

**CRJC Wantastiquet Subcommittee  
Minutes**

Tuesday, March 22, 2022 at 6:00PM

Hybrid Meeting - Brattleboro Brooks Public Library, 224 Main St, Brattleboro, VT

**Attendees**

Walpole	Samantha Loch	V	Westminster		
Walpole			Westminster	Jim Calchera	
Westmoreland	Perry Sawyer	V	Putney		
Westmoreland			Putney		
Chesterfield	Roland Volbehrr		Dummerston		
Chesterfield			Dummerston		
Hinsdale	Mike Darcy		Brattleboro	Kathy Urffer	V
Hinsdale			Brattleboro	Michael Fairchild	
Vernon	Andy White	V			
Vernon					

*Note: P = present in person; V = present over remote virtual platform; X = not present*

Attending Virtually: Olivia Uyizeye (UVLSRPC Staff); Margo Ghia (Natural Resources Planner, Windham Regional Commission)

*No Quorum. Due to lack of sufficient in person attendance.*

**Minutes**

**1. Welcome & Introductions**

Chair Sawyer called the meeting to order at 6:10PM.

**2. Meeting minutes**

Due to lack of quorum, the review of the November minutes is postponed until the June meeting.

**3. Permit Reviews**

**a. Alteration of terrain, Red barn lane, Walpole**

Sawyer explains the permit, on the edge of the Wantastiquet jurisdiction or a quarter mile from the Connecticut River shore. The parcel is behind the Walpole dollar general store. It is an old agricultural field. Urffer shares the google map satellite image of the location.

Uyizeye reads the permit section related to "Potential impacts and conservation measures" including discussion of potential impacts to rare/threatened species.

Loch expresses concern for wellhead protection area potential on this area. Uyizeye, references Drinking Water Protection Plan, 2015 protection area map which does not include the relevant parcel. Loch would like to discuss the permit with the Town of Walpole and visit the site.

White says that turtles are more likely to be found on the surrounding sandier fields in my opinion. White doesn't see anything of concern.

Uyizeye shares that the commissioners have conditionally approved subcommittees to use a disclaimer for comment letters coming out of meetings without a quorum as required by NH RSA 91-a. The

disclaimer is an effort to provide some ability for LRS to submit comments despite their best efforts to meet quorum requirement. Uyizeye suggests using this disclaimer.

Members agree to the strategy in the case that Loch see an item warranting specific attention. Sawyer and White agree that the application details appear to be in order.

b. **Act 250 permit, Dummerston (Project # 2W0724-2)** See permit details at -

<https://anrweb.vt.gov/ANR/Act250/Details.aspx?Num=2W0724-2>

Urffer provides an update on the Maple Valley Ski area, on route 30 along the west river. The upland site is where the ski area used to be. The plan is to redevelop the building as a brewery and event space. Plan is made with employee parking behind the building and the area along the river for event parking. This is how it was used when the ski slope was open, closed 20 years ago. Vermont Fish and Game, and applicant have debated on whether this was an existing use. Some of recommended that they recreate their plan with the parking lot in upland area. March 31<sup>st</sup> is the formal public hearing where CRC will be providing testimony, including not to park cars along the river. Guidance about riparian buffers to protect fish and wildlife species. Fisheries biologist has explained that her understanding of the guidance is to have a hundred-foot buffer from the top of the bank. Many species of concern in this area – freshwater muscle that was just upgraded from threatened to be endangered, sea lamprey and other spawning fish, potential for wood turtle, and area for recreational use.

In general members are supportive of this project, and hope the applicant is responsive to these comments about move the parking lot. White supports the 100 ft buffer and notes that if they do use the parking lot, significant riparian buffer work should be done to provide as much protection as possible with the parking lot in use. Sawyer adds that when in pervious use as a ski area, it was not easy getting down to the parking lot from the road.

Loch asks if there is anything Wantastiquet can do. Urffer responds that you cannot comment unless already petitioned for party status.

Sawyer asks if another party can reference this meeting. Urffer is willing to reference this meeting and discussion in her comment letter.

c. **Putney rowing club, Dummerston**

Uyizeye reports there are no additional details on this project.

4. **Updates & Other Business**

a. **Town/Member updates**

Sawyer reports that he has renewed his membership as a Wantastiquet member. In addition, Paul Reynolds has resigned himself as he has moved out of Walpole.

Uyizeye informs members, that after review of the CRJC bylaws in regards member resignations, a method is being employed by the organization to facilitate the ability to meet a quorum. It has been determined that if a member does not attend at least 3 meetings in a row and fails to respond to communications by CRJC members or staff, then that person may be resigned in consultation by the subcommittee chair and CRJC president. This action does not impact any of these individuals' ability to again join the LRS at a future time. For the Headwaters LRS, Daniel Marx and Paul Harlow will be resigned.

Loch asks about the last time town boards were contacted. Sawyer responded that boards were contacted a year ago and would be willing to do it again.

Loch expresses that the lack of members for this and other groups she is connected to is a little disheartening. The need for recruitment, when already volunteering time, is not ideal.

Sawyer, speaking from experience in Westmoreland, expresses that communicating through the conservation commission is a better route.

Ghia is in regular contact with towns who have conservation commissions and is willing to share.

Loch asks if we can glean boat registrations from towns for recruitment. White responds that this information is managed by the state and is unlikely to be publicly available.

Uyizeye explains the possibility of an outreach experiment, to choose a few towns and try a variety of methods. Members discuss using laminated flyers at boat launches and where people receive fishing licenses, conservation commission outreach, in person/virtual visit, newsletter to target river groups like Putney rowing club, trail committee, and historical societies. Members and staff agree to do what they can. Uyizeye will share a flyer for their use and will setup a shared document to communicate between meetings. <https://www.crjc.org/lrs/>

#### **b. Water Quality monitoring 2022 season plans**

Uyizeye summarizes the water quality monitoring work planned for the 2022 season <https://www.crjc.org/water-quality-monitoring/>

#### **c. Text Reminders**

Sawyer suggests adding text message reminders to LRS communications to be used once before each meeting. Uyizeye will investigate options.

### **5. Adjourn**

Sawyer adjourns the meeting.

*Minutes respectfully submitted by Olivia Uyizeye.*