



Niantic River Watershed Committee, Inc.

<https://www.nianticriverwatershed.org/>

Minutes

NRWC Board of Directors Meeting

May 1, 2025, 6 PM

Attendees: Jamie Vaudrey, NRWC Coordinator; Susan Gonzalez, Town of East Lyme; Jim Paganetti, Town of Waterford; Nate Hermann, Town of Montville; Don Danila, Town of East Lyme; Peter Harris, Waterford-East Lyme Shellfish Commission; Chris Tomichek, Town of Waterford; Amy Cabaniss, Dave Turner, Town of Montville (remote).

Excused: Don Landers, East Lyme Harbor Management/Shellfish Commission

1. **Call to Order:** S. Gonzalez called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.
2. **Seating of Alternates:** Motion by D. Danila to seat A. Cabaniss for the Town of Salem, seconded by P. Harris. Motion passes.
3. **No welcomes and introductions:** Emily Bigl from CCOG.
4. **Review and Approval of April 3 minutes:** J. Paganetti moves to approve, C. Tomichek second. Motion passes.
5. **Treasurer's Report:** D. Danila provided a report including an update from the previous month due to his absence. C. Tomichek moves to approve the report as read, P. Harris second. Motion passes.
6. **Coordinator's Report:** J. Vaudrey presented the Coordinator's report.
 - a. Planning for Report Card – listening session locations at the Raymond Library and Waterford Library or Town Hall. Additional considerations include the Charter Oak Credit Union meeting. May be able to get event insurance as we are now officially working with Remote Ecologist, but it may be unnecessary.
 - b. Bacteria Sampling Grant was approved for \$4500, \$500 less than asked but should have enough wiggle room to make it work. S. Gonzalez explained that funds will be transferred electronically.
 - c. EarthFest (5/17/25) and Celebrate East Lyme (7/19/25) – Request permission to register for Celebrate East Lyme having paid \$60 last year but not knowing how much it is this year. Motion by C. Tomichek to allow Jaime to pay up to \$100 for registration, P. Harris second. Motion passes. A. Cabaniss will be in attendance for EarthFest.
 - d. Envirosapes to be updated in subcommittee updates.
 - e. Hole in the Wall meeting to be in November, but no updates.
7. **Town Matters:** D. Danila presented that John Mulaney has retired from USGS. D. Danila updated on court case on the cutting around Oswegatchie Hills where the sewage allocation has been delayed by likely another couple years, but clearcutting will likely continue. P. Harris informed the committee that WELSCO will be running a booth at EarthFest allowing people to paint shells.



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8. **Old Business:** None.

9. **Subcommittee Updates:**

a. **Monitoring Group:** Nothing to report. D. Danila will be attending a workshop on May 14th discussing eDNA by the CRC.

b. **Education/Outreach Group:**

- i. **Website Update:** Most pages are up and formatted. P. Harris will provide information to N. Hermann about shellfishing to make a WELSCO page on the website. A. Cabaniss has requested any pictures that people would be willing to have on the website.
- ii. **Enviroscape Loan Agreement:** A local teacher provided their thoughts on the loan agreement as it was written at the last meeting. Primarily, they expressed concern on the potential costs for damage which, as they are so high, would almost certainly be passed up to school administration. As such, it may necessitate teachers to have prior approval to accept the loan, approval which would be more readily given if a cover letter describing the value of the Enviroscapes is included. Additionally, it was suggested that the cost of damages be invoiced and due within 45 days rather than immediately.

10. **New Business:** Larry Tytla as a new WELSCO representative is getting official emails from the Committee, but Jamie is going to get him approved from Waterford to attend meetings.

A. Cabaniss is interested in having a hat with a logo to wear and distribute at events. Unclear where it could be paid from, need a solid number on how many to get and how much they cost to identify how much is available from miscellaneous cash funds. May pursue the same company as has printed bags in the past, more information to come from A. Cabaniss next month.

11. **Public Comments:** Save the River, Save the Hills had a meeting on Monday which brought up a question on studies of silting in the Niantic River as this has been identified in Latimer Brook at Banning Cove. Folks are hoping to get the channel dredged and want to know what it takes to do this, the opinion by the Committee is that there is nobody that would pay for it especially outside of the main channel in the Bay. However, a Coastal LIDAR dataset has just been made available in the past two weeks, may be able to compare data across time points. Deb Surabian at USDA-NRCS may be a point of contact for a recent sedimentation survey; however, this survey may not have gone north of Route 1.

12. **Next meeting:** June 5, 2025, 6 PM.

13. **Adjourn:** C. Tomichuk moves to adjourn, J. Paganetti seconds at 6:53.

Respectfully submitted,
Nathan Hermann
Town of Montville
Secretary

Niantic River Watershed...

...a Treasure Worth Protecting