



FARMINGTON RIVER COORDINATING COMMITTEE
100 East River Road – Squire’s Tavern
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Approved Minutes of Regular FRCC Meeting
Monday, May 16, 2011
Squire’s Tavern
100 East River Road, Pleasant Valley

Present: Tim Anthony (MDC Rep); Rodger Behrens (Barkhamsted Alt); Tiffany Caisse (SCA/Americorps Apprentice); Eileen Fielding (FRWA Alt/Treas.); Nicki Hall (Hartland Alt); Liz Lacy (NPS Alt/FRCC Director); Susan Peterson (CT DEP Rep/Sec.); Paul Pinette (FRAA Rep); Bill Roberts (Canton Rep); Cherie Robinson (Canton Alt/Vice Chair); Mario Santoro (Barkhamsted Rep); David Sinish (FRWA Rep); Edna Travis (Colebrook Alt/Chair)

1. **Call to Order:** Meeting called to order by Chair Travis at 7:07 p.m.
2. **Approval of Minutes of April 4, 2011 meeting:** Minutes were approved as presented.
3. **Treasurer’s Report:** Fielding reviewed the Treasurer’s Report which was distributed as a handout. As of May 9, 2011, the new checking account balance was \$15,448.72; and the new scholarship fund balance was \$4,522.21. The date on the 17-Feb AT&T phone bill is wrong and Fielding will correct it. She noted that the payment for PVPs was for an entire year of vernal pool mapping.
4. **Old Business:**

Resource Stewardship – Anthony, SubCommittee Chair, led the updates. The SubCommittee met via conference call on May 2, 2011.

The SubCommittee spent time going over budgeted line items, and some project amounts were reduced. There is no additional funding for land protection other than what is already committed.

Greenwood Anglers Trail – The area was flooded up until about a week or so ago. Pinette reported that FRAA performed trail maintenance yesterday. The weekend before last, they cleaned up trash. Anthony would like to get signs made up soon.

Water Quality Monitoring – On-going

Land Protection – The only project underway is with the Hartland Land Trust – Bassett Property (\$10,000).

Invasive Plants Management Project – Lacy reported that the contract with Betsy Corrigan has been signed. Corrigan will be giving us a more specific timeline and scope of work. Lacy has a copy of Corrigan’s summary for last year. Lesser Celandine has been found in Canton. Robinson is helping to get the word out. Sinish reported that he harvested some Mile-a-Minute vine from his backyard.

Still River Watershed Study – Fielding brought copies of the engineering plans for the BMP demonstration projects. She stated that FRWA is considering how to re-invigorate the other components of this project. She said that there is a need to have a re-grouping meeting with the different players to discuss how best to move forward with outreach to town and property owners.

Vernal Pools – Work is going smoothly. They have probably done more than 20 vernal pools. Property owners have been cooperative, although they have had a few polite refusals. Caisse said that this week will probably be devoted to data management, due to the rainy weather. Fielding said that the FRWA intern is now available to help, if needed.

Mapping – Lacy said she was going to touch base with Jeff Bolton (FRWA) and get him going on some basic maps for the Management Plan update. Lacy displayed a copy of a basic town aerial and parcel map that was previously created. These are available to FRCC town representatives, if desired. Bolton can print out copies, if requested.

Education and Outreach – Sinish, SubCommittee Chair, led the updates. The SubCommittee met on May 5, 2011.

Newsletter – Next issue will be mailed before the October Open House. Copy deadline is September 1st. Will discuss articles at June meeting.

Website – Not much change.

Kiosks – Santoro is assuming lead on kiosk repairs, in terms of who is in charge of each kiosk. Lacy and Sinish will be developing lists of maintenance tasks.

River Etiquette Package – Sinish distributed copies of the newly printed maps. The maps are printed on waterproof paper that is difficult to tear. Sinish had sent an e-mail out to Committee members about distribution but did not get much feedback. 1,000 maps were ordered to start with but we may need to order more. Sinish has gotten some cardboard stands for the maps. There will be tags in each stand indicating how to order more maps. Sinish received a round of applause for his dedicated work in getting the map created and produced.

Outings – Sinish noted that it was decided to have an Executive Committee meeting, instead of an outing, prior to the full Committee meeting in May.

The first outing will be in June, and will be an evening paddle at MDC's Hogback Dam reservoir.

Scholarships – Five applicants are currently being considered. The SubCommittee needs to make a decision soon, so that the two recipients can be invited to the next full Committee meeting. The SubCommittee will recommend the two recipients to the full Committee soon, via e-mail.

Roberts has written up a draft policy with regard to repeat applicants because we received an inquiry but did not have a policy in place. The policy that Roberts has drafted actually covers the entire scholarship program process, and is based on his experience running the program for the past several years.

Outreach to Town Boards, etc. – Caisse has been visiting a myriad of groups. Caisse is also working on the Junior River Ranger pilot program. She has visited a few PTO's in designated towns. She noted that the Hartland group did not seem to be familiar with the Wild & Scenic designation.

Wild & Scenic Brochure – The existing W&S brochure needs to be redone. Coming in future ...

Executive – Travis deferred to Lacy to present the subcommittee report.

Proposed 2011 Work Plan – The annual work plan and budget is still a work in progress. Robinson has been assisting Lacy in reviewing and reorganizing the spreadsheets. Lacy is working on trimming the budget further. When finished, she will circulate the materials to the full Committee for review. Lacy thinks we are okay for now but cautioned that FRCC will need to be careful and creative in the year(s) ahead, as things are liable to continue to be tight, budget-wise.

Lacy reported that we received another grant application from Aton Forest requesting \$5,000 for development of an informational brochure regarding Sandy Brook. Lacy will write to John Anderson (Aton Forest) and let him know that FRCC is not able to fund any additional projects at the present time due to our budget constraints.

Management Plan Update – Joyce Kennedy Raymes has been working on, and has given Lacy an initial draft version. For now, the draft will go back and forth between Lacy and Kennedy Raymes while they work to fold in existing comments. Then the draft document will go to the Executive Committee for review. After that, the update process will move onto more substantive issues. Because of budget concerns, we will not be able to pursue the capacity study at the present time. However, we will try to focus on some of the recreational issues. Lacy noted that Kennedy Raymes is only available to assist us through September.

Annual Report – Lacy brought copies of the Annual Report. She asked that Committee members take a few copies and distribute it to their towns, etc. Lacy will also be posting the report on the FRCC website, e-mailing it, and also mailing some copies.

5. New Business/Other

USFS Highlands Study – Peterson brought a copy of the USFS Highlands Study which was recently completed. The study area includes the towns in the Upper Farmington Wild & Scenic area. Peterson suggested inviting Mary Tyrell (Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies) who worked on the Study to speak at an upcoming meeting. It was agreed that this would be a good idea. Fielding mentioned that individual town maps are available.

Junior River Rangers – Lacy is hoping to get publicity underway regarding the Junior River Rangers, and get people involved in helping out. She would like to develop a postcard with an announcement. It would be distributed to all homes in the five-town W&S area. The plan is to work with summer camps, visitors, DEP Forest staff- Stone Museum, Hawes campground, etc. The program will be for children ages 6 – 12.

6. Town Reports

Barkhamsted – Behrens reported that there is a property owner in Riverton who is looking to give a gift of land that includes 400 ft. of river frontage. The parcel contains wetlands and is not buildable. The property owner has discovered that making arrangements to give the land away is difficult due to legal fees required, etc. Behrens wondered if FRCC and/or FRWA might be interested in assisting? Fielding said FRWA would be willing to discuss the matter with the property owner. She also suggested looking at the land trust project budget to see if there might be some potential funding available there. Roberts said that his law firm, Shipman & Goodman, might be able to assist with some pro bono work. Behrens will get more details.

Canton – Roberts reported that Canton is updating its Plan of Conservation and Development, and was wondering whether FRCC had been contacted? Lacy said we had not been contacted yet.

The hydropower study for the Collinsville dams has been released. The report indicates that the proposed project has “no fatal flaw” but it may be difficult to operate the project profitably without assistance. Also, the

consultants have recommended that nothing be done with the lower dam. Sinish mentioned that the Board of Selectmen will be meeting on Monday night.

The Conservation Commission is conducting a Natural Resource Inventory (NRI) and has hired an intern to create an open space map. To date, the Town has not tracked the open space that it has acquired through subdivision requirements, etc. So, the Town is having to “back track” to put this information together. Sinish commented, and Fielding agreed, that the NRI sounds like a Biodiversity Study, and it would be nice if the Town and FRWA could coordinate.

Hartland – Hall said she did not have much to report. However, she noted that FRCC has given a lot of money and assistance to the Hartland Land Trust in recent years. They are now in the process of acquiring their first property, and have also been offering a lot of interesting programs. As a result, local interest and support for the land trust has been growing. Hall remarked that it is nice to see how FRCC’s support has helped this relatively new land trust grow.

7. **Next meeting dates:** FRCC: June 20 and July 18; Subcommittees (by conference call): June 6, July 5 (Tuesday); Pre-meeting outings start June 20 – paddle at reservoir.

With regard to Subcommittee meetings, Lacy noted Peterson’s concern that some Subcommittee members who are not members of the full Committee would still like to have face-to-face meetings. However, Lacy feels that the conference call meeting format is generally better for most people, and is a “greener” approach as it saves on travel and fuel consumption.

8. **Adjourn:** 8:22 p.m.