

York River Study Committee
Meeting Minutes (Draft)
April 26, 2016, Grant House, York

Voting Members Present: Chuck Ott, Thom Kearns, Judy Spiller, Joan LeBlanc, Jack Murphy, Cindy Donnell, Karen Arsenault, Bryce Waldrop

Voting Members Absent: Jean Demetracopoulos, Steve Pelletier, Stefan Claesson, Beth Walter

Other Committee Members Present: Jennifer Hunter, Jim MacCartney, and Paul Dest

Guests: Ron Nowell

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chuck Ott, Chair

1. Welcome and Introductions: Chuck welcomed Bryce Waldrop as a new member of the York River Study Committee. Each member present introduced his/herself and then Bryce gave the group a bit of background on his experience and interest in participating as a member of our committee.

Ron Nowell was introduced. He wanted to bring to our attention an issue relating to a potential dumpyard on the bank of Fall Mill Brook, seized by the Town of York from a member of the Ramsdell family for failure to pay taxes. He felt the pit could be potentially dangerous to the water.

Chuck thanked Mr. Nowell for making us aware of this issue and he left the meeting.

2. Minutes: The minutes of the March 22 meeting were distributed. Joan made a motion, seconded by Thom, to approve the minutes. All were in favor and the minutes were approved.
3. Budget Review: Paul presented a report showing expenses to date. He said he would present the committee with a report on a quarterly basis. A motion was made by Thom to accept the budget as presented, seconded by Jack and unanimously passed.
4. Watershed Surveys/Data: Paul reported that two studies had been completed on the York River, one was a fisheries study documenting fish species in the York River, done 15 years ago, finding 25 species. The other was a salt water marsh study. The question asked was what would it take to update the data? Paul suggested that the studies can't really be updated. Validation would mean doing an entirely new survey starting in April

and ending in October, which he estimated would be 150 hrs. x 3 seasons, costing somewhere around \$15,000 for field work and data analysis.

It was suggested that the estimate seemed low and questioned whether there were particular species of concern we might want to investigate rather than doing a whole new study. Other questions that arose had to do with the number of sites sampled, were these different types of species/habitats indicators of good water quality?

The saltwater marsh study was completed in 2005, to determine threats to the watershed/salt marsh peat/invertebrates and plant communities from issues relating to land use.

Question: We want to know what we need. Jenn will send reports.

Next steps: Paul will sit down with his people and get a better handle on costs

Comments:

Jim suggested that we could rely on the data that exists, perhaps with a recommendation in the management plan to do a more current study.

Need to prioritize gaps that arise and consider time frame

What issues rise to the top

Water quality indicators – was there collection?

5. Subcommittee Reports:

ORV: Jenn reported on behalf of Stefan with an update on the archeological data he had collected: a cultural inventory of dams from the state, which was information not publicly available on archeological sites – inventory, maps, photos. He is aware of what is available for data and data gaps. Almost all information available on Gogledocs.

Advisor/Stakeholder Meeting:

Outreach Subcommittee: The goal of the meeting was discussed:

Meeting with “good friends” as a first step (advisors, town officials, members of local land trusts, harbor board, open space committees, science teachers in schools, Congressional delegation . . .) in late May/early June.

What do we want to share? What kind of feedback do we want? What do we want to accomplish? Listening session?

Jenn reported on the dates the Library community room was available and it was determined that we would hold the meeting on June 20th from 6-7:30.

Topics:

- Intro from Chuck and Jenn (overview and introduction of Study Group volunteers, what we will be presenting)
- Wild & Scenic 101 presented by Jim

- Timeline, planning document approach
- ORV highlights
- Website and other outreach plans
- Identifying lead person in each area
- Taking questions and writing down concerns
- Drafting our own questions
- Inviting people to participate with us

Other outreach topics discussed

- Invitation to participate in Eliot Festival Day, September 24th
- Draft website in process. Website address: www.yorkrivermaine.org
- Chuck brought up idea of using a video to disseminate our message – people keeping the stories alive.
- Bryce suggested artists and writers should be added to our outreach list

Questions:

- How much information do we want on our website? Minutes yes, minus open forum.
- Committee members contact information? Y/N? Let Jenn know.

6. **Conclusion:** Committee members spent the final 15 minutes in an Open Forum, bringing up and discussing various topics and issues.

Motion to adjourn made by Thom, seconded by Cindy.

Hearing no objections, Chuck adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

The next meeting is Tuesday, May 24 at 5:30 p.m. at the Grant House.

Minutes submitted by Karen Arsenault