



## Connecticut River Joint Commissions

*10 Water Street, Lebanon, NH*

*Monday, December 18, 2017*

### *Meeting Minutes*

#### ***Commissioners Present:***

NH–Jim McClammer; Jennifer Griffin; Alex Belenzs, Alt.; John Mudge; Steven Schneider, Alt.

VT–David Deen, Jason Rasmussen, Steven Lembke, Chris Company, Kari Dolan.

**Commissioners Absent:** Alison Low, Michael Storace, Tara Bamford, Norman VanCor.

**Guests:** Rick Van de Poll

**Presentation: Aquatic Restoration & Mitigation Fund** – Rick Van de Poll. See Attached.

**Adopt October Minutes:** Commissioner Company moved to adopt the minutes as presented; David Deen seconded the motion. Vote Unanimous.

**November Financials:** Comm. Company moved to accept the financial statement as presented. Comm. Mudge seconded the motion. Discussion followed with inquiry about the A/P aging explained by slow payments on billings submitted to the states. Vote: Unanimous

**Update on FERC Working Group** – This working group met just prior to the meeting where the group discussed latest erosion study. The study as published is problematic in the group’s view mentioned in press comments (e.g., Vermont Digger, Claremont E-Ticker, and Valley News) which suggest the supplemental study demonstrates project operations do not cause erosion should be refuted. CRJC should submit comments on the study and cooperate with Connecticut River Conservancy in retaining Princeton-Hydro as a peer reviewer. The time frame to respond to the revised erosion study has not been established by FERC. The group requests that CRJC correspond with FERC to clarify the schedule for 1) consultation with stakeholders and submission of comments on the study results and 2) amending the final license applications and subsequent procedures.

The Integrated Licensing Process was discussed. The point of the ILP process was to create a concise time frame for relicensing that remained more or less on track. The current frustration with FERC on this is the lack of a revised schedule. Along these lines, Comm. Deen expects that an advocacy group is going to raise the issue of Turners’s Falls in Northfield, because the relicensing is overdue for that dam. The

discussion followed on whether an administrative permit could be extended for 1 year.

It was noted that FERC has been participating by telephone. FERC does have a quorum but it is expected that the current staffing level will be challenged with the number of relicensing applications that will soon be pending.

Comm. Deen moved and Comm. McClammer seconded a motion to have CRJC write letter to request a schedule going forward.

The Connecticut River Conservancy might suggest the precise way to articulate the request. For now, it is assumed that the timeframe would be operating within the usual 60-day time comment period.

### **Workgroup Integration – Steve Lembke**

Comm. Lembke offered an overview of the Work Groups, Planning/Projects, Development, and Communications. These were supposed to meet from 1 – 2 prior to monthly meetings but other than the Communications Group, they have not met regularly. Comm. Lembke would like to have new members to be assigned to a work group. Since Communications Committee meets fairly regularly, he would like to suggest that members of other work groups consider attending communications meetings which could then bring ideas from among all three work groups together and act as a sort of a “catalyst group.” Essentially that would turn the 3 groups into one. Work Group. Discussion followed about the mission of each of the 3 groups. Under this scenario, there is no real reason why the existing committees should be disbanded.

All work group meetings should post an agenda and notice the meeting publicly as is done with all other meetings. Comm. Lembke will send out a notice of meetings. It was suggested that Commissioners think about how the groups can work together and whether that can be implemented through the executive committee or the joint commissions. The FERC Work Group is not included in this discussion. The executive committee will take this up at their next meeting in January

### **Discussion of the process for submitting comments or representation of CRJC / Delegation of authority when liaisons are appointed to ongoing projects.**

Comm. Lembke suggested that comments be presented in writing to the Executive Committee or the Joint Commissions.

Background on the situation relative to the Route 12 reconstruction project that prompted the discussion was covered. Comm. McClammer agreed that there are instances where details might be discussed beyond what had been previously

identified by the Commissioners. Comm. Griffin responded that whatever is to be submitted, the Joint Commissions should have prior approval and that matters outside that should not be entered into comments on behalf of CRJC.

Comm. Rasmussen explained that at the September meeting broadened the scope of the liaison because of the timeframe and it seems that they voted to authorize Comm. McClammer to represent them and the latitude in that role was not clearly articulated. In future, correspondence that goes out should be circulated among the Commissioners before distribution. Comm. Deen noted that the issue will come up every time CRJC delegates someone to do something on behalf of CRJC and the extent of the authority should be clear.

**NCC Staff Introduction** – Alex Belenz spoke of his background in planning. He announced that Comm. Robinson had resigned for personal reasons effective on December 15. He spoke of efforts at boosting membership on Headwaters and Wantastiquet local river subcommittees as something that he and Nick Altonaga will be working to improve. It was noted that with the departure of Comm. Robinson, CRJC will have to appoint a new person to serve on the Mitigation and Enhancement Fund review committee. Alex Belenz said he is interested, but would have to be approved by the NCC. The first meeting will be right after the first of the year. Letters of intent have to be received by January 9, 2018. Alex Belenz\ will discuss with NCC. In the interim CRJC will have to appoint someone to attend the first meeting.

Comm. Lembke moved to name Commissioner Deen the interim representative on the MEF until it can be determined whether Alex Belenz or another individual can permanently fill this post. Comm. Company seconded the motion. Vote: Unanimous.

**Agenda February Meeting:** VOREC could be invited to the February 26 meeting. Staff will inquire again about whether NH has a similar individual working on outdoor recreation economic development matters.

**Adopted:** *February 26, 2018 at 2 p.m. at CRJC in Lebanon, NH.*