

York River Study Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 24, 2017

Grant House, 200 US Route 1, York, Maine

Voting members present: chairman Chuck Ott, Karen Arsenault, Jean Demetracopoulos, Cindy Donnell, Thom Kearns, Joan LeBlanc, Mike Masi, Judy Spiller

Voting members absent: Stefan Claesson, Jack Murphy, Beth Walter

Non-voting committee members present: Paul Dest, Jennifer Hunter, Jim MacCartney, Emma Lord

Visitors: Mary Ann Krebs and Dick Lord (Lamprey River Committee members), Carol and Nick Xenos (York River landowners), Grace ? (York High School student)

1. Chuck welcomed everyone and started off the meeting by asking Dick and Mary Ann to address the group on the benefits accrued resulting from designation of the Lamprey River and any unanticipated negative outcomes.

Perception issues prior to designation:

- Government takeover of land and water withdrawal resource in Durham. Both issues resolved as (1) NPS cannot own land on Partnership W & S rivers and (2) the state saw to it that Durham got a recharging aquifer.
- Ongoing education important

Positives:

- Helped conserve by sale or easement over 3000 acres of land
- Developed community outreach education for schoolchildren, including curriculum development for 4th and 5th graders, field trips for schools, children's book published
- Adult education – videos created on history, water quality, others
- Hired outreach specialist to work with volunteer groups
 - Education on septic systems, wildlife surveys, water quality data collection and analysis
 - Junior ranger program
 - Canoe access

Important part of the success of this designation has been that the money provided by the Park Service on an annual basis has allowed them to attract other partners – leveraging this money to attract other money to accomplish many important projects.

2. Review of Minutes: Chuck asked for any changes/additions to the September minutes. Paul noted a punctuation error to be corrected. *On a motion made by Karen to accept the minutes of the September meeting and seconded by Jean, they passed unanimously.*
3. Straw Man Proposal on York River Designation: Jenn provided a handout to help the group advance the conversation about designation, which included a York River Watershed map outlining designated segments for a “recreational classification,” a chart listing ORV characterizations by segment and values, tasking the committee to define the ORVs.

Discussion occurred about what should and should not be included (streams, tributaries), whether we need to include the whole watershed, would ORVs apply to all areas? Jim said there was no right or wrong way to designate, and all stream segments do not need their own unique ORVs.

It was determined that there are three decision points we need to consider:

- Do we proceed with W & S designation?
- If so, what geography?
- Based on geography, what classification?

Cindy made a motion proposing to designate a part of the York River for Partnership Wild and Scenic Designation, seconded by Jean and passed unanimously.

Jack will be contacted by Jean. Judy felt Kittery should be included in the designated area and Joan felt the recreational classification would be easier to explain and that it wouldn't make a difference once designated.

Joan made a motion that for the area we decide upon for Wild & Scenic, it should be designated recreational. Seconded by Jean and passed unanimously.

The group will discuss which areas to designate at its next meeting. Brief discussion about other data would help with decision-making. Map with roads and town boundaries as well as waterways.

4. Financial Update: Paul explained that the report he presented included money that comes into the Reserve that he is accountable for. No outside funds.
5. Proposal for Contract Support: Chuck proposed that we needed technical help with writing the management plan and asked that we set aside \$7,000 for this purpose. He suggested that we contract with Joan LeBlanc for the natural resources section, in particular water quality, and Stefan Claesson for the historical and archaeological chapter. In coming up with the dollar amount, he used the rate we pay Jenn by the amount of time he considered would be needed to complete the task.

Jean made a motion to appropriate up to \$7000 for assistance in technical writing for the management plan, seconded by Cindy and passed unanimously.

6. Management Plan Status and Updates: Jenn passed out latest draft of the management plan objectives which was presented to the York Board of Selectmen and has been put up on the website. She sent it to the members of our Advisory Board asking for feedback. We want as much feedback as possible from all of our stakeholder groups.
 - Jenn asked for any ideas for overarching outreach efforts
 - Announced Nov. 9th ORV meeting
7. Meetings
 - York Board of Selectmen meeting very positive
 - South Berwick Conservation Commission meeting – receptive as advocates
8. Future Agenda Items
 - Revisit vote on designation
 - Discuss geography for designation
 - Discuss how Outreach and ORV information will come together in the management plan

Adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
 Karen Arsenault
 Acting Clerk