



CRJC Meeting
Lebanon City Hall
April 26, 2011
MINUTES (approved)

Present: Glenn English, Tom Kennedy, Peter Gregory, Bob Christie, Bev Major, Chris Campany, Gayle Ottmann, Donna Drouin, Cleve Kapala, Gary Moore, Norm Wright, Alex DeFelice, Bob Harcke

Staff: Theresa Darling

Guests: Rick Hopkins –VTANR, Mike Bald-CISMA, Steve Couture-NHDES, Bernie Folta-Claremont

Chair: Tom Kennedy

Introductions.

Tom asked if there are any changes or additions to agenda. The bylaw revision item will be moved up.

Minutes: Gayle Ottmann moved to accept the minutes of the January 24, 2011 meeting. Bev seconded. Unanimous.

Guest Speaker Mike Bald, CISMA: CISMA stands for Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area. Currently there are two active groups: Ottauquechee CISMA and the Upper CT Watershed CISMA. There is also a Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) in the Rochester VT area. These are grassroots organizations that are modeled to work cooperatively to deal with awareness and control of important invasive species. They work to protect those geographic areas and the entire watershed from the threat of non-native animal, plant, and insect invaders. The groups came together a year ago and have been meeting regularly.

The O-CISMA just received a \$45,000 grant for the upcoming two years. The O-CISMA is involved with the VTDEC, VTANR, Army Corps of Engineers, the National Park Service, The Nature Conservancy, the Conte Refuge, and additional recreation groups and local organizations. They are planning on bringing a coordinator on board next month. The plan is to move forward with a Memorandum Of Understanding to formalize the organization, while producing a strategic plan and organizing watershed-wide assessment, control and outreach efforts.

The Upper CT Watershed Cisma is organizing north of St. Johnsbury and began reaching across the river in January to make sure that all the NH players are involved. Again, movement on an MOU is underway to formalize the organization, which includes the groups mentioned above as well as the NH counterparts and the White Mountain National Forest, Lyndon State College, and UNH. Most of the communication is done electronically. By the end of the growing season, two demonstration control projects will be initiated as well as a kick-off of assessment work.

Mike stated that there are lessons to be learned as both of these organizations establish, and any towns / regions that are not in the group are welcome to sit in on meetings. The idea is to act and intercept before invasive species take over vital ecosystems. The invasives are working their way up the river in a general northward direction, although travel corridors can spread them from nearly any direction. The Cismas are working with schools, colleges, and getting the kids and teachers involved. They communicate via Google groups and are prepared to spread the message to Canadian organizations. Mike would like to invite CRJC to read through the MOU and see if there is a place for the CRJC in our group. Mike invites CRJC to communicate with him at TREEGUYVT@gmail.com. Mike asked CRJC to inform the Cismas what they can do for the CRJC, and what kind of support the CRJC might provide in return.

Bob Christie asked Mike about sources of funding. Mike replied that the Upper CT Cisma does not have any funding yet but is just getting the membership finalized. The Ottauquechee group has a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant, and the NRCD is the district funds administrator. The bulk of that grant will be going into a program coordinator position. The intent of both groups is to create a long-term self-sustaining organization to pursue and deploy grants while building local capacity. Long term funding outside of grant monies is still to be addressed. The O-Cisma coordinator position is advertised through VINS and will report to VINS staff, reporting hopefully in mid-May.

Cleve Kapala asked if the Conte Refuge's role is just MOU. Mike answered that the Conte Refuge is the watershed-wide umbrella organization, but the scaling of the effort will bring together grassroots local groups, regional organizations, and also organizations like the Conte Refuge which are larger in scale.

A key issue is to get all of the invasives into one database on imapinvasives.org. Unifying the data will serve the Cismas well. VT has the database funded for the coming three years, while NH is weighing iMap with one other alternative and seeking some source of funding to host the database.

Tom Kennedy asked how they are interfacing with landowners and such. Mike answered that they have begun the outreach for schools and they will start this summer doing outreach. They want to engage both states and bring attention to the issue. They also want to make sure the media is there capturing and presenting the work. It's a slow building momentum. People are ready to see things happen. The Cismas want to get it done and document everything.

Finances: Theresa discussed AR and AP. The financial reports from Larry Reed will be discussed at the next meeting.

Grant updates: The State of VT appropriations are still in the budget for the same amount as last year, \$34,960. The State of NH appropriation for \$30,000 made it through

House and should go pass through the Senate. All of the current grants will be closed out and there will be an operating budget of about \$64,000.

Proposed bylaw revisions: Bob Christie said that an adhoc committee has been working on drafts. At each of the meetings where previous drafts have been presented, they have incorporated changes as they saw fit. What CRJC has now is organizational and it needs more commissioner's involvement in the day to day operations. Bob said that he presented the bylaws for acceptance and rejection today. Norm Wright asked if the bylaw acceptance required public notice. The answer was yes.

Tom asked if everyone wanted to continue to review. The answer was yes.

It was discussed and agreed to change the following:

Article 7 Officers and Officer Duties:

Strike Section 7.6 Subordinate Officers

Add in Section 7.6 – Authority to contract: Copy from current bylaws article 4 section 1.

Remove 7.7 Removal of Officers because it is repeated in Article 12.

Add in 7.7 – Corporate Funds: Copy from current bylaws article 4 section 2.

Article 9 Board of Advisors:

Add in 9-1 Board of Advisors: There may be a Board of Advisors activated by vote of the commissioners which shall advise the commissioners on matters of policy.

Move the current 9.1 to 9.2, etc.

Article 10. Remove current article 10 and reserve for the personnel policies. Change article numbers accordingly. Add in: “Article 10: Duties of Employed/contracted employees Section 10.1 The organization is authorized to hire or contract staff as necessary to contract and hire according to budget constraints.”

Article 12

Section 12.1 change the beginning of 12.1 to read “The Board of Directors may recommend removal of an officer or committee member so long as notice is given”

Article 18: Amendments: add “15 days” between along with and notice.

Bob Christie stated that at every meeting different commissioners come and change the draft bylaws. He said as far as he is concerned right now the commission is dead in the water. He doesn't see any end to the editing of these bylaws. He is concerned that we are not following the bylaws, the subcommittees are foundering, and there is no program director for programming. Glenn stated that he agrees and he will address this at the annual meeting.

Bob added that the draft bylaws were also reviewed by NHDES. The bylaw amendments will be added and a final draft copy will be distributed for vote at the next meeting.

Recess for NH Caucus

NHRVRC adjourned and CRJC reconvened

State Caucuses:

Glenn announced that commissioners need to pick a date for the annual meeting toward the end of June. June 21st was agreed on.

Glenn reported that the NH Caucus met. Cleve Kapala was elected vice-chair and Mary Sloat was elected Secretary.

Election of Vacant Officers: Mary Sloat has agreed to take position as Treasurer of CRJC. Peter moved to accept. Tom seconded. Unanimous.

Review Steering committee membership: Steering Committee membership is now the officers and Bob Christie.

Check signing Authorization: Glenn moved that Mary Sloat, Treasurer, be authorized to sign checks and remove George Watkins. Seconded by Gayle. Unanimous.

Budget: Glenn would like to authorize the Steering Committee to put together a budget for the upcoming year. The SC will meet in May and all commissioners are welcome.

Commissioners Comments: Glenn sent out email on testimony on the Lamprey River. There are some real concerns about the NHDES protection programs. The house basically killed the program and since they are CRJC's primary partner, Glenn thinks CRJC should take a position to help protect the program. Without this function, it is going to make it difficult for CRJC to function and it will be devastating to rivers and lakes.

Steve Couture handed out a one page information sheet that was presented to the Senate Finance Committee yesterday and told them about the impacts of what the house had cut. The House cuts eliminate the River and Lakes Coordinator. Also, the Volunteer River Coordinator, Public Beach Program and the Volunteer Lake Program would also be eliminated.

Norm Wright commented that unless CRJC is going out, he would suggest that CRJC support the Governor's proposal. Norm moved that CRCJ accept the Governor's proposal. Seconded by Bev. Unanimous. Glenn would be happy to write a letter on behalf of CRJC and urges everyone to write a letter to the Senate. Bev suggests that CRJC should get in touch with subcommittees. Bob Christie asked Steve Couture if he has heard anything about revenue enhancement. Steve said there are some sources that may be reinstated but nothing significant.

Gayle Ottmann said that the Byway Council met last week and had about 20 people attend. John LaBarge will know in a week who has received 2010 grants and the 2011 criteria will be out soon. Nat Tripp and Christine Walker have met with Ray Burton. Councilor Burton supports a two day tour of the Upper Valley and Waypoint Communities. It will start in Massachusetts and end up in Colebrook. The marketing committee will be meeting soon and they will come up with a 6 month plan to get the BC through this year. It will have to be creative.

Bob Harche wants to know what the policy is on recruiting someone to take his place if he is going to miss a meeting. Glenn said that the organizations can appoint alternates.

Adjourned, 11:45

