

**Upper Valley Subcommittee
Special Meeting Minutes**

Monday, Sept 16, 2024 – 6:00 PM Meeting

Hybrid Meeting – Norwich Library, Downstairs, 368 Main Street, Norwich, VT

Attendance

NH Members:	Attendance	VT Members:	Attendance
Alice Creagh, Hanover	X	Ted Unkles, Bradford	P
Vacancy, Hanover		Vacancy, Bradford	
Eric Agterberg, Lebanon	X	Ben Dana, Fairlee	X
Ruth Bleyler, Lebanon	X	Arlene Guest, Fairlee	P
Bill Malcolm, Lyme	P	David Barrell, Hartford	X
Vacancy, Lyme		Lynn Bohi, Hartford	V
Ted Cooley, Orford	P	Bill Bridge, Thetford	P
Carl Schmidt, Orford	X	Watt Alexander, Norwich	P
Vacancy, Piermont		Lynnwood Andrews, Norwich	P
Vacancy, Piermont		Vacancy, Norwich	
Majestic Terhune, Lebanon	P		
Jude Stell (sp?) Lebanon	P		

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

Partners Present: Ian Garland (Staff, CRJC, In-person)

Minutes

1. Welcome and Introductions/ Roll call + Brief Bio

Chair Malcolm started the meeting at 6:00 p.m. Members and partners present introduced themselves.

Arlene Guest: Fairlee: On the committee for about 9 months. Background as a retired Physical oceanographer. Works in Lebanon

Jude Stell: Environmental management and loves the Connecticut River.

Ted Unkles: Bradford: VT department of environmental services. Didn't know there were vacancies in Bradford and the previous chair told him to join.

Ted Cooley: Orford: Vice chair of the Orford Conservation Commission. Vice president of the CRJC so it helps to be involved in both groups. Background in electrical engineering.

Lynnwood Andrews: Norwich: Vice Chairman of the Norwich Conservation Commission. Asked for a response to the Wilder Dam on behalf of Norwich and became aware of the group and Norwich needing a rep. Retired child psychologist.

Bill Bridge: Thetford: Has lived on the river for 40 years. Set up camp sites and has been on CRJC for Thetford for 10 years.

Watt Alexander: Norwich: Businessman and cattle farmer. Impact on permitting and legal aspects and conservation where the river hits the road. Here to learn.

Majestic Terhune: Lebanon: Enjoyed working with the CRJC with the UVLSRPC and wanted to continue.

Bill Malcolm: Lyme: Chair of the UVLSRPC and on the zoning board. Spent time on the river rowing it's a fantastic resource. Wants to help.

Lynn Bohi: Hartford: Original member. Needed someone from the conservation commission. State legislator from VT. Now retired and the river is a good place to be.

Chair Malcolm appointed Stell and Terhune for the meeting for voting purposes.

2. Members with 3 or more Unexcused Absences:

Malcolm explained that there are members of the LRS that haven't been attending meetings and need to be removed because they are causing issues with quorums and are taking away their towns chance to be represented by filling a spot and not participating.

Garland showed a list of members who have not attended the past five meetings

Members list:

Alice Creagh (Hanover): 0/5
Eric Agterberg (Lebanon): 0/5
Ruth Bleyler: (Lebanon): 0/5
Carl Schmidt: (Orford): 0/5
Ben Dana: (Fairlee): 1/5

Guest asked if Dana could be an alternate in case she can't make it.

Malcolm explained that you can't be an alternate and an active member.

Garland explained that it is okay for both members of one town to be present at one meeting.

Malcolm motioned to remove the other members that haven't been attending meetings. Cooley seconded. Vote passed unanimously.

3. September 16th Minutes:

Guest told Garland that the only thing to change is the "xx" appearing in the minutes. Garland said that he would change it.

Garland stated that he would also change the few spelling mistakes and name inconsistencies.

Guest motioned to approve the minutes with the noted changes. Unkles seconded. Stell abstained. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Permits

a. Wilder Shoreland

No comments.

b. Hanover Wastewater

Bohi mentioned that it is functioning as expected and that there were no comments.

Stell asked if there was any way that they could do it that would be better and have less discharge.

Malcolm stated that NHDES has scientists and other officials looking at it so this group may have less impact than they would as oppose to an issue such as a boat launch. The group is more like the eyes and ears.

Unkles stated that there were many comments about projects that didn't receive responses in general.

Stell asked if there were any cases where minimum standards are not met.

Garland mentioned that in other LRS subcommittees they have provided comments on permit applications and received a response. Mentioned that there was never any change to the permits, but they did receive a response.

c. West Lebanon Alteration of Terrain Permit

Malcolm explained the project and the timeline. Also explained that the group can host another meeting to discuss further if needed.

There was a discussion about which bridge it was. Unkles where the project area is taking place.

There was discussion about how the permit application was confusing because there were a lot of numbers with very little explanation.

Terhune explained that in each section there was a takeaway part.

Unkles motioned to have a meeting on February 24th to discuss the permit further. Cooley seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

5. Project and Permit Application Review Process and Laws that Govern our conduct

Malcolm talked about the project and permit application review guidelines and explained how they work with NH right-to-know laws.

Communication among members outside of a warned meeting cannot happen. When sending out a group meeting asking for comment, yes or no only. Not asking for an opinion, also don't use reply all. Doesn't want to run afoul of making a comment through emails.

Cooley asked if it would make sense for committee members to use LRS UVLSRPC email addresses.

Malcolm suggested making a separate email address. Has not asked from a legal standpoint.

Garland put it in the to-discuss list.

Malcolm discussed CRJC bylaws and conflict of interest documents and how a conflict of interest could come to be. Asked the group to be aware and that the statute discusses financial interests. Need to disclose and not vote or abstain.

Unkles explained a potential conflict of interest between him and the Wilder Dam for example.

Cooley talked about how perceived conflict of interest is important as well.

Bohi asked about the signature part of the conflict of interest.

Garland stated that he would ask Marie about it.

Malcolm explained what the NH right-to-know law is and mentioned that the members should take a look. Important from an administrative point of view.

Cooley mentioned that there is no quorum, texting about a meeting is bad.

6. Other Business

No comments

7. Adjourn

Cooley motioned to adjourn. Unkles seconded. The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

The next meeting is February 24th, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Ian Garland.