

**Missisquoi Basin Water Quality Council (BWQC) Meeting
MINUTES**

Wednesday, November 1st, 2023, 11-1 PM
Virtual Meeting/Held Via Zoom* (computer/smartphone/tablet etc.)
<https://youtu.be/0GVA88UJUdw>

**A VIDEO RECORDING OF THE MEETING IS AVAILABLE THROUGH
THE NRPC YOUTUBE CHANNEL (Link above).
THE WRITTEN MINUTES ARE A SYNOPSIS OF THE DISCUSSION AT THE
MEETING. MOTIONS ARE AS STATED. MINUTES WILL BE SUBJECT TO
CORRECTION BY THE COUNCIL. CHANGES, IF ANY, WILL BE RECORDED IN THE
MINUTES OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

Council Members: Lindsey Wight (Q), Kent Henderson (Q), Dan Seeley (Q), Allaire Diamond (Q), Jacques Couture, Lauren Weston (Q), Barry Lampke (Q) (Q=toward quorum), David Allerton, Beth Torpey(Q), Ellen Fox
Staff: Dean Pierce, Maddie Yandow, Sara Gratz
Voting Members not present: Ted Sedell, Sarah Damsell
Others Present: Jim Pease's Otter AI, July Medina-Triana, Karen Bates, Bridget Butler

1. Welcome and Introductions

Lindsey Wight opened the meeting as BWQC chair at 11:00 am. Participants introduced themselves.

2. Meeting protocols

Meeting protocols were reviewed.

3. Conflict of interest declarations, if any

Lauren Weston stated that she has a proposal that is on the table.

Kent Henderson stated that he should recuse himself from voting for Bridget Butler as his alternate.

Lindsey Wight stated that she is involved with a proposal that is on the table.

Dean Pierce stated that Barry Lampke will recuse himself from voting on the application that Maddie Yandow submitted since they are both staff of Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NRPC).

4. Review/adjust and approve agenda

No adjustments were offered to the agenda. Kent Henderson motioned to approve it and Beth Torpey seconded the motion. Motion carried.

5. Approval of Minutes

Beth Torpey motioned to approve the minutes from the last meeting. Dan Seeley seconded the motion. Motioned carried.

6. Public comment not related to items on agenda

No public comments were made.

7. Seating of any new reps or alternate(s) (if required)

Bridget Butler was nominated to be seated as an alternate for Kent Henderson. Beth Torpey motioned to approve and Allaire Diamond seconded. Kent Henderson recused. Motion carried.

8. Funding Application/Project Review

Dean Pierce discussed the two applications that were submitted for funding, including one from Maddie Yandow and one from Lauren Weston. Dean stated that although both he and Maddie are staff of NRPC, he was not involved with the application in any way. Dean recommended both projects to be approved.

Maddie Yandow gave a presentation on her application for project development using the Functioning Floodplain Initiative (FFI) tool. The goal of the project would be for NRPC and Missisquoi River Basin Association (MRBA) to work together, using the FFI tool to identify 10-14 priority projects to improve water quality and reduce phosphorous. The total cost of the project development would be close to \$45,000.

A discussion followed to clarify that this work would be to identify projects that could be added to the watershed project database for further development, but it would not consist of project design. Excitement and concerns were expressed about using the FFI tool in this manner as it is

a new process and there is no standard protocol in place. Maddie acknowledged these concerns and assured that they would consult with others who have done similar work to ensure consistency.

Kent Henderson motioned to approve the project for funding and Lauren Weston seconded. Lindsey Wight and Barry Lampke recused themselves. Motion carried.

Lauren Weston gave a presentation on her application to move a project to the final design phase. The project consists of removing a failing dam from the Trout Brook Reservoir, which is owned by the town of Enosburg Falls. The removal of the dam would represent an estimated phosphorous (P) credit of 47.1 and a one-time P removal of 5,000 kg. The final design phase of the project is estimated to cost just under \$110,000.

A discussion followed regarding the high cost of the project. Lauren explained that the cost is higher because they are expecting that they will need to conduct a historical and archeological study, a mussel study, and that some water lines near the site may need to be moved. It was also mentioned that removing sediment from the waterway will cause some of it to wash downstream, creating a displacement of phosphorous. Lauren acknowledged this concern, assured that measures would be taken to minimize displacement, and reiterated that the long-term goal is to reduce phosphorous levels overall.

Allaire Diamond moved to approve the project for funding and Kent Henderson seconded. Lauren Weston recused. Motioned carried.

9. Policy on Budget Adjustments

Dean Pierce made a presentation proposing a policy for budget adjustments. He highlighted the need for a simplified process of amending budgets when projects require more funding. He noted one other Basin Water Quality Council (BWQC) has adopted such a policy. Dean proposed that an increase in budget of less than 10% could be approved by CWSP staff, an increase between 10-20% could be approved by the Chair and Vice Chair, and that an increase of over 20% would require action by the BWQC.

A discussion followed over concerns that amending budgets by a percentage could lead to big increases depending on the size of the project. Dean suggested that caps could be put in to

place, or dollar amounts could be used instead of percentages. A decision was made to discuss the topic further at the next meeting.

10. Training regarding Cultural Resource Assessment

Dean Pierce gave a brief presentation on the Cultural Resource Assessment that some projects may be required to complete during their preliminary design phase. He shared that the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has a video explaining the process and that NRPC has a transcription of the video if anyone would like to read it. DEC encourages watching the video first and then reaching out for further questions.

A short discussion followed between members who have had experience using the Cultural Resource Assessment and suggestions were made to those who are less experienced with the process.

11. Updates and Conclusion – Finances / COI /Applications by NRPC / Adoption of existing projects

Dean Pierce shared a document that CWSP shares with DEC to track funds. He shared that the Missisquoi Basin has been awarded 1.9 million and much of it is unused because not many projects have been brought to completion. This highlights a need to get more projects done to use the funds that are available.

Dean made some suggestions for future agenda topics including CWSP's role in identifying completed projects for adoption to make funds available for their operations and maintenance. He suggested that future conversations could discuss the types of projects that would be good to go after.

12. Conclusion

Beth Torpey motioned to adjourn the meeting and Kent Henderson seconded. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 12:45 pm.