

Pemigewasset River Local Advisory Committee
June 25, 2013 at Pease Public Library
Plymouth, New Hampshire

Minutes

Members Present:

Max Stamp (Bristol); Dan Paradis (Bristol); Carl Lehner (Holderness); Mike O'Donnell (Holderness); Dan Stack (Ashland); Fred Gunter (Thornton); Barry Draper (New Hampton)

Also Present:

Pat Schlesinger (New Hampton resident)

Call to Order:

Chairman Max Stamp called the meeting to order at 7:08 PM.

Approval of Minutes:

Fred Gunter made a motion seconded by Dan Stack to approve the minutes of May 28, 2013. The motion carried unanimously.

Management Plan distribution/introduction to towns:

Max asked the members present to report on what progress they had made since the last meeting in arranging for distribution of the new management plan to the towns. They reported as follows:

- Dan Paradis (Bristol): Dan is scheduled to make a presentation to the Bristol Planning Board tomorrow (June 26). He said he would basically follow the outline Dave Jeffers had supplied us with previously.
- Carl Lehner (Holderness): Carl has shown the management plan to town officials. He intends to have further discussions with them and to present the plan to the planning board, of which he is a member. He also reported on a conversation he had with Bob Snelling, who sits on the Shoreland Advisory Committee to DES. Bob wanted to know PRLAC's position on treating rivers differently from lakes with regard to the protection measures in RSA 483-B. The consensus seemed to be PRLAC sees no benefit to splitting lakes/rivers apart when it comes to approaching the legislature on Water Quality issues. It was implied that rivers might be able to justify tougher WQ regulations than lakes would tolerate. The group's off-the-cuff reaction was that we're stronger in alliance than separated and would prefer to approach WQ issues as a united force.
- Dan Stack (Ashland): Dan has turned over the materials to Town Administrator Paul Branscombe who will pass them on to Susan MacLeod, Chair of the Planning Board. No date has been set for a presentation yet.
- Barry Draper (New Hampton): Barry will work with Town Administrator Barbara Lucas initially, then with the Planning Board at a date to be determined. New Hampton resident Pat Schlesinger asked if she might share a concern she has with the group. She feels the weak link in the current river protection laws is the lack of any requirement for towns where a riverfront project is taking place to notify downstream towns of this activity. She proposed that such notification be required to all downstream towns extending to the next downstream dam. The committee discussed the proposal but reached no consensus on how effective such a provision might be.
- Fred Gunter (Thornton): Fred has talked informally with the Planning Board (on which he serves as an alternate) and to Town Administrator Tammie Beaulieu. He is not sure how receptive the Board of Selectmen will be to the management plan.
- Max Stamp (Bridgewater): Max is scheduled to meet with the Planning Board on July 16th. He intends to emphasize runoff as a major concern and to address the changes in the former Shoreland Protection Act.

After these presentations were made, Max suggested that members share their experience in making these presentations via email.

Outreach Initiatives:

Max introduced the question of outreach which had come up at the May meeting in the context of setting

PRLAC's direction in the near future. At that time, there seemed to be some interest in trying to do more "hands-on" activities. With this in mind, Max spoke at length with Michelle Tremblay of the Upper Merrimack Local Advisory Committee (UMLAC). For years UMLAC has sponsored "Bug Nights", a program in which participants learn how to identify invertebrates and how their population reflects the health of the river. The program has grown over the years and now involves about 40 people studying 17 sites. Max thought that it would not be realistic to expect that we could copy such a well-established and extensive program, but asked for suggestions as to outreach approaches which might work for PRLAC.

Pam Schlesinger suggested a hands-on program of this type might work well at the 6th grade level, when the students in the Newfound District begin Middle School. Barry Draper said he could do one-off "river day" event as he has done once before. Max reported that Michelle Tremblay had suggested the Isaac Walton League as a useful resource and he passed around a worksheet they created for this type of activity. Mike O'Donnell thought that if a one-day event were good enough, it might evolve into something more extensive. The thought of working with PSU came up in several contexts, but it was thought that incorporating this kind of material into teacher training might be the best way to tie-in with them. Max will follow up on the PSU connection. Carl Lehner summarized much of the discussion when he suggested it seemed like our role might be to encourage others to create a program. Pat Schlesinger suggested that Karen Downing, fifth grade teacher at the New Hampton Community School, might be someone who would be receptive to our message. In summary, this was a wide-ranging discussion of possible hands-on activities, but no single idea emerged as the most productive path to follow.

Other:

Permit Applications: Three permit applications have been received for review, including a major project to resurface the face of the Ayers Island Dam. Max had a few suggestions for one of these, but thought they looked OK on the whole.

LRPC Annual Meeting: Max, Dan Paradis and Fred Gunter had all attended the LRPC dinner the previous night and gave a brief report on the talk by DES Commissioner Tom Burack. This led to a brief discussion of the situation in Maine, where the newly-appointed DEP Commissioner seems determined to undo many of the protection measures now in place.

Adjournment:

Carl Lehner made a motion seconded by Fred Gunter to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel A. Paradis
Secretary