

Lamoille Basin Water Quality Council (BWQC)

Thursday, September 24, 2026

9:00 AM to 11:00 PM

Virtual Meeting

Meeting video posted at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wFwxRTkB3hI>

**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: Meghan Rodier (Q), Mel Auffredou (Q), Ken Minck (Q), Brad Holden (Q),
Chris Steel (Q), Fiona McMurtrie (Q), Remy Crettol (Q), Alice Weis (Q)

Q= towards quorum q= towards quorum when representative has recused

Staff: Dean Pierce, Lorna Peters

Others present:, Chris Rottler (DEC), Karen Bates (DEC), Dan Koenemann (Winooski NRCD),
Richard Goff (LCPC), Will Marlier (OCNRCD)

1. Welcome and introductions

Meghan Rodier opened the meeting at 9:05am as Chair. A round of introductions was made.

2. Meeting protocols

Meghan Rodier reviewed norms for meeting on Zoom.

3. Conflict of interest declarations, if any

Chris Steel declared a conflict of interest as a board member of OCNRCD and will abstain from
voting on OCNRCD's budget adjustments.

4. Review/adjust and approve agenda

Meghan motioned that we add the Cemetery Brook budget adjustment request to the agenda. Brad seconded and requested that time estimates for agenda items are included in the agenda. Chris abstained. Motion carried.

5. Approval of minutes

Remy motioned to approve the July 30th meeting minutes. Chris seconded. Motion carried.

6. Public comment not related to items on agenda

Karen made a comment that the Lamoille TBP is in the public comment stage and BWQC members can now make comments. LCPC held an informational meeting on the Lamoille TBP and could make the recording available if anyone would like to watch.

7. Seating of new members

Alice Weis was seated as the representative for LCCD, making Emily Lugthart an alternate.

8. Budget Adjustment requests

a. Administrative

No administrative budget adjustments were made.

b. Requests requiring BWQC Vote

i. Alley project 12645

OCNRCD requested a budget adjustment for their Greensboro stream and wetland restoration project. The project was approved for both Preliminary and Final Design, and 30% design plans were sent to VDHP. It was deemed that both design plans would require further archaeological review. Will reached out to multiple consultants and found the best price. The budget adjustment includes this estimate and covers Will's additional time spent. Remy asked if archaeological review could happen while more design plans are being created. Will answered that their plans are currently past 30% and ARA will be taken into account in the final plans. Ken asked if any sites were found within a kilometer of the project. Will does not believe this was looked at, but that Crown Consulting would potentially look at other areas outside the project. Ken commented that AHA was triggered for a project in Georgia because a site was recorded nearby, and Will replied that proximity to surface waters is likely the reason ARA was triggered. **Mel motioned to approve the Alley Project budget adjustment request. Remy seconded. Chris abstained. Motion carried.**

ii. Cemetery Brook 14066

OCNRCD explained that this is another wetland/stream restoration project in the Caspian watershed and is already in implementation. The next step is planting, and Will is concerned

about tracking survivorship for their 4000+ stakes over 11 acres. This budget adjustment includes an order for bamboo stakes to track planted stakes, Will's extra time spent, and an order for tube stock from the Intervale. Ken commented that they used tree tubes for a prior planting, and Will shared that the concern was primarily finding the planted trees in tall competing vegetation to manually remove vegetation. Brad commented on the high cost of the gate drop, and Will shared that most of the cost is likely from shipping from the West Coast. Mel noted that the FCNRCD has used stakes in their recent plantings and it has made a huge difference in O&M. Remy suggested flagging the stakes, and Will is hoping to spray paint the bamboo stakes to avoid introducing excess chemicals and flagging tape to the area. **Brad motioned to approve the Cemetery Brook budget adjustment request. Ken seconded. Chris abstained. Motion carried.**

9. DEC formula grant proposal

Dean shared that a Formula Grant funding change is out for public comment. He explained that funding comes in yearly increments, and this proposed change for FY2027 (Year 5) includes two adjustments. One of the adjustments is to account for inflation, reducing the overall targets for each basin for FY2025 due to increased project costs. There is another request that \$800,000 for Year 5 in the Missisquoi Basin (Basin 6) will be split between Basin 7 (Lamoille) and Basin 17 (Memphremagog). The additional \$400,000 for each basin will increase the Year 5 reduction targets, and will be used for projects, administrative costs, and O&M. Comments can go to <https://enb.vermont.gov/?id=30903>. Comments are due October 5th. Chris shared that the Clean Water Board and Legislature will be looking more closely at open accounts, and the Missisquoi has much more available funds when compared to other basins. This money can likely be moved faster in the Lamoille and Memphremagog basins. Chris also shared that capacity on both the partner and DEC sides, and difficulties with agricultural projects and ARA also contribute to difficulties getting projects through.

10. Policy Topics

a. Enabling of costs as of BWQC approval

Dean explained that once a project is approved by the BWQC, the CWSP starts drafting a Task Award for that project, which can take some time. Project partners are currently not able to be reimbursed for costs incurred between project approval and Task Award signing. Some other state programs will allow reimbursement from the approval date, even without the contract being signed. The BWQC could contact DEC asking for consideration that the official state policy be changed to be based on the timing of BWQC decision, not contract signing. Mel asked for clarification on the BWQC and CWSP roles in project approval. Dean explained that the BWQC is making recommendations for the CWSP to approve projects, and the decision can change if the CWSP does not think the project is acceptable. Mel asked how this process would work with

these two decisions. Dean suggested that there could be a “motion to proceed” from the CWSP before a Task Award is signed, and time could start being billed then. Remy stated that he would be supportive of this change, noting that contracting can often take time and a lot of back and forth. Ken shared that there is some awkwardness with invoicing for town projects that are being managed by another entity. Dean explained that there is not really a work-around for the secondary managing entity to be the one receiving invoices and reimbursing contractors, unless the project manager designates that responsibility to the CWSP. Ken asked, in regard to the Silver Lake Road project, if the Town of Georgia be receiving invoices for the consultant work, or will the CWSP be managing the contracts given that NRPC is doing the work for the project. Dean said that no, invoices will go to the town. Meghan and Remy agreed that this can be a clunky process and said that being clear with consultants is helpful in these situations. Brad asked if the agreement with the landowner would be signed before any funds were spent to limit the risk of a project incurring costs and never moving forward. Dean replied that one of the deliverables for design projects is a draft site access agreement (signed for final design), so the project partner will likely know the project will not be stopped by the landowners prior to implementation (generally the most expensive project phase). Some conditions could be put on the reimbursement so that reimbursement was dependent on the project moving forward. Remy suggested that staff time for forwarding the project could be reimbursed, but not contracting costs or equipment costs prior to contract signing. Mel shared that it could be up to the subgrantee’s discretion, whether they choose to devote time and funds prior to contracting. Brad shared some of his experience with VTrans projects, and suggested that this process could be implemented for projects as-needed. Dean noted that none of this is possible under DEC’s current policies, and the start will be a change in DEC policy that does not tie ability to incur funds with the signing of the Task Award. BWQC members were generally supportive of this idea, and action could be taken at a future meeting.

b. Timing of Officer Elections

Dean explained that some partners have shared that the timing of elections can be difficult if time for meetings is compensated with grants outside of the CWSP. The idea of moving elections could be helpful for budgeting for those being funded through the Tactical Basin Plan because Chair and Vice Chair get different funding based on their increased involvement. Elections could happen earlier in the year for these organizations that rely on a separate grant where they need to apply for funding earlier in the year. Dean added that it could be easier for the CWSP to just manage all reimbursements for BWQC members time, since they do it for some members, just not all. Meghan asked what the most administratively efficient approach would be to this, and added that the TBP budget request just involves changing a line for involvement in BWQC meetings. Remy shared that, to him, it makes the most sense to just standardize where reimbursement comes from, and Dan agreed. Mel asked if this alteration

would be reimbursements or up-front payments, and if it would include meeting prep time. Dean said it would likely be reimbursements and could be altered to include meeting prep, but it currently does not. Meghan added that \$50 per hour reimbursements do not account for all members on the BWQC, since indirect rates vary. Ken said that this could also include compensation for prep for project presentations in meetings, which could vary.

11. Updates

a. Next application rounds

Dean shared that the next call for applications will open on October 8th and close on November 12th. The next round will open in early February.

Dean asked the BWQC if they would like to continue receiving every item in the application packet, or if they would like a shortened version. There will also be a CAPTCHA system employed to address spam in the application form.

b. CWSP reappointment/status renewal update

NRPC is currently in the reappointment process for CWSP designation and will submit a self-assessment by the end of October. BWQC member public comments are due mid-October. Additionally, all materials for two projects will need to be submitted to DEC as part of this process.

c. Training opportunities

Dean opened the meeting for training opportunities. Mel shared a link for FCNRCD's ongoing permitting for clean water projects webinar series and a lakeshore restoration post-implementation permitting session.

12. Choose Date for Next Meeting (conflict with Thanksgiving)/Adjourn

The next meeting will be moved to December 3rd and will include application review. **Remy motioned to adjourn. Brad seconded. Meeting adjourned at 10:47.**