

# York River Stewardship Committee Meeting Minutes

## York Land Trust

February 27, 2024

Voting Members present: Karen Arsenault, Allan Kawrse, Joan LeBlanc, Karl Honkonen, David Marshall, Susie Rice, Judy Spiller (Chair)

Others present: Jenn Hunter (Coordinator); Alternates Philip Brekke, Beth Cromwell, and Deane Rykerson; Jim MacCartney (NPS), Hannah Volk (NPS), Emma Lord (NPS)

Guests: Bob Gray (KWD Board), Debby Ethridge (YLT Board), Amelia Nadilo (Exec. Dir. YLT), Lynn Zacharias, Mike Masi

1. **Welcome:** Committee Chair Judy Spiller opened the meeting at 5:30, welcomed everyone and introduced Tad Baker, an historical archeologist and professor of history at Salem State.
2. **Learning opportunity: historic resources.** During the York River Study, Tad helped the Study Group with documenting eligibility for the historic resources component of the study. Tad presented information; when a redacted version of the presentation is provided it will be posted on the website.
3. **Review of Minutes** from January 23rd meeting. Joan made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by David and approved unanimously.
4. **NPS PWSR program updates:** Jim noted there is no new information on the FY24 budget. He's optimistic an agreement can be reached in time to avoid a government shutdown. Jenn said there won't be a proposed budget for the committee's review until we have a budget number for the cooperative agreement amendment.
5. **Conflict of Interest Policy:** A draft policy had been sent out for the committee to review. Karen suggested reviewing the policy section by section for people's comments or suggested edits. A question was asked about how and why the policy came about. It was noted that our bylaws state there will be a conflict of interest policy. It's standard practice for organizations to have such a policy, particularly for matters involving awards and funding decisions for federal funds. Our draft policy was modelled after the Nashua PWSR policy, with additions and changes to meet our needs. Karen walked through the sections of the policy. There were no comments or edits. A motion was made by Karl, seconded by Allan to adopt the policy and was unanimously approved. Jenn noted that she will ask all to complete the acknowledgement form at the March monthly meeting and subsequently each July.
6. **Outreach Subcommittee Update:** Jenn reported that the newly formed committee met in the first week of February. She had distributed the notes to all committee members. All are welcome to either become a member of the committee or attend the monthly meetings that take place on second Friday of each month at 10:15, currently at Kittery Town Hall.

**Recommendation:** Find a paid consultant to help us with "rebranding:" logo development, website redesign; key messages for outreach to audiences. We need to determine what are the things we need to be looking for in a consultant to help us define our needs. We need to develop a "Request for Qualifications." We need a "roadmap."

- Park Service can offer some help: handouts, websites, sharing what other Partnership rivers have done. Each river may choose different things depending on their needs

- \$7000 to get started
- Call for Jenn to move ahead with RFQ
- Draft RFQ to go to the Communications Committee and then to the full Committee in March.
- RFQ will be sent out at end of March with about a month for people to respond.

7. **Ad Hoc River Committee Update:** Beth reported that they were still in the talking stage category. They want to submit an entire package to the Town for the proposed dock at the Grant House: which would include the study, engineering, and permit to build the dock. The current harbor ordinance for a dock needs to change to exclude “town owned property.” Mooring Increase Study showed “packing the boats in” that the Ad Hoc Committee is currently evaluating before addressing.
8. **Proposed Oyster Farm in York River:** Mike Masi, former Study Committee member spoke of the Oyster Farm he is proposing in the York River. He and his partners have submitted plans for this to the Department of Marine Resources. A site report was conducted and he is awaiting a date for a public hearing on the project, which could be some time in April. He wanted to make the group aware of the project and asked if he could make a presentation at our next scheduled monthly meeting. A discussion ensued about how to avoid a presentation at our meeting turning into a public hearing on the project, which is not the purpose of the presentation. The conclusion reached was that Mike would present to our group in order to provide us information on the ecological benefits of this undertaking.
9. **Public Comment:** no public comment

Meeting adjourned at 7 p.m.

Submitted by Karen Arsenault, Secretary

Approved: 3/26/24