



Niantic River Watershed Committee, Inc.

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Minutes
NRWC Board of Directors
May 3, 2018 6:00pm
East Lyme Town Hall, Conference Room 1
108 Pennsylvania Avenue, Niantic, CT

May 31 2018 AT 3:40 AM/PM
Kaunmuelm
EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

Attendees: Chris Tomichek, Town of Waterford; Ralph Bates, Town of East Lyme; Don Danila, Town of East Lyme; John Jasper, Town of East Lyme; Peter Harris, Waterford-East Lyme Shellfish Commission (WELSCO); Doug Lawson, Town of Waterford; David Turner, Town of Montville; Don Landers, East Lyme Harbor Management and Shellfish Commission; David Bliven, Town of Montville; Eric Thomas, CT DEEP; and Sam Alexander, Southeastern CT Council of Governments (guest).

Excused: Rick Kanter, Waterford-East Lyme Shellfish Commission; Judy Rondeau, ECCD.

Absent: None.

1. Call to Order: Chair Chris Tomichek called the meeting to order at 6:03pm.
2. Seating of Alternates: Don Landers made a **Motion** to seat Ralph Bates for the vacant Salem seat, seconded by Don Danila. All in favor, **Motion passes**. Introductions were made for the benefit of two new meeting attendees. C. Tomichek welcomed new Committee member David Bliven who is representing the Town of Montville (along with Committee member D. Turner). C. Tomichek shared the resignation notice from Ruth Savalle, effective immediately. C. Tomichek requests that J. Rondeau draft a letter to R. Savalle for his several years of service to the Committee. D. Turner made a Motion to pursue a service recognition plaque for R. Savalle, using the previous plaque template and under the expense cost threshold set previously by the Committee; seconded by R. Bates. All in favor, **Motion passes**. C. Tomichek stated that with Ruth's resignation, the Committee has a vacant Secretary position that needs to be refilled and is seeking Committee member interest to step up for consideration of that position. This will be added to the June, 2018 meeting agenda.
3. Review and Approval of the April 5, 2018 Meeting Minutes: D. Landers made a **Motion** to accept the minutes as presented, seconded by D. Turner. All in favor, **Motion passes**.
4. Treasurer's Report: Presented by Don Danila. **Motion** by R. Bates to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented, seconded by D. Turner. All in favor, **Motion passes**.
5. Coordinator's Report: C. Tomichek read the monthly submitted by J. Rondeau for activities for the past month. Discussion was held on the scheduled May 17th WELSCO meeting for aquaculture operation policy under their jurisdiction including in the Niantic River. Committee members are encouraged to attend the meeting at 6:30pm at Waterford Town Hall.

6. DEEP Liaison Report: E. Thomas provided brief comments about the recent MS4 municipal stormwater training workshop held at East Lyme Town Hall that was well received by 40+ attendees who toured several installed stormwater practices in the Niantic village area.

7. Old Business:

- a. Town Matters: D. Turner stated that a Montville landowner within the Niantic River watershed will be removing her horses from the property that has a chronic eutrophic small pond discharging to Powers Brook before entering upper Latimer Brook. The landowner indicated interest in the NRWC Rain Barrel/Rain Garden project and D. Turner will share information with J. Rondeau to pursue further.
- b. Review and Update of By-Laws: D. Danila reviewed the final draft updates to Committee members. P. Harris made a **Motion** to approve the by-laws as revised; seconded by D. Landers. All in favor, **Motion** passes. D. Danila will distribute clean copies of the revised by-laws to each of the four Niantic River watershed town Chief Elected Officers with a cover letter from the Committee's Chair. D. Landers recommended action to update the NRWC official letterhead to reflect current Committee members and affiliations; D. Landers to pursue this action with J. Rondeau.
- c. Niantic River Watershed Plan Update Contract: C. Tomichuk reported her signing the DEEP CWA Section 319 grant funded agreement and associated forms and that E. Thomas had hand delivered them back to the DEEP Business office for processing. The grant agreement may be fully approved by the NRWC June meeting to allow the project subcommittee to start work on the project's Request for Proposals (RFP) for qualified contractor services.
- d. Land Conservation Update: E. Thomas recently communicated with Whit Beals of New England Forestry Foundation (NEFF) about an update on their Niantic Headwaters Preserve project that roughly straddles the East Lyme/Waterford/Montville area. The *Headwaters of the Niantic Community Forest* Phase 1 property acquisition (200 ac) is now completed, and a Phase 2 property acquisition (185+/- ac) is now pursuing a final acquisition phase. W. Beals offered to update the Committee more regularly, as it may assist Committee discussions about supporting a regional land conservation strategy with desirable watershed protection objectives. E. Thomas distributed a NEFF Niantic Headwater Project area map indicating active and proposal projects (*Headwaters* plus the proposed *Silver Falls Community Forest*) within a 2,200 acre continuous forest block area that includes Willys Meadow Brook, Gurley Brook and portions of Latimer Brook. Meeting guest S. Alexander, SCCOG Planner indicated a preliminary interest by COG staff to consider some watershed basin planning support (and future pursuit of funding assistance) that could include three main freshwater tributaries within the Niantic River watershed.

8. Subcommittee Updates:

- a. Monitoring Group: D. Danila stated that he will continue conducting wet weather nitrate nutrient sampling event around the next big rain storm in June. D. Danila reported he and J. Rondeau will be retrieving the previously installed stream water temperature loggers to send to DEEP for downloading of valuable data. D. Danila also reported that this season's Latimer Brook fishway is passing a sizable increase in migrating alewife fish (12,500 to date) and that DEEP has switched to an electronic counter to handle the large influx of passing

fish. J. Jasper provided attending Committee members with a graphic handout and verbal interpretation of nutrient loading (and changes, or flux over time) into the Niantic River. J. Jasper has been communicating with Tim Sargent of the U.S. Geological Survey New England office about options to reactivate the USGS Latimer Brook stream gaging station. Valuable water flow measurements could then be complementary to the nutrient water sampling work being done by the Monitoring subcommittee – leading to useful outreach information to local community land use decision makers and managers working to protect and restore the water quality and resources of the Niantic River and Bay. Some funding support may be offered through USGS, but a cost share match of approximately \$11,000 is needed to cover operational costs for one water year and formalize an agreement with USGS. Committee members discussed possible grant or other funding sources to pursue.

- b. Education/Outreach Group: D. Danila discussed the latest DEEP Sound Outlook newsletter which contained several relevant short articles, most with focus in East Lyme, about the Niantic River and Bay watershed. Committee members provided consensus for D. Landers to take the modified newsletter digital file provided by DEEP to print color copies for local distribution at the summer Celebrate East Lyme Day and at town hall counters, and maybe through the NWRC website.
- c. Grant Review/Fundraising: This item was reviewed in the Coordinator's Report.
- d. Membership Subcommittee: Nothing to Report.
- e. NRWPP Update/RFP Subcommittee: Activity will begin when the 319 contract is executed, possibly in early June. A Plan Update subcommittee will then need to start up the RFP development process for contractor services.

9. New Business:

- a. Announcement was made for the Celebrate East Lyme Day event and anticipated NRWC booth on Saturday, July 21 from 3:00-9:00pm. Committee volunteers are needed to staff the booth at different periods during the event – contact J. Rondeau to coordinate scheduling.

10. Public Comments: S. Alexander indicated interest to participate as SCCOG staff in future Committee members on a semi-regular business, which was well received by the Committee.

11. The next meeting will be held on June 7, 2018 at 7:00 PM in East Lyme Town Hall, 108 Pennsylvania Ave, Niantic, CT.

12. Adjournment: A **Motion** was made by D. Landers at 7:25 pm to adjourn, seconded by R. Bates. All **in favor**, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Eric Thomas
Filling in for the vacant Secretary position

