

Pemigewasset River Local Advisory Committee
January 25, 2011 at Boyd Hall
Plymouth, New Hampshire

Minutes

Members Present:

Chairman Max Stamp (Bristol); Dan Paradis (Bristol); Mike O'Donnell (Holderness); Barry Draper (New Hampton); Jane Kellogg (Campton).

Also Present:

Dave Jeffers (LRPC)

Call to Order:

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM.

Approval of Minutes:

It was pointed out that Barry Draper's name had been incorrectly given as "Barry Walker" in the November minutes, and the Secretary apologized for the error. Jane Kellogg made a motion seconded by Mike O'Donnell to approve the minutes of November 30, 2010 amended to correct the error in Mr. Draper's name. The motion passed unanimously.

Report on PRLAC Account:

Dave Jeffers declined to give a specific accounting of receipts and costs, but stated that current administrative costs for PRLAC have largely been covered by the 604(b) grant from NHDES to LRPC. He expects that LRPC will continue to provide support to PRLAC, working within our budget. Max pointed out this might mean Dave would not be available for all of our meetings. Jane Kellogg said she found it difficult trying to determine exactly what LRPC's contribution to PRLAC is. As an example, Dave said the total time charged to PRLAC from April 2009 to April 2010 was in the neighborhood of 34 hours, charged at the rate of \$54 per hour for all types of services.

This was followed by further discussion of the 604(b) grant. This in fact is federal money administered through NHDES. We are currently benefiting from a two-year grant which paid for the recent Pemi survey. LRPC hopes to get another two-year grant to complete revision of the River Management Plan, but this is still awaiting approval by the Governor and Executive Council. Dave provided a copy of the section of the application which outlined the steps to be taken in completing the revision, and explained that these could be modified if necessary. The first objective listed in the proposal includes conducting two kick-off meetings (one north and one south) by June 30, 2011 and creating a web page to serve as the primary information portal for the project. The kick-off meetings might be reduced to a single meeting if we felt that would be adequate.

Corridor Survey Feedback:

As a guide to the discussion, Max provided a summary he prepared of the top five responses to a number of the survey questions. The focus of the discussion was on whether we agreed with the results and on trying to understand how respondents might have interpreted the questions as a way of better understanding the results. The members agreed with the response to Question 1, which made protecting water quality the most important objective. However, the group disagreed with the results of Question 2, where respondents ranked failing septic systems as the most serious threat to water quality. This led to an extended discussion as to how to deal with situations like this, where public perception does not seem to be in line with scientific evidence. Mike O'Donnell felt it was important to use the survey results as the basis for our recommendations and compared the process to the creation of a town's master plan. Dan Paradis felt that the relatively small number of surveys completed and the closeness of the various responses did not justify putting too fine a point on the analysis. He pointed out that in the existing management plan no attempt had been made to prioritize the perceived threats to the river. Ultimately there seemed to be some consensus that while it was important to report the survey results accurately, our recommendations should be based on the best scientific studies available. Where this might differ with public perception could provide an educational opportunity, which is one of the reasons for producing the management plan.

The group proceeded to review all of the survey results Max had summarized. For the most part, the tenor of the responses suggested broad support for preservation/conservation measures. For example, a large majority of respondents supported CSPA buffers though it was pointed out this might vary by town. There was wide-spread support for non-motorized recreation but little support for industrial development and increases in motorized recreational use such as

ATV's and motorboats. The usage figures were impressive, suggesting that the survey respondents frequently take advantage of the opportunities afforded by the Pemi. Respondents also indicated that the best way to communicate with them is at the launch sites. Support was expressed for regulatory measures to protect water quality, with several approaches virtually tied in terms of support. Those who perceived climate change as significant cited several possible effects with near-equal concern.

Max initiated a discussion of next steps and provided a draft outline of what might be included in a revised management plan. Time did not allow consideration of this proposal, but this may serve as a framework for discussion at the February meeting.

Adjournment:

A motion to adjourn was made by Jane Kellogg and seconded by Barry Draper. The motion passed and the meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM.

Funding Proposal 2011:

The Committee reviewed the progress of our funding requests for 2011. The following observations were made:

Campton	Will be included in Conservation Commission budget.
Thornton	Fred Gunter is handling; should be OK.
Holderness	Will be provided through the Planning Board
New Hampton	Same as last year – appropriation should be forthcoming.
Bristol	Max has made presentation to Budget Committee
Franklin	Use a different fiscal year schedule. They work more closely with UMLAC, which makes their support for us less likely.
Bridgewater	Max may contact
Plymouth	On a different schedule. Funds expected next year.
Sanbornton	Conservation Commission may support us this year.
Ashland	Past appeals ineffective. Unlikely to support us.

January Agenda:

Max asked if there was interest in obtaining a speaker for our next meeting in January. He suggested that since no information sections on the new stream crossing rules had been held in our area, this might be a topic of interest. Jane Kellogg said she had attended a session dealing with this at the annual meeting of Conservation Commissions and that the presentation was not particularly clear. Max said he might contact Steve Couture about having someone make a presentation.

Water Testing Data:

Some concern was expressed about interpreting the extensive data contained on a spreadsheet of water testing results which had been e-mailed to members. Dave explained that graphical representations were available by clicking on the tabs at the bottom of the page, and went on to demonstrate this.

Adjournment:

Jane Kellogg made a motion seconded by Barry Walker to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Daniel Paradis, Secretary