

York River Study Committee Meeting Minutes
December 22, 2020, Online via Zoom

Voting Members Present: Karen Arsenault, Stefan Claesson, Jean Demetracopoulos, Cindy Donnell, Thom Kearns, Joan LeBlanc, Chuck Ott, Judy Spiller

Voting Members Absent: Mike Masi, Jack Murphy

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

Guests: Emma Lord, Deane Rykerson

1. Chairman Judy Spiller began the meeting and had participants introduce themselves.
2. September meeting minutes – On a motion by Chuck and seconded by Karen, members approved the minutes from the September meeting.

Paul gave a brief budget update and noted that a mini-fundraising effort resulted in donations that were matched by the Wells Reserve to cover basic coordination functions. There is a \$2,000 balance as of December 1.

3. Senate Bill 4938 – The bill was introduced in the Senate on December 1 by Senators King and Collins. It was assigned to a committee, but no further action was taken. If not passed in the current session, it will have to be reintroduced in the new congressional session. Karen reached out to Senate staff about the bill getting rolled into some larger budget bills, but it was very unlikely without having had committee hearings. Jenn will continue to share any updates.
4. Stewardship Committee – Committee members that were involved with the York River Steering Committee prior to the York River Study Committee formation described the process to identify members and work with town boards. They had public meetings to describe the York River Study and an application process for interested individuals. They sought different perspectives. The Steering Committee recommended people to town boards. The Steering Committee also benefitted from assistance by Town of York staff. Jim noted that it is typical for about half of the members of a study committee to continue as members of the subsequent committee after designation. The committee discussed identifying skill sets for the future Stewardship Committee. Jenn noted that the Stewardship Plan also identifies that non-voting members from partner organizations can be on the committee.
5. Designation timing – Based on other rivers' experiences, 3-6 months following Congressional designation is a good target for the first meeting of a PWSR stewardship committee. The FFY21 budget includes more funding for Partnership Rivers than previous years, though nothing was included for York River. Jim noted there might be some mechanism for funding York River at the time of designation.
6. Additional discussion – None.
7. Next steps / planned actions – Jenn summarized: (1) Paul and Jenn will continue to communicate with congressional staff on bill status; (2) Jenn will assemble a list of partner organizations; and (3) Paul will share documents from the YRSC application and formation time.

Meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Hunter