

CRJC Mount Ascutney Local River Subcommittee

Tuesday, September 10th, 2019
 Rachel S. Harlow United Methodist Church
 7:00PM

Minutes

Attendees

Plainfield	Elise Angelillo		Windsor		
Plainfield	David Taylor	X	Windsor		
Cornish	Bill Gallagher	X	Weathersfield	Howard Beach	X
Cornish	Colleen O’Neill	X	Weathersfield	Nancy Heatley	
Claremont			Springfield	Bill Manner	
Claremont			Springfield	Kelly Stettner	X
Hartland	Cordelia Merritt	X	Rockingham	Thomas Hernon	
Hartland	Judy Howland	X	Rockingham	Margaret Perry	
Charlestown	Janice Lambert	X			
Charlestown	John Streeter				

Rebecca MacKenzie, Lionel Chute (CRJC Commissioner), Jim McClammer (CRJC Commissioner), Olivia Uyizeye (staff, UVLSRPC)

Minutes

Stettner opens the meeting at 7:10 pm.

1. Welcome and Introductions

Stettner welcomes representatives and visitors to the meeting. Introductions are made.

2. Meeting Minutes from July

Stettner opens discussion and comment on the July meeting minutes. O’Neill asks that reference to her on Item 7-4 pg.3 be removed and replaced with general interest.

Taylor makes a motion to approve the minutes with edits. Merritt seconds the motion. The motion passes unanimous.

3. Chair Nomination

Stettner opened discussion on nominating a new chair. She suggests a rotating chair may be good way to go, and would allow different representatives to try it out before making a commitment. She notes that she does not have the capacity to take on this role permanently at this time. Lambert suggests starting with those who have been with CRJC MARS the longest. Merritt offers to chair the November meeting.

Taylor makes a motion to accept Merritt acting as chair for the next meeting, at which point the chair for the following meeting will be selected. O’Neill seconds the motion. The motion passes unanimous.

4. Permit Review – NH Industries

Stettner shares the documentation provided by NH Industries on the proposed permit in Claremont, NH. The permit is for the use on of an evaporation unit on contaminated water (pH and lead above standards). Stettner reads from the permit application the different contaminant levels in each drum of material.

- Merritt indicates that the permit does not require air quality monitoring on that which is released, nor an explanation of why not.
- Beach adds that there is no information on protocol and structures set up to prevent or contain a spill.
- McClammer expresses concern for where the remaining materials go after the water is evaporated; It might end up impacting the Connecticut River later on in the chain of custody.
- Chute mentions that municipals sludge has produced PFOA or PFOS and would hope that this material is not being composted.
- Beach notes that chemicals can kill the “healthy bugs” at a treatment plan, causing a release of untreated material.
- MacKenzie wonders how often NHDES visits the site.
- Merritt suggests the LRS write a letter to address these questions. McClammer encourages the LRS to send in their questions. NHDES cares what groups like this say, although not always.

Merritt makes a motion for Stettner to draft a letter that will be circulated for edits and sent in for comment. Beach seconds the motion. The motion passes unanimous.

5. Septic Smart Workshop

Stettner gives an update on presenters. Uyizeye informs the group that a handful of people have pre-registered for the event. O’Neill and Lambert confirm that they can help with setup. O’Neill will donate coffee and donuts for the event. Stettner notes that signage will be needed to direct people to parking behind the church.

Chute informs the group that the State of Vermont septic smart week promotional materials have included the event in their promotions. Stettner has shared the flyer with realtors who have agreed to share it with their clients. Many reps have shared this in their communities. Stettner suggests another round of promotion before the final date.

6. Water Resource Chapter Priorities

Uyizeye provides a brief review of the survey results (attached). The top 3 voted items were: septic smart workshop, stormwater management and riparian buffers. The following comments are made:

- Stettner asks how we reach the public to make it clear who CRJC MARS is and what we do.
- Chute notes that branding is important to improve the CRJC reputation.
- Merritt updates on the Lull Brook riparian project that may begin planting in October. Trout Unlimited is taking point on this project. Stettner and Howland note that local highschool students might be able to help to fulfill volunteer hours.
- Lambert informs the group of a stormwater management landscape design project she is in discussion with the Town of Charlestown about. The group is currently working to determine how best to implement. Stettner comments that this could be the seed of another workshop that could have site visits. Lambert is on board with showcasing the project once it is underway with Spring 2020 being the earliest possible start date for planting, if ready. Lambert notes that she is reaching out to businesses to make this both about function and beauty. McClammer notes that Charlestown would greatly benefit from this initiative due to the money savings from improving stormwater infiltration.
- O’Neill references the rain gardens in Springfield, VT that might be another site to visit.
- Chute references a riparian buffer project underway in Claremont, NH. It is 500 feet along a nice trout stream. The owner wants to make this a model with edible landscape. It will be funded in part by NRCS.
- Lambert references the buffer zone article in the Valley Green Journal (attached). A huge volunteer event was done in Charlestown many years ago that has been successful. This could be another site.
- Howland references a possible new project at the intersection of 3 Corners in Hartland. The road is changing and there might be potential for green infrastructure.

- McClammer brings up the Plainfield NH 12A slope failure. He advocated for the planting of steaks among the hard armor proposed, but this was rejected by NHDOT. It is important that we showcase models where using green infrastructure works, as we know there are, for bank stabilization, especially during big storm events. McClammer notes that the sediments and erosion control work is being performed well.
- Chute notes that he recently reviewed all the recommendations in the CRJC Water Resources Chapter and that even if only a quarter of those recommendations were implemented there would be a huge impact on the river and surrounding land. Lambert notes the tremendous work required to write the chapter. Both Lambert and Chute agree that more action is required. McClammer notes that the CRJC plans are an important tool to reference. They have an impact on state policy and bolsters our ability to comment on projects that have an impact.

Uyizeye will keep on the agenda an item to revisit a stormwater mangement and/or riparian buffer workshop in 2020.

7. Updates and Other Business

MacKenzie highlights the importance of making changes due to the impacts of climate change. She encourages reps to take part in the Climate Strike next week being lead by youth.

Howland references a breakfast at Damon Hall in Hartland where 9th graders will give a presentation on climate change. Merritt mentions another recent presentation by students on plastics that were very well done.

McClammer informs the group that Great River Hydro will be submitting their application on the dam relicensing, good for 40-50 years, somewhat soon. This will require comment and a groundswell of support to maintain watershed health standards in the agreement.

8. Adjourn

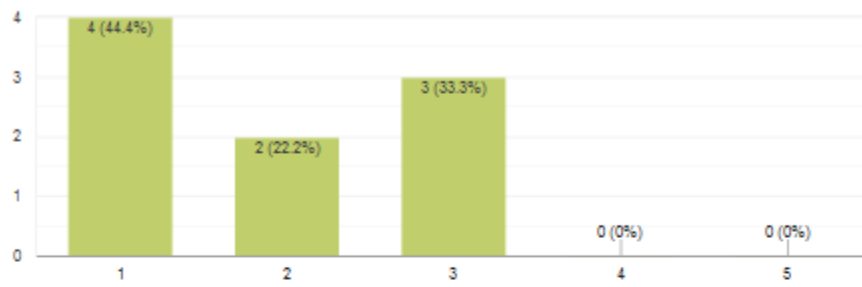
O'Neill makes a motion to adjourn. Merritt second the motion. The motion passes unanimous.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Olivia Uyizeye.

How important is it for MARS to further support monitoring programs?

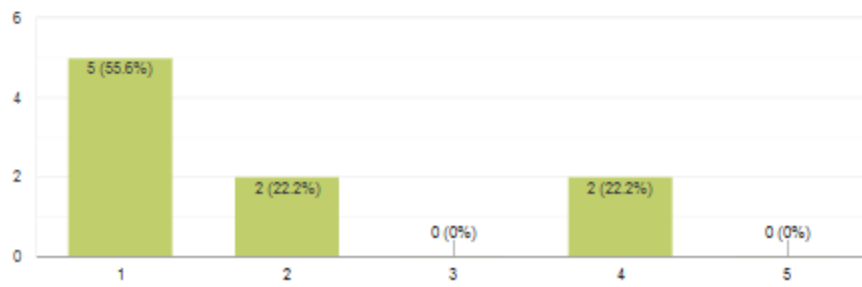


9 responses



How important is it for MARS to increase rep communication with local government and committees?

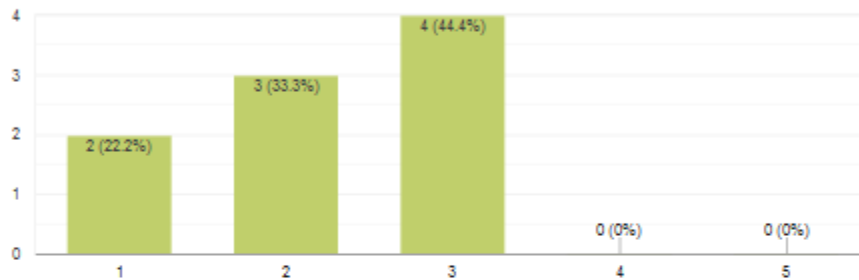
9 responses



Message from MARS campaign. How would you rate this strategy?

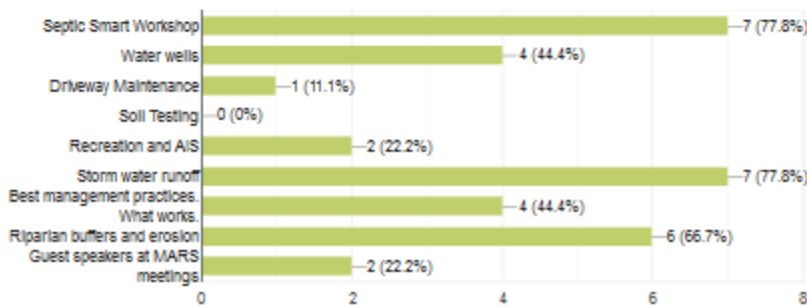
Clear message campaign for list serves or small slips in popular locations. The "Message" could be signed from the local rep. Topics could include soil testing, proper medication disposal, event reminders, riparian buffers and erosion, etc.

9 responses



Choose 4. Which education activities are your top priority?

9 responses



Is there anything else that you think is missing here?

4 responses

Anything that we can do to stimulate or instigate pro-active efforts in an educated public!

define our role in our communities and how we should/can do outreach. Are our activities making a difference? Are we overlapping with the work of other organizations?

SUPPORT ENLIGHTENED MANAGEMENT OF BEAVERS-AVOID LETHAL CONTROLS

Continue to insure that the issues of the Connecticut River don't get lost in the emphasis on Lake Champlain. This may be moot - I'd like to think so - but it nearly happened once.

The guest speakers are great a couple of times a year. How do we most/more effectively get their info/message to wider public?

Continued push to see that users/ abusers contribute \$ to improving the health of the river they make money from. (lots of luck on that one)