**Connecticut River Joint Commissions**

Executive Committee Meeting

Monday, May 22, 2023 - 2 PM

Join Virtually via Zoom

**Attendance**

The attendance noted below is organized according to officer positions for each participating state Commission that together make up the Joint Commissions. The Joint Commissions officers are President (Jennifer Griffin), Vice President (Chris Campany), Secretary (Ted Cooley), and Treasurer (Jason Rasmussen).

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Officer** | ***NH CRVRC*** | | **VT CRWAC** | |
| Chair | Jennifer Griffin | V | Chris Campany | V |
| Vice-Chair | Ken Hastings | X | Marie Caduto | V |
| Secretary / Treasurer | Ted Cooley | V | Jason Rasmussen | V |
| Most recent past CRJC  President |  |  | Steve Lembke | V |

Note: P = present in person; V = present over remote virtual platform; X = not present Additional Virtual attendance: Olivia Uyizeye, Staff Consultant.

NO QUORUM.

**NOTES**

**2:00 PM Convene**

President Griffin convenes the meeting at 2PM.

1. **Minutes Review (February 2023 Notes for information, February 2022 for Approval)**

Griffin opens the February 2023 notes and 2022 minutes for review. No comments are made.

Lembke/Rasmussen agree to accept the minutes, pending confirmation vote at the next meeting with a quorum.

1. **April Financials**

Rasmussen reviews the April financials with no concerns to raise.

MacEwan noted that CRJC is running slightly under budget.

1. **Herrick’s Cove Festival**

Caduto and Lembke report out. Very well attended event. Lembke and Miller split responsibility for the table. Felt it was excellent as a festival and CRJC. Lembke was interested in discussing CRJC with attendees to see about their knowledge and interest in CRJC, Many expressed interest to possibly join the board (including discussion with a CRC volunteer, business owner, kayaker, few transplant, contacts for several conservation organizations). Connection made with similar organization and possible areas for collaboration.

Lembke felt it was good to keep the table simple. Maybe a few stand ups to show who the organization is. Simplicity allows for various people to engage with the table.

Lembke will circulate contacts made and whether/how they should be contacted.

1. **Revitalization and Assessment Plan**
   1. **Secure Funding**

Griffin worked with Cooley and Uyizeye to submit contract requirements to NHDES Tracie Sales so funding can be available on July 1, 2023. The Bi-annual reflected $60,000 over two years, or $30,000 over the next two years.

Caduto reports on Vermont. The budget is just getting finalized. The request for the next fiscal year budget will go in in August for start in November 2023. The requested $35,000 has not been confirmed as fully approved, although there is no indication of it not being accepted. When it comes around for the following contract, we might consider asking for more and can discuss that at that point.

* 1. **Retainment and Recruitment**

Lembke recaps that the goal was to ensure we retain the same number for those who had indicated that they would leave.

* Chris Campany to be replaced by Margo Ghia for WRC
* Lembke to be replaced by Erin Devriese Vermont River Conservancy. Really interested in bi-state discussion on land and river conservation.
* Beth Kennett agreed to stay.
* Hannah Dallas is interested to work on the forestry, as well as her partner who works as a private forester. County and private forester.
* Ken Hastings to be replaced by John Mudge for CRC.
* Griffin will replace herself, a few people in mind. She expects to be able to stay on through the Fall to assist with mentoring. .

Reflections from the exercise.

* Don’t need to over think it.
* If know someone who would be interested, send an email or contact. Ask if they might have someone else in mind.
* Might not be as bad as it appears.
* People generally had good responses on the CRJC.
* Mostly Vermonters at the table.

Possible recruitment process. Materials to be maintained and kept on file by staff for request at any time.

* Contact. Package of information that goes out to someone when contacting someone.
  + Name & contact information
  + Set email for initial contact/invitation
  + Staff maintain packets/materials
* Build interest. Specific to areas of interest.
* Onboarding. Materials and process for membership. Confirm first meeting.
* Welcome. X person to connect over coffee/lunch. Do you have any questions? Here’s what it is? Have you received the information from staff?
* Follow up. Any changes or surprises? Has it been meeting your expectations.

Griffin reports that Jeff Miller is looking at the NH list for possible recruits.

* 1. **Bi-state discussions**

Caduto reports that she along with Uyizeye and Campany attended the Local Solutions conference. Walling and Kennett also attended with CRJC assistance. Campany explains. University led efforts that talk about what needs to happen without getting into the details on how that happens. Research the efficacy of governance for infrastructure and other components to retain and make room for the people we have. Understand that we are not going to change the governmental system. Keene example is uplifting but also shows it as an outlier with a Mayoral capacity that was able to make decisions, with that reflecting back 100 years. Hard for many communities to make decisions 5 years in advance. Need some direction around how people will make decisions. Really key. Towns unable to handle the technical management, and may be losing grant funding for water/sewer improvements because of that. Could queue up over the summer climate change and fruit crop (apple crop lost due to hard frost last week).

1. **Fiscal Year 2024**
   1. **R&A Phase II**

Griffin summarizes the updated phase worked on with Lembke. Decided to not include named, so in the June meeting people can identify teams and that can be started to be worked on. Targets to be met and then updates. Many are well underway. This can be reviewed again at the June meeting.

Lembke suggests renaming the document. The members agree on “Continuing Assessment Plan” or CAP.

* 1. **Website & Communications Needs**

Uyizeye reviews.

* 1. **Draft Budget Review**

Griffin indicates this has been drafted and asks the EC to review in advance of the June meeting.

1. **LRS Priorities and Membership**

Uyizeye reports that LRS members are discussing possible priorities. Also, the following changes in membership

* New member Heidi Henkel, Putney, VT
* New member Ted Unkles, Bradford, VT
* New member Dan Nelson, Hartland, VT

1. **June Full Commissions agenda**

Anything for Griffin and Uyizeye to include. Lembke asks about having caucuses for voting. Griffin confirms that this will come first.

1. **Updates and Other Business**
   1. **Hydro-relicensing**

Bellows falls minimum flow unit. 300 cfs at Bellows Falls dam at all times. Dam and power canal. Dam bypasses the natural river bed. Talking about a minimum flow unit, including one that is very fish friendly. Addendum to the application with that unit. Comments are due today. They had been in conversation with the fisheries agency about that process. First Light followed part of their settlement agreement on flows and fisheries. Those comments are due at the end of this week. At that point, they will have everything they need to start their final review and submit for their environmental review. Comments then welcome on the license and what they would like to see in that.

* 1. **Friends of Conte – Connecticut River watershed partnership act**

Campany reports that it is being based on the Delaware basin. The main question is how it can get over the finish line.

* 1. **Long Island Sound Futures Fund - agriculture**

QAPP confirmed. Waiting to receive funding and Agriculture season. Looking for SC to meet in Fall 2023.

* 1. **Other Business**

Griffin indicates a change in staffing conditions for UVLSRPC.

Campany notes this is his last EC meeting. Lembke also notes his last meeting. Griffin thanks both for their time and considerable contributions.

**4:00 PM Adjourn**

The meeting is adjourned.

*Meeting notes respectfully submitted by Olivia Uyizeye.*