



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

Executive Committee Meeting

Monday, February 28, 2022 - 2 PM

Join In Person – 10 Water Street, Suite 225, Lebanon, NH

Join Virtually via Zoom

ATTENDANCE

Officer	NH CRVRC		VT CRWAC	
Chair	Jennifer Griffin	P	Steve Lembke	P
Vice-Chair	Ken Hastings	P	Marie Caduto	V
Secretary / Treasurer	Ted Cooley	V	Jason Rasmussen	V

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

Additional attendance: Olivia Uyizeye, Staff Consultant; Chris Campany, Windham Regional Commission, CRWAC Commissioner.

MINUTES

2:00 PM Convene

President Lembke convenes the meeting at 2PM.

1. December Minutes Review

By motion of Hastings/Griffin, the December minutes pass unanimously with the following edits – add a note about time spent to honor Pat Crocker for her work with CRJC before retirement.

2. Financials

By motion of Caduto/Cooley, the January financials pass unanimously.

Rasmussen reviewed the report and indicated all looked to be in order.

Lembke notes that the bit spent over budget for the period by UVLSRPC was due to a backlog of website updates, based on conversations with Uyizeye.

3. Revitalization and Succession Plan

Lembke opens conversation on the plan drafted by Lembke and Griffin. Griffin has agreed to step forward as president in FY 2023. Lembke praises Griffin for taking on this responsibility and indicates this as a critical step to move forward with organizational planning. The following is an excerpt from this draft plan:

CRJC 16-month Goals, Benchmarks and Project Leaders

While designated “leaders” are expected to assume overall responsibility for meeting the specified goal, they are encouraged to solicit help from other Commissioners to complete the necessary tasks. Commissioners are expected to willingly assist. This will be our first big test.



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1 Goal: Secure multi-year (2+ years) funding from both VT and NH based on this plan.

Benchmark: Hold funding meetings with VT and NH funders.

Leaders: Marie Caduto and Jen Griffin

2 Goal: Secure an organization to provide administrative services in 2022-23.

Benchmark: Hold administrative services meetings with UVLSRPC to determine their interest in continuing our current relationship and /or determine alternatives – by May 31, 2022.

Leaders: Steve Lembke, Jen Griffin

3 Goal: Complete VT and NH contractual deliverables for FY 2022-23.

Benchmark: Create a delivery plan by March 7, 2022, and update members at each EB and FC meeting on the status of deliverables.

Leaders: Marie and Jen

4 Goal: Establish a more structured relationship between the CRJC and the LRSs.

Benchmark: Meet with LRS representatives to discuss improvements, create a plan, and execute the plan.

Leaders: Olivia Uyizeye, Ken Hastings.

5 Goal: Retain current CRJC and LRS members and recruit new members.

Benchmark: Talk with current members and recruit three new CRJC and three new LRS members by January 1, 2023.

Leaders: Jen, Beth Torpey, Olivia, Ken Hastings

6 Goal: Create and retain a strong and active EB and leadership team.

Benchmark: Obtain individual commitments to help lead the organization by ???

Leaders: Steve, Jen

7 Goal: Produce and deliver a climate migration project webinar and a river wide speaker series,

Benchmark: Climate migration webinar by November 1, 2022; Speaker series outlined by April 1, 2022,

Leaders: Steve, Chris Company, Olivia

Lembke – programming committee. Take that to funders and recruitment people.

8 Goal: Create and maintain a CRJC website and other community outreach avenues.

Benchmark: Hold meetings with stakeholders to determine most efficient and economical way to reach our goal. Present plan at June 20, 2022, full Commission meeting.

Leaders: Olivia and Pete Fellows

9 Goal: Have a watershed speaker at two future meetings.

Benchmark: Consult state deliverables and ask possible speakers. Present proposal at May 23, 2022 EB meeting.

Leaders: Beth Kennett, Jim McClammer, Jason Rasmussen

10 Goal: Ensure reasonable adherence to the current Strategic Plan.

Benchmark: Meet to determine realistic measures and misses. Present findings and plan at April 18, 2022 EB meeting.

Leaders: Steve and Ted Cooley

11 Goal: Create 'working' partnerships with other watershed-centric groups and organizations

Benchmark: Through surveys or direct conversations with other watershed organizations or groups, determine possible partnership options. Present plan at May 23, 2022 EB meeting and update progress at each following CRJC meeting.

Leaders: Olivia and Ken

12 Goal: Convene bi-state group to discuss watershed-based problems, issues and successful practices.



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Benchmark: *Determine one or more common issues and the stakeholders and develop a timetable for convening. Present plan at May 23, 2022 EB meeting.*

Leaders: *Ted and Jason*

Lembke asks the following questions, and discussion follows:

- Do you agree with the opening statement and assessment of our current situation?
 - No comments raised
- Should we approach this in another way entirely?
 - Caduto – putting on the table that we may fold if we are not doing this well. Do we have that authority? This is a statutorily established organization.
 - Campany – can't get rid of the legislation but can inform the legislature that we recommend that the organization be "sunset". The current membership is unable to perform its work / not going to be meeting.
 - Lembke – reflects that the question raised may inform how success/failure will be established.
 - Caduto – agrees with the approach set forward by Lembke and Campany.
 - Cooley – anything in the bylaws for inactive/dormant phase?
 - Caduto – there is a dissolution or winding up of affairs in the bylaws
 - Rasmussen – notes issues other than funding. Sustaining membership is a challenge, especially considering NH meeting laws.
 - Lembke – does not see this as a public document except the section "CRJC 16-month Goals, Benchmarks and Project Leaders".
- Does this document address too many issues or not enough?
 - Cooley - the listed goals seem like a lot difficult to cut any.
 - Lembke – the number of goals is a lot, but should not be too much for the number of commissioners, especially if all 30 positions were filled.
- What is the priority ranking of each goal? What impact, if any, do you think this document will have on commissioners individually and collectively?
 - Griffin – agrees that this is the general priority ranking.
 - Caduto – notes that there is a sequence with the deliverables. This makes it difficult to set clear priorities because many are interdependent.
 - Lembke – the expectation is to have multiple things going on at once.
 - Hastings – flexibility on prioritization is helpful.
 - Lembke – what will be reported on first and last.
 - Cooley – recruiting materials would be useful. What are the expectations for new commissioners? very difficult to recruit without that information.
 - Griffin – Caduto, Griffin and Uyizeye working on these materials.
 - Lembke – Goal leaders should indicate where help is needed and if the benchmark is appropriate.
 - Lembke – do not want to put too much pressure on existing commissioners, pushing them to resign.



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- Campany – over the years, those who have the most energy to sunset the commissions are those who are contributing less. On the topic of the LRS, a question to the extent to which they are still relevant in both states, especially VT. Nothing bad about them, but what is their utility? May need to be candid about the importance of LRS. NH would still require them because of a different role.
- Griffin – had informational discussions with NHDES Tracie Sales. Are looking into what the options are for the LRS if the Commissions are sunset. There is one other LAC in NH with funding.
- Hastings – LRS are important for local input. If complaining, then get involved. Membership is a tough challenge, and important on both sides of the river.
- Caduto – the timing is unfortunate. The Connecticut River will be coming into focus in not-too-distant future because of the LI Sound Futures, TMDL. This organization could have a really big role to play. No other entity in either state has the same to offer. In a couple years, the states are going to be looking for someone to do this work. If we can hold on, that would be good. Make people aware that this is coming down the pike.
- Lembke – right now grasping with fingertips. If make moves on the 16-month plan, CRJC would be in a good way when that moment comes.
- Lembke/Griffin – asks officers to review plan. If you cannot act where you've been named or can take on more responsibility, please email them. Also contact with any comments about the goal or benchmark as written.
- How many of these goals do we have to achieve to move forward?
 - Lembke – can we just assign a number?
 - Caduto – certain ones we have to do, such as needed funding and an active board. The strategic plan doesn't have to happen immediately. Must get CRJC in front of people. If we can do that, can make movement on everything else. LRS are a big piece of that. Commenting on permits in VT, getting in front of people in the state, will make other things grow and happen.
 - Cooley – communications and outreach. This should be earlier. People do not know who we are. Get on the social media with frequent posts. Funding and outreach would assist with the recruiting.
 - Rasmussen – agrees. Doing stuff is needed. CRJC will not get more funding if we are not getting things done.
 - Hastings – recruitment is a job for all of us. Something we do all the time. Keep our eyes open. How many of us are also involved in the LRS? Grassroots contact with people, no better way to do that. Need more commissioners involved with the LRS. Even people who leave, know who the CRJC is.
 - Campany – having this conversation for 11 years. Amount of energy is diminishing. Struggle with putting in staff time to the LRS. A lot of work on water quality, clean water advocacy. The LRS is not really an entity in the Windham Regional Commission region. Never had an item come up, where it needs to go to the LRS, not seeing the difference that it is making.



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- Hastings – contacting local people, that's where the word of mouth comes from. Populace is a big body of intellect.
- Caduto – doesn't disagree with Company. When there were more staff time, a lot of stuff got done. A lot of leadership happened. CRJC was very relevant. The CRJC should be that again. Watershed needs that again. How do we get to that point?
- Griffin – We don't have that money. We can't be what that was.
- Do we and other commissioners have the capacity and willingness to tackle and accomplish these goals?
- How do WE present this to the FC at the March meeting?
 - Caduto – if see these, they are going to be overwhelmed.
 - Griffin – interesting listening to Beth Torpey but CRJC is not in a position to use/take comments. Helps to present a projection of where we want to go with the organization. The current strategic plan doesn't help to maintain organization.
 - Lembke – build on people's knowledge and willingness. Discussing a topic without a quorum. Is ok. (Need to have a quorum? Officially establish committees?)
 - Griffin – Frame benchmarks as, these will allow us to do...
 - Caduto – Could we do this at the meeting as a survey or a poll? Help prioritize what people are thinking. Feedback/involvement.
 - Lembke – put together simple survey with ranking ahead of time.
 - Caduto – ask if there is something that was missed?
 - Rasmussen – concern for items due this fiscal year.
 - Caduto – willing to work with Rasmussen on bi-state discussion.
 - Uyizeye – offers to put together the survey, and add notes for each goal on available staff support, including any outside the current budget. Suggests adding notes on coordination needed between goals.
 - Lembke/Griffin – will clean up document.
- How do we report on and monitor our progress?

4:00 PM Adjourn

By motion of Caduto/Griffin, the meeting is adjourned, passing unanimously.

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Olivia Uyizeye.