



## Connecticut River Joint Commissions

*Suite 225, 10 Water Street, Lebanon, NH 03766*

*Wednesday, September 4, 2019 ~ 2:00 – 4:00 PM*

### Minutes

**Present:** Vermont Commissioners: Lembke, Bamford, Caduto, Rasmussen, Kennett Richter and Jeff Nugent (Company designee).

New Hampshire Commissioners: McClammer, Chute, Kennedy, Belenz, Griffin, and Smith.

**Vermont Caucus** – The Vermont Commission met and elected the following officers for the new fiscal year: Steve Lembke, Chair; Tara Bamford, Vice Chair, Chris Company Secretary/Treas.

**NH Officers** – The NH delegation met in caucus in June and elected the following officers: Alex Belenz, Chair; Lionel Chute, Vice Chair; Jennifer Griffin, Secretary/Treas.

**Report of Nominating Committee and Election of CRJC Officers** – Comms. Bamford and Kennedy presented the slate of officers. Steven Lembke, President; Alex Belenz, Vice President; Jennifer Griffin, Treasurer; Secretary, Chris Company. Comm. Rasmussen moved the slate as presented; Comm. Kennet seconded. Vote: Unanimous.

Following Election, Comm. Lembke, as newly elected president, assumed the role of meeting chairman. He thanked outgoing President McClammer for all his hours of work and service to CRJC over many years and acknowledged the good work that the UVLSRPC did over the past year, especially noting that the UVLSRPC did their work under a period of uncertain financial and budget conditions.

**April 15 Minutes** – Comm. Caduto moved, Comm. Griffin seconded a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Comm. Smith abstained. Motion Carries.

**June Meeting Notes** – Comm. Kennedy suggested the addition of a phrase stating the NH officers were elected. Abstain: Comms. Lembke, Kennett, Smith who were not present at that meeting. Motion Carries.

## **Local Subcommittee Report and Appointments**

Local River subcommittees will review the basin plans. Tracie Sales is working on a wetlands review policy which has already been enacted. Subcommittees could consider nominating a small policy review group from their members so that the LRS could review projects even if the projects were presented for outside the regular meeting schedule. The subcommittees will be called on before DES to review applications and this will change the process with LRS becoming involved earlier. Some subcommittees may have to adopt revised bylaws or protocol for earlier permit reviews. Committees will review whether the protocol only should be revised. In past, the CRJC has had a policy on permit comment procedures. Bylaws may have to be amended. Olivia will ask Tracie Sales for additional guidance on delegation of authority. A suggestion was made to call the group the “review team”. Water quality monitoring, invasives and pesticides training were suggested as possible subjects of interest to local subcommittees.

**New Representatives LRS** (See List attached) – Bill Malcolm from Lyme will be approved in next round as the nomination form was not in yet.

Comm. Kennett moved and Comm. Chute seconded approval of their appointments.

Comm. Lembke will draft a letter thanking them for their willingness to serve.

**Update on Strategic Planning** – It is anticipated that a CRJC strategic planning effort will be undertaken prior to June 2020. There had been mixed reviews of the previous strategic planning exercise done in March 2011. The Executive Board is looking for a way to streamline the process this time. CRJC issued an RFP. Only one response was received and it was rejected as it was considered to be lacking in many ways. Comm. Bamford has been in touch with Marlborough College who promised to provide a proposal that will fit into the \$5,000 budget set by the NH Charitable Foundation grant for this purpose.

Comm. Lembke noted that due to budget constraints four meetings of the joint commissions will be held annually rather than six. It was suggested that those four meetings could be scheduled for three hours 1–4 pm on the third Monday of the month. The Joint Commissions will meet in June, September, December, and March. While no vote was taken, Commissioners seemed to be in favor of these meeting changes

Any additional meetings requested by local subcommittees may require the members

to provide their own staffing support for taking minutes. Comm. McClammer suggested it would be good for Commissioners to attend LRS meetings. Comm Chute urged the Commissioners to adopt their local LRS.

**Reserve Fund Policy** – The point of this policy is to ensure that the fund balance remains at a sufficient level before discretionary expenditures are authorized. The policy was reviewed by the finance committee and the finance staff approved. Comm. Kennett moved and Comm. Rasmussen seconded the motion to adopt the policy. Vote: Unanimous.

**Bylaws Amendment** – Comm. Bamford explained that NH EDS staff member Tracie Sales recommended these additional bylaw changes about roles of sub committees and it also includes updating names of agencies. Amendments were reviewed and discussed. Following discussion, it was decided that the addition of a reference to the Vt. Dept. of Agriculture and the term “surplus property” should be clarified before the amended bylaws are approved. Comms. Caduto and Kennet will investigate the revisions in the context of the Vermont policies. Comm. Caduto moved to table the amendments, Comm. Kennet seconded until clarifications have been received.

**Motion to accept June Financials** – Comm. Griffin moved to accept the financials as presented, seconded by Comm. Belensz. Discussion followed. The Exec Committee had previously reviewed the report with Anne MacEwan. Vote: Unanimous.

The Vermont ANR funding reduction was discussed. Comm. Lembke explained that he had been in contact with the staff at ANR and was assured that the reduction had nothing to do with CRJC performance but was related to Act 76 funding. The water quality initiative funds, included in the Act, did not exist at the time CRJC was founded. The ANR staff suggested that the funding of CRJC projects is possible and likely. However, it was noted that, even if projects could be identified and funded, the loss of funding for strictly administrative purposes would not entirely be made up on the project side. If CRJC were to manage those projects there would be administrative funds included. Comm. Caduto was invited to the Executive Committee in November to discuss this further.

**Review and approve FY19 Budget Amendment.** Comm. Chute moved and Comm. McClammer seconded a motion to pay for additional services above the previous year contract with UVLSRPC. Discussion followed. A friendly amendment to the motion from

Comm. Bamford was accepted to clarify that the action to be taken is a retroactive amendment to the FY19 budget. Vote: Unanimous

**Budget for 2020** – Comm. Chute and Comm. Rasmussen moved and seconded a motion to accept the UVLSRPC budget presented. Vote: Unanimous

**Approval of UVLSRPC Contract for 2020** – Comms. Chute and Belenz moved and seconded approval of the contract as presented. Discussion followed. Vote: Unanimous.

**VT Work Plan discussion for 2020** – Comm. Caduto will provide guidance on the VT workplan that is new this fiscal year. Comm. Caduto moved and Comm. Rasmussen seconded to approve the new workplan. Vote: Unanimous.

**FERC Relicensing Update** – Commissioner Griffin reported on status. Commissioner McClammer reported on meetings he has attended or will attend with members of the NH congressional delegation. Comm. McClammer explained that it has been very difficult to respond to short notice meeting requests and that this will be made more challenging with the reduction in annual meetings. Comm. Lembke stated that it will be advisable to discuss again who the members of the FERC relicensing subcommittee are and who will be delegated to attend these short notice meetings on behalf of CRJC.

Comm. McClammer will provide a written summary draft of comments after these meetings and invited comments from all Commissioners. Comm. McClammer noted that the FERC Relicensing process is intensifying and recommended that the CRJC become more invested in the details of the project. April 30, 2019 is the date that the application including operating conditions will be submitted.

Comm. Griffin stated that if there are things that CRJC or individuals would like to see happen or comment on, the company would like to receive them before the application is submitted. That said, it was noted that the final application will also be subject to review.

Discussion followed on the concept of attending meetings on behalf of CRJC. The Waters of the US Section 401 Water Quality new regulatory standards limiting state's abilities to manage its water bodies was discussed. This is another topic that needs to be followed up with the congressional delegation.

**Adjourn** – Comm. Rasmussen moved and Comm. Griffin seconded a motion to adjourn at 4:07 PM. Vote: Unanimous.

*Adopted: Monday, December 16, 2019*