



CRJC's mission is to preserve the visual and ecological integrity and sustainable working landscape of the Connecticut River Valley, and guide its growth and development through grassroots leadership.

Connecticut River Joint Commissions

Full Commissions Meeting

Monday, June 20, 2022 - 2 PM

Hybrid Meeting – Walpole Town Hall, 34 Elm St, Walpole, NH

ATTENDANCE

NH CRVRC COMMISSIONERS			VT CRWAC COMMISSIONERS		
NCC	OPEN		Sec. Nat. Resources	Marie Caduto	P
UVLSRPC	Ted Cooley	V	NVDA	Beth Torpey	V
SWRPC	Jeffrey Miller Harriet Davenport (alt)	P V	TRORC	Pete Fellows	V
CRC	Ken Hastings	V	MARC	Jason Rasmussen	V
CRFCC	OPEN		WRC	Chris Company	P
Hydro-Electric	Jen Griffin	P	RPC#5	OPEN	
Conservation	OPEN		At Large	Steve Lembke	V
Tourism	OPEN		At Large	Beth Kennett	V
Agricultural	OPEN		At Large	OPEN	
Forest Products	OPEN		At Large	OPEN	
At Large	Jim McClammer	P	At Large	OPEN	
At Large	OPEN		At Large	OPEN	
At Large	OPEN		At Large	OPEN	
At Large	OPEN		At Large	OPEN	
At Large	OPEN		At Large	OPEN	

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

Additional attendance: Adair Mulligan, Hanover Conservancy; Olivia Uyizeye, Staff Consultant

AGENDA

2:05 PM Convene

1. Welcome

Lembke calls the meeting to order and welcomes all in attendance.

2. Speaker – Adair Mulligan, Hanover Conservancy

Rasmussen introduces Adair Mulligan. Mulligan is the current Executive Director at Hanover Conservancy and prior staff to the Connecticut River Joint Commissions.

Mulligan shares an engaging and visual presentation about the history of the Connecticut River from indigenous to settler to modern traditions. Mulligan discusses policy decisions such as the establishment of the CRJC. Also, Mulligan shares details on culture, including the Connecticut River Valley Porch a unique architectural feature. Also the significant of Indian Stream Farm, the northernmost protected farm in the Connecticut River watershed. Mulligan makes many wildlife related references including the Cobblestone Tiger Beetle, also the Town of Plainfield beetle.

Mulligan refers to multiple CRJC produced publications such as The Great River Rises, Connecticut River Heritage Trail, and Proud to Live Here. Mulligan makes note of the Lyme-East Thetford



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bridge which is red listed and requires restoration with the addition of a walking/biking path. Mulligan also indicates some broken links on the website, for example that for the Connecticut River Heritage trail.

All Commissioners thank Mulligan for her presentation and stimulating conversation. Kennett appreciates learning more about the CRJC. Lembke acknowledges Mulligan's concerns about the Lyme-East Thetford bridge and CRJC website, indicating CRJC will seek to address those.

3:00 PM Business Meeting

Lembke opens the business meeting.

3. New Commissioners & LRS Members

Griffin welcomes Jeffrey Miller as a new representative of the South West Regional Planning Commission (SWRPC). Miller thanks Griffin. Miller shares his experience as part of the process to establish the CRVRC as a legislator at that time. He is appreciative of the opportunity to represent SWRPC and take part for the Connecticut River.

Uyizeye summarizes local river subcommittee membership. Janice Lambert from Charlestown, a dedicated advocate for healthy water, recently passed away. Bill Gallagher from Cornish resigned after many years of service. Howard Hatch of Haverhill and Jeffrey Plant of Cornish have been nominated as new members by their respective communities.

By motion of Caduto/Hastings, new members are approved. The motion passes unanimously.

4. Election of Officers – CRVRC and CRWAC break out meetings

The Connecticut River Valley Resource Commission (CRVRC) and Connecticut River Watershed Advisory Commission (CRWAC) break out into two meetings to nominate officers.

a. CRVRC break out meeting

Griffin reports that the CRVRC approved Jennifer Griffin as Chair, Ken Hastings as Vice Chair, and Ted Cooley as Secretary/Treasurer.

By motion of McClammer/Miller, CRVRC officers are approved. The motion passes unanimously.

a. CRWAC break out meeting

Lembke reports that the CRWAC approved Chris Campany as Chair, Marie Caduto as Vice Chair, and Jason Rasmussen as Secretary/Treasurer.

By motion of Torpey/Kennett, CRVRC officers are approved. The motion passes unanimously.

b. Connecticut River Joint Commissions

Lembke brings forward the following nominations for officers to CRJC – Jen Griffin as President, Chris Campany as Vice President, Ted Cooley as Secretary, and Jason Rasmussen as Treasurer. Lembke as if there are any other nominations to be considered. Lembke indicates that he would continue served on the CRJC Executive Committee as the immediate past President.

By motion of Cooley/Lembke, the nominations as presented are approved. The motion passes unanimously.

5. Adopt/Review Minutes of January

Lembke opens the January meeting minutes for review. No comments are made.

By motion of Rasmussen/Hastings, the minutes are approved as presented. The motion passes unanimously.



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6. Financial Report

Lembke explains that the April financial statement is currently the most recent. After conversation with Tracie Sales with NHDES, the named contingency funds just over \$11,000 can be carried over into the second half of the CRJC two-year contract with the state. Lembke indicates that there is not designation on how these funds need to be used.

Rasmussen indicates that everything else looks in order. Rasmussen highlights the underspending on the current budget.

By motion of Rasmussen, the April financials pass unanimously.

7. CRJC FY2023 Budget & Tasks

Lembke explains the budget for fiscal year 2023 maintains the same tasks as in prior years. In addition, due to the carry over contingency funds, the following projects have been included in the proposed budget: Recruitment & Retainment for Commissions & LRS representative; Assessment and revitalization plan activities; Migration project; Grant writing; Water quality monitoring program; Website updates; and Social event for the Full Commissions and Local River Subcommittees. Lembke expresses both his and the Executive Committee's confidence in the budget as it is put forward. No comments are made.

By motion of Kennett/Torpey, the proposed FY2023 budget is approved. The motion passes unanimously.

8. CRJC-UVLSRPC Contract

Lembke explains the contract for fiscal year 2023 with UVLSRPC, which is similar to past contracts. The contract Exhibit C including a detailed review of tasks/deliverables based on state contracts, compiled by Commissioners Lembke, Griffin, and Caduto. Lembke acknowledges the need to put out an RFP to go out for bid for administrative work, which has been deferred and chosen to stay with UVLSRPC.

By motion of Griffin/Caduto, the proposed FY2023 contract with UVLSRPC is approved. The motion passes unanimously.

9. Revitalization and Assessment Plan

Lembke provides a status update on the goals of the revitalization and assessment plan.

- Funding is secure, pending VT legislature vote.
- Contractual deliverables and securing administrative services are complete.
- All positions are filled for this fiscal year for the CRVRC, CRWAC, and the Executive Committee.
- Hastings reports that he will be reaching out to LRS chairs this Fall to discuss the LRS-Commissioner relationship.
- A climate migration project proposal to be presented at the next executive committee meeting.
- The presentation by Adair Mulligan today fulfills the CRJC deliverable for a watershed speaker.
- There is general adherence to the strategic plan.

Company asks if any changes have been made to the NH meeting law. Griffin notes no change in 91-a for NH with the next opportunity during the next legislative session. Company notes that the VT meeting law may change to not require in person attendance. Company will let people know when The VT change comes and whether it may warrant CRJC comment.

a. Bi-state Discussion

Caduto reports on the bi-state discussion on water quality monitoring that took place in May 2022. Caduto is very pleased with how it went with 30 attendees from various organizations. The group



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focused on identifying possible data gaps, especially related to the Nitrogen total maximum daily load due to the severe impacts on the Long Island Sound. Both states agreed to do more monitoring. The EPA agreed to see if they can identify more funding for the monitoring, esp. how it is related to what the loading. Caduto feels the current CRJC water quality monitoring inspires the states to take us seriously. Caduto hopes another meeting will be held at the end of the monitoring season this Fall 2022. CRJC will make sure the volunteer data is getting into both state systems. Discussion follows:

- Company expresses that this type of meeting is the CRJC strong suit. CRJC should keep doing more of these discrete meetings with the right people and realistic outcomes, if it fits within our functioning and budget. Company suggests topics could be chosen based on the different sectors called out in statute to be represented in CRJC. CRJC can bring in other NGO partners and increase viewing by the public.
- Caduto agrees with Company, this is where we can have the most impact. Right people for the right conversations.
- Company adds that it is hard for these stakeholders, especially state agencies to self-organize. If CRJC can do that, there is a big prop for us and return for the state agency. These concerns just never rise to the top for state agencies
- Caduto suggests doing this for legislators as well.
- Lembke suggests that it helps CRJC to have someone internal to CRJC internal to that stakeholder group, such as how Caduto helped to facilitate the water quality conversation.

10. Membership

Lembke explains an alternative Commissioner membership model. Rather than invite new commissioners to act as a full member, invite to act as an advisor in particular interest areas to the Connecticut River Valley, and aligns with topics for additional bi-state meetings. Lembke feels that they do not all need to be Commissioners, although CRJC can host up to 30 Commissioners. This model would help CRJC to advance topic areas without having challenged meeting a quorum for organizational business. Discussion follows:

- Griffin – Theoretically if we had all those members, we would have those connections automatically. Not sure where advisory where commissioner distinction would be.
- Lembke – One issue that a commissioner would bring but not an advisor, is related to the quorum challenge. Ad hoc basis is a more realistic expectation for most people. Let them come in and perhaps eventually be a commissioner.
- Cooley – asks about alternates to address the quorum challenge.
- Company – Governor appointed Commissioners cannot have alternate, while self-appointing organization called out in statute, such as the regional commissions and CRC, can have alternates.

11. Long Island Sound Futures Fund

<https://longislandsoundstudy.net/about/grants/lis-futures-fund/>

a. Agriculture Proposal

Caduto summarizes the LISFF agricultural proposal. Caduto has been thinking about this project for several years now. The application was put in with the Windham Conservation Commission as lead. The project represents a planning process related to Agricultural land use and Nitrogen load reductions into the Connecticut River. The proposal is for a bi-state team together with academics, farmers, and regulatory entities. What are the practices that farmers would want to do? How would they be



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monitored to ensure they have an impact? How does that happen on the landscape? The proposal has a budget of \$450K, in part due to the funding needed by each partner engaged. Caduto is hoping for real active involvement from CRJC. Everyone who participates in this gets money out of it. Drawing on collective knowledge of all these people to make those connections to have an impact. Beth Kennett interested to be involved. Caduto expresses that it would be nice to have full committed support from CRJC.

By motion of Cooley/Campany, the Full Commissions expresses their support for the LISFF agricultural proposal as presented. The motion passes unanimously.

a. Stormwater Proposal

Uyizeye summarizes the LISFF stormwater proposal. The application was put in with Sullivan County Conservation District as lead. The project represents a planning process largely at the local level to identify priority stormwater improvement projects in developed areas. The project would seek to hire an engineer to help facilitate the design of these projects and get them close to shovel ready. CRJC has been indicated as a resource with significant funding, just over \$110K to facilitate outreach to communities with assistance from members from the LRS and assist in presentations highlighting the project at the watershed scale.

By motion of Caduto/Griffin, the Full Commissions their support for the LISFF stormwater proposal as presented including CRJC participation, with the understanding that the CRJC organization must be evaluated to be an appropriate position to take on the role at that time. The motion passes unanimously.

12. Other Business

Lembke describes a recent motion from the Friends of Conte group that voted to “pursue and develop a legislative strategy for the Connecticut River watershed. The concept is to advance a CT River Watershed Partnership Act (CRWPA), modeled after the Delaware River Basin Restoration Program, designed to enhance collaboration and coordination among federal agencies and state, regional, and local partners with a shared goal of strengthening the health of the Connecticut River Watershed and the well-being of its communities through conservation, restoration, research, engagement, recreation, and advocacy. at their June quarterly meeting.”

Minutes from this meeting can be found here -

<https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1LH0Xb5NFrw7DnVjNzYwdfcdx-ql8RMQe>

Lembke asks Campany, as a member of the Friends of Conte executive board, to provide additional details to allow CRJC to evaluate whether and how CRJC may be involved.

Campany explains that he sits on the Friends of Conte, largely to remind them that regional commissions and local governments exist. Campany continues to provide some context to the recent motion:

- Delaware River Basin Act, 2016. A federal act for federal, state, local, and regional governments to implement restoration activities, fish & wildlife habitat, flooding reduction measures, and recreation. It is a non-regulatory act that lays the impetus for coordinated activities to improve efficiencies and savings. Partners can provide grant opportunities on a shared set of priorities with the intention not to recreate projects but rather identify/address gaps that need to happen.
- Friends of Conte. A policy organization because of the unique nature of the watershed with specific land holdings. The organization has representatives from all the Connecticut River states, however, attendance from the upper basin states (NH&VT) has been low.



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- Connecticut River watershed partnership act would advance shared goals such as those in conservation, restoration, recreation, research, engagement, education, and advocacy. This effort is intended, in part, to support the America the Beautiful initiative. A task force by Friends of Conte will advance this partnership.
- At their annual meeting, Connecticut River Conservancy and David Muir's VT Audubon, supported something similar but not quite. A study for the Department of Interior to explore the feasibility of this concept. Friends of Conte instead is looking to go big. Part of this drive is to name after Senator Leahy who is set to retire.
- Company notes that sometimes legislation can slide right in. The Connecticut River states tend to play pretty well together.
- Company thinks this approach makes sense. It would be a nice non-regulatory arm that works with the regulatory Long Island Sound Study.
- Support for the initiative by CRJC would be very helpful. Not sure if it really needs direct involvement.

Discussion with all Commissioners follows:

- Lembke thinks CRJC can express support for the Friends of Conte motion. Lembke asks if CRJC might also consider sharing a wishlist of projects by July 1, as requested in their correspondence.
- Company asks for clarification on support versus participation.
- Lembke clarifies for CRJC to support and learn more about it.
- Company would like to see CRJC be more involved with Friends of Conte more generally.
- Caduto shares that Friends of Conte have been given a whole bunch of money for land acquisition for each state within the watershed. A lot of money if we have priorities for land acquisitions to share. The timing is perfect with the America the Beautiful 30 by 30 (30% conserved by 2030). Find out more here - <https://www.doi.gov/priorities/america-the-beautiful#:~:text=The%20President's%20goal%20of%20conserving,and%20for%20decades%20to%20come> Caduto is working with other groups to determine what permanent protection for aquatic systems looks like. CRJC would be remiss if we did not participate.
- Company – America the beautiful is not law in Vermont. Still moving forward with the goals laid forward at other levels. Not sure how we would come up with our wish list for land acquisitions. NH/VT is very weekly represented. Good for this group to participate but also to recruit for others to participate. Wishlist is a lot to ask in 10 days.
- Lembke – Griffin and Lembke will work on a letter.

Caduto notes that somebody from Friends of Conte would be a great speaker for CRJC. Company shares that they have been invited to speak at a WRC meeting. Perhaps could be a joint sponsorship presentation also for CRJC. Company will consult with Lembke. The presentation is expected to be virtual. Griffin expresses her enthusiasm to make that relationship more known between CRJC-WRC.

By motion of Griffin/Cooley CRJC will express its support for the Friends of Conte motion to advance the Connecticut River Watershed Partnership Act. The motion passes unanimously.

4:00 PM Adjourn

Lembke thanks everyone for attending.

By motion of Company/McClammer the meeting is adjourned. The motion passes unanimously.

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Olivia Uyizeye.