Administrator - Sarah, replied to my request for funding the porta-potties at Shunpike this year for three Summer months.(Looks like this is just for 2024 funding)
 - Her response: "... the selectboard voted to make sure that there was funding whether by donation or via the town earmark. I will reach out to FRCOG"
 - FRCOG is willing to do the permitting and coordinate the installation of porta-potties at Shunpike for free. FRCOG

confirmed that the Town is willing to pay the porta-potties at Shunpike for June thru August. The MassDOT permit and contract & payment to the vendor will be through FRCOG, with the Town reimbursing FRCOG.

- Relicensing - Status. (Bruce Lessels)
 - Worked with Great River Hydro to improve the safety of a kayak launch at the put-in area for the Dryway. Great River Hydro has committed to making improvements to the boat launch.
- **Other Partner Organizations**
 - Woodlands Partnership of Northwest MA – Status Update. (Sheila K)
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 - Deerfield River Watershed Trout Unlimited – Updates on what Trout Unlimited has been up to on the Deerfield River. (Sheila K)
 - *Chris B says they're doing monitoring along Rice Brook re: habitat for fish, temperature, desired pools. Work is paying off.*
 - Mass Rivers Alliance - Current issues. (Chris B, Chris C) *Chris C, nothing new.*
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 - Green River Watershed Alliance (Ryan O, David B) -
 - They actually met and they have a grant to do a mailing of watershed maps to middle Green River watershed (MA towns except for Greenfield) and do several programs in late summer.
 - Working on developing programs now, but will be nature and conservation focused
 - Will share final events for website and social media when available
- **Secretary:** (Terry)

John Bennett of the Windham Regional Commission (WRC) passed away on 2/29/24. He dedicated over 20 years of his career to the WRC, and almost 40 years of volunteer work to the Franklin County Conservation District. Among other organizations, contributions in John's name were asked to be given to Connecticut River Conservancy, or Deerfield River Watershed Association. DRWA will receive \$500 in John's name from the WRC. Jim sent a Thank You Note to WRC.
- **Membership & Community Outreach:**
 - Newsletters & Appeals - (Jim)
 - Articles & photos for our May Appeal were due to Jim, Sunday March 17th. *Jim will send out a draft newsletter once again and will change the flower photo to a group of hikers photo.*
- **Education:** (Terry Atkinson)

- Education Outreach: Shared post on Facebook the March 13th Recorder article on NPS survey with regard to Deerfield River Wild & Scenic River designation mentioning Chris C & DRWA.
- Noted many more camps along the Green River during a recent bike ride; most are near Greenfield Gardens Apts., some quite large. Couldn't determine if some were still active; flooding appeared to have done a lot of damage.
- Mini-Grants:
- [Science]: (Terry Atkinson)

New and Old Business:

Next meeting: April 15, 2024 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.