



# Niantic River Watershed Committee, Inc.

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## Minutes

NRWC Board of Directors

November 7, 2019, 6 pm

East Lyme Town Hall, Conference Room 1

108 Pennsylvania Ave, Niantic, CT.

Nov 22 20 19 AT 12:30 AM (PM)  
*(Carmel Hillman)*  
EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

Attendees: Ralph Bates, Town of East Lyme; Melissa Bezanson, Town of Salem; David Bliven, Town of Montville; Donald Danila, Town of East Lyme; Peter Harris, Waterford-East Lyme Shellfish Commission; John Jasper, Town of East Lyme; Rick Kanter, Waterford-East Lyme Shellfish Commission; Donald Landers, East Lyme Harbor Management and Shellfish Commission; Doug Lawson, Town of Waterford; Eric Thomas, CT DEEP; Chris Tomichek, Town of Waterford; David Turner, Town of Montville; Judy Rondeau, Watershed Coordinator; Amy Cabaniss, UConn NRE-CAP (guest); Kayla Strother-Rolon, UConn CAP (guest); Deb Moshier-Dunn, STR-STH (guest).

Excused: None.

Absent: None

1. Call to Order: Chair C. Tomichek called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.
2. Seating of Alternates: A motion was made by D. Landers to seat R. Bates for the vacant Salem seat and R. Kanter for M. Bezanson, seconded by D. Turner. All in favor, the motion passes.
3. UConn Conservation Ambassador Program: Amy Cabaniss, the Coordinator of the UConn Conservation Ambassador Program (CAP) and Kayla Strother-Rolon, a CAP student, were present to discuss possible projects in the Niantic River watershed. P. Harris suggested a project related to shellfish restoration in the Niantic River. Judy will follow up with Amy and Kayla to develop a project.
4. Review and Approval of October 3, 2019 meeting minutes: D. Danila made a motion to approve the minutes with one correction; item 3, the spelling of Gonzales be corrected to Gonzalez, seconded by D. Turner. All in favor, the motion passes.
5. Treasurer's Report: D. Danila reviewed the Treasurer's Report. D. Landers made a motion to accept the report as presented, seconded by M. Bezanson. All in favor, the motion passes.
6. Coordinator's Report: Judy attended a Niantic River Nitrogen Work Group meeting on Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>. Also on the 7<sup>th</sup>, she accompanied a Waterford High School Biology class to Jordan Brook to conduct water sampling. She will be participating as a community mentor in the UConn Conservation Ambassador Program. On Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> Judy and Maureen Fitzgerald collected RBV samples from Oil Mill Brook in Waterford. Judy has been coordinating with Fuss & O'Neill to follow up on some items from the October 29<sup>th</sup> workshops. Judy was contacted by a faculty member of the US Coast Guard Academy, who would like to partner with NRWC for students to develop climate resiliency projects as part of their course requirements. Judy is reviewing several grants for possible projects.

7. DEEP Liaison Report: E. Thomas queried whether NRWC had Directors and Officers Insurance or was covered by D&O insurance held by the watershed municipalities. Don Landers offered to research and report back at the December meeting. Eric informed the Board that NOAA has approved the proposal to establish a National Estuary Research Reserve in LIS. The FY2020 CWA §319 grant program RFP is anticipated in December. Eric announced that a new bipartisan coastal caucus has been formed to address coastal issues.
8. Old Business:
  - a. Town Matters: D. Landers made a motion, seconded by M. Bezanson to give outgoing Waterford First Selectman D. Steward a plaque, cost not to exceed \$200. Vote: 2 in favor, 7 opposed. Motion did not pass. D. Turner reported that he had discussed the installation of a rain garden in Montville with Mayor R. McDaniel. The mayor was supportive of the installation of a rain garden at the Montville Senior Center; however, the senior center is not in the Niantic watershed. The Board will review the language of the 2015 Dominion Foundation grant for guidance.
9. Subcommittee Updates:
  - a. Monitoring Group: D. Danila shared the preliminary results of RBV sampling conducted in partnership with the East Lyme Commission for the Conservation of Natural Resources. The submitted samples will be reviewed and verified by DEEP staff over the winter of 2020, and the results distributed in spring 2020. D. Danila made a motion to formally thank Ray and Penny Heller, Steve Loomis and Aaron Pauley for their assistance with the sample collection, seconded by D. Landers. All in favor, the motion passes. D. Danila and D. Moshier-Dunne reported that they attempted to obtain permission to deploy temperature loggers in Stony Brook and Oil Mill Brook, and will continue to communicate with the land owners to obtain permission.
  - b. Education/Outreach Group: Activities were reviewed in the Coordinator's Report. J. Jasper commented that he would transfer the information he has compiled on the watershed signs we previously sought to install on local and state roads at the limits of the Niantic watershed to anyone interested in taking it on.
  - c. NRWPP Update Steering Committee: D. Landers suggested the Board should review the top five concerns and actions identified at each workshop and conduct ranking ourselves.
10. New Business:
  - a. Development of Bacteria Analysis Project: Judy discussed the possibility of creating a bacteria analysis project in partnership with Save the River-Save the Hills. There's been much discussion about bacteria levels in the Niantic River, as well as contributions from stormwater outfalls. There may be interest and potential in developing partnerships with East Lyme and Waterford High Schools to do this sampling.
  - b. US Coast Guard Academy Resiliency Project: Judy was contacted by a faculty member of the US Coast Guard Academy regarding the possibility of the students conducting climate resiliency projects in parallel with the development of the watershed plan update.
  - c. M. Bezanson made a motion to purchase blank note cards for thank you notes, seconded by D. Landers. All in favor, motion passes.
11. Public Comments: D. Moshier-Dunne commented that the feeding of waterfowl at an area at the head of the Niantic River is becoming a problem. She also informed the Board that STR is waiting to hear from the CT Siting Council regarding their request to be approved as an intervenor to the proposed Waterford solar facility.
12. Next Meeting: December 5, 2019, 6 PM, East Lyme Town Hall, 108 Pennsylvania Ave. Niantic, CT.
13. Adjournment: A motion was made to adjourn at 7:51 PM by D. Danila, seconded by D. Turner. All in favor, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Judy Rondeau". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Judy Rondeau  
Watershed Coordinator