



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, September 18th, 2023 - 2 PM
 Hybrid Meeting – Kilton Library, Lebanon, NH

ATTENDANCE

NH CRVRC COMMISSIONERS			VT CRWAC COMMISSIONERS		
NCC	OPEN		Sec. Nat. Resources	Marie Caduto	P
UVLSRPC	Ted Cooley	P	NVDA	Beth Torpey	V
SWRPC	Jeffrey Miller	P	WRC	Margo Ghia	P
CRC	Kate Buckman	P	MARC	Jason Rasmussen	P
CRFCC	OPEN		TRORC	Pete Fellows	X
Hydro-Electric	Jen Griffin	P	RPC#5	OPEN	
Conservation	OPEN		At Large	Beth Kennett	X
Tourism	OPEN		At Large	OPEN	
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

In Person:

Don Devanney, Great River Hydro, Director of Asset Management

Hannah Dallas, Southern Windsor County Forester

(Pending Commissioner appointment for CRWAC At Large forestry stakeholder).

Erin De Vries, Vermont River Conservancy, Co-Executive Director and Conservation Director

(Pending Commissioner appointment for CRWAC At Large conservation stakeholder).

Virtual: Olivia Uyizeye, Staff Consultant.

AGENDA

2:00 PM Convene

1. Welcome

President Cooley starts the meeting at 2:09pm. Commissioners and guests in attendance introduce themselves.

2. Adopt/Review Minutes of March

Cooley opens the June meeting minutes for review. No edits.

By motion of Miller/Caduto, the minutes are approved. The motion passes unanimously.

3. Financial Report

Rasmussen reviews the notes on the July financials. Spending looks on target. No concerns are raised.

By motion of Caduto/McClammer, the financials are approved. The motion passes unanimously.



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4. Continuing Assessment Plan or "CAP"

a. 1- Funding

Griffin reports that NH funding is confirmed, and we are in the first of a two year cycle.

Caduto VT in process for next contract, with paperwork in place for a before Nov 1 start. This request is an increase to \$35,000 grant, and next year Nov 1, 2024, request has already been submitted for an increase to \$40,000. To date, this funding largely covers staff support. This November start was made recently to ensure contracts start on time as those on the July 1 have regularly been delayed.

Uyizeye reports that a proposal has been submitted to the NHCF unrestricted grant for \$20,000. If received this funding is not tied to a specific task or project, it is for organizational functioning.

b. 2- Staffing

Rasmussen reports that the staffing agreement is in place for this fiscal year. CRJC bylaws require that a consultant be chosen through an RFP process at least every five years. The last RFP was out in 2014, which has been delayed for organizational stability reasons. Rasmussen and Ghia agree that it is appropriate and required to put out an RFP for the next fiscal year. An RFP will be drafted for review and approval at the January meeting. The goal will be to have the RFP go out in February/March time frame, with 3 weeks to respond. Staffing should then be in place in advance of the new fiscal year. Ghia asks that when CRJC is at the point to review proposals, it might be nice to have a larger variety of voices in addition to Ghia and Rasmussen.

c. 3- Deliverables

Griffin reports that the deliverables table has been updated and shared with Caduto/Uyizeye. Only thing outstanding at this point was the year end financials to VT, due October.

d. 4- LRS Actions

Ghia provides an overview of the team's discussion based on input from the five local river subcommittees through survey and meeting discussion. The main priority for this fiscal year is agreed to be more training on what they are tasked to do, primarily on permits and the Vermont basin plans. This item will largely be tackled through an online training this winter that will be recorded for future reference. In addition, recruitment for Riverbend and Headwaters will be a priority.

For future fiscal years, other priorities were identified. Building collaboration with conservation commissions and select boards to identify local projects. Second, there was interest from the LRS to explore local watershed education in a focused way. Lastly, there was focus on fundraising especially for legislator engagement. The option to work with a lobbying was discussed, however staff need to determine whether CRJC is allowed to engage in this type of activity.



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Cooley emphasizes the Upper Valley LRS frustration with the permit review process. Buckman emphasizes that LRS should meet to discuss actions even if there aren't permits to review. Griffin suggests Tracie Sales as a very helpful resource for the training workshop.

e. 5- Recruit/Retain

Griffin reports from the Team's activities to put together a coordinated process for recruitment, onboarding, and retainment of Commissioners. Commissioners were requested to suggest specific names in target knowledge or geographic areas. Knowing these names ahead of time would help with a coordinated outreach effort. The team also suggests extending the invitation to others for the CRJC social event on October 7th.

f. 7- Bi-State Meetings

Rasmussen reports for the team that the bi-state meetings are in development. The focus is primarily on discussions on the topics of water quality, agriculture, and climate migration.

Conversation follows about the water quality discussion as there are a few topics of focus that could be considered, including Nitrogen TMDLs (i.e., total maximum daily loads), cyanobacteria, and safe swimming. On safe swimming, multiple commissioners confirmed concerns raised during recent flooding. Caduto recommends CRJC to support messaging to just not go swimming after any large rainfall event. This is a time to educate about pollutants such as sewage, as well as petroleum and other contaminants that certainly get washed into the Rivers during any large flood event.

Ghia, McClammer, and Cooley reference water quality as an area of concern and interest. Uyizeye notes that Buckman has agreed to collaborate on a water quality summary for public distribution from the last few year's of data collection on the Connecticut River.

g. 8- Communications

Cooley confirms that this team has not yet met. Uyizeye references that the potential actions by this team will be impacted most by whether CRJC received the NHCF Unrestricted Grant for \$20,000.

h. 9- Watershed Speaker

There is no update on a watershed speaker for Full Commissions meetings.

5. LRS Update

a. Quarterly Report & Water Quality Monitoring Program

Uyizeye provides summarizes the quarterly report including the water quality monitoring program and most recent meetings. The riverwide speaker series event planning is well underway and planned for late this coming Winter.



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There are two new nominated members in this quarterly report. Their appointment is delayed to the next meeting as their forms were not available for advance Commissioner review. Cooley will review the forms for pro forma appointments.

6. Updates and Other Business

a. CRJC social

Cooley reminds Commissioners to RSVP to the upcoming CRJC social at Storrs Pond in Hanover on October 7th. Uyizeye confirms attendance for near 30. The social event will include speaker Karl Kemnitzer who will speak about the Route 5 bicycle Corridor in VT under Study this Fall and Winter. In addition, there will be a table for people to learn and discuss the relicensing status for the Wilder, Bellows Falls, and Vernon dams.

b. Summer Flooding

The question is posed: What is the role of CRJC in these cases of more flooding? Caduto suggests that CRJC help to get back information out there, including that on safe swimming and connecting to both state's resources. It will be good to highlight the information during emergencies and offer general floodplain resources on the website.

Buckman suggests that this is an opportunity to engage with state agencies, NHDES is updating their climate plan, previously focused on the Seacoast. This is a place where emphasis can be placed on the Western part of the state. Buckman agrees that communications and outreach is also an important avenue.

Caduto adds concern around agriculture in the floodplain. If we want farmers to allow their fields to be flooded because it helps us all, how are we compensating for that loss. Crop insurance provides only partial recovery, as low as 15% of the loss is mentioned.

Dallas notes the issue also one for the forest industry. Need to consider impact of practices to the environment, and also impact to the industry itself due to damage to tools and forestry infrastructures.

Millers suggests emphasis on the whole watershed. Promotion to be more active in communities or businesses as well as those areas along the River itself.

c. CRJC Annual Report

Uyizeye reports that the fiscal year 2023 report is out on the website. It is one of our contract deliverables that will be shared with riverside towns at the end of the calendar year. Uyizeye notes that it hasn't been voted on in the past.

d. Hydro-relicensing

Griffin reports that there are no updates.

e. LISFF

Caduto confirms that the agriculture project did finally receive their contract. Uyizeye reports that the stormwater proposal is pending response in November.



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f. Connecticut River Watershed Partnership Act (Friends of Conte)

Caduto reports that the legislations has been submitted in both states. McClammer asks if a letter of support would be appropriate, which Caduto responds that it is not yet time. Ghia offers to write a draft in preparation.

g. Other Business

McClammer suggests CRJC bring Commissioners, LRS, and public together in preparation for comments on the relicensing of the Wilder, Bellows Falls, and Vernon dams. McClammer drafted a press release to talk about what is going on, what CRJC has done in the past, and what we're doing now. CRC staff will be giving presentations to the Upper Valley, Mount Ascutney, and Wantastiquet LRS this fall.

Griffin suggests informing people and highlighting what the public or various people can contribute to the process.

Caduto expresses concern over trying to put too many voices on a letter. Cooley suggests including the LRS involved so not to be blind-sided. DeVries echoes suggests sharing but not specifically request edits. The LRS would bring local education and knowledge to the process.

Commissioners agree for the Executive Committee to review as the next full commissions meeting is not until January, which would be after this Fall's LRS presentations.

4:00 PM Adjourn

Griffin thanks everyone for attending.

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

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Olivia Uyizeye.