

York River Stewardship Committee Meeting

Minutes for the August 27, 2024 meeting at York Land Trust

Voting Members Present: Karen Arsenault, Allan Cawrse, Sally Harold, Joan LeBlanc (Chair), Mary Marshall, Susie Rice, Jim Smith

Other Committee members: Beth Cromwell (Alt), Deane Rykerson (Alt), Paul Dest (Wells Reserve), Emma Lord (NPS), Jim MacCartney (NPS), Hannah Volk (NPS), Jenn Hunter (Coordinator)

Guests: Paul Matthews and Emily Broadbent from Fluent IMC

- 1. Welcome:** Joan LeBlanc, in her first meeting as Chair, opened the meeting at 5:35. Meeting attendees introduced themselves to our guests.
- 2. Fluent IMC:** Paul developed and presented two different logo options that were based on answers to the questionnaire sent to committee members, input at the kickoff meeting, and the boat trip he and Emily took up the river, as well as historic photos he had collected. The two logo options had three colors each, with blue and green elements with color choices intended convey fresher, coastal New England colors; one with the Wiggly Bridge prominently featured with nature behind, the other with a heron, marsh and water. There was much discussion about color and details. Everyone agreed they liked the font that was used and preferred the logo with the heron as the choice to move forward with. Paul noted the issues discussed and would make appropriate tweaks for final decision and approval.

Emily discussed the audit and strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis as the foundation for building a communications strategy: looking for feedback to move forward to understand audiences, partnerships, and other aspects of outreach. We need to look at other websites to see what we like and dislike and to determine content for our website that's missing. Next steps will be working on the communications strategy. Jenn will compile the Committee's feedback on the audit and share with Emily, and the results will be discussed at the next Communications and Outreach Subcommittee meeting.

Before moving to the next agenda item, Joan expressed thanks for Judy's willingness to serve as Chair for the committee's first year. She acknowledged the skill and dedication required to address all the important foundational tasks for a new committee.

- 3. Review of Minutes from June 25th meeting:** Mary moved to accept the minutes as presented, seconded by Susie Rice. All approved.
- 4. Review of FY Q4/Final Year End Report and FY25 Budget:** Sally reviewed the FY24 budget report and remarked that \$86K was rolled into next year's budget. Paul stated that there were hours added in the FY25 budget for Jenn, based on what she needs. If demand goes up, she can be paid more, dependent on what we ask of her.
- 5. PWSR Meeting in October:** Joan stated that we have enough funds in the budget to support travel for 6 members of the committee. She has a list of all interested committee members, but

needs to confirm attendance and will work down the list, hopefully accommodating all that are interested and available.

6. Updates:

NPS: Emma reported that the Park Service has hired an organizational development firm working with 6 rivers to develop best management practices. They will be doing a workshop for all rivers on September 26th, a morning and an afternoon session. Everyone is invited to attend. All committee members will receive information about signing up.

Executive Committee: Joan reported that there have been two external requests for input:

- (1) A river landowner sent a message regarding downed trees in the upper reaches of the river blocking passage and restricting flow. Jenn followed up, conveying that it was a code enforcement issue as we are not a regulatory group, but there could be opportunities for education and outreach on shoreland regulations and buffers.
- (2) The York Conservation Commission contacted us regarding a solar farm that is being considered on the McIntire property. The Committee did not choose to comment. Jenn shared comments she made previously as a private citizen, not representing the committee.

Coordinator Update: Jenn updated the committee that the **saltmarsh restoration project** was just getting underway. Project team members assisting with the project include Joan, Sally, Judy from our committee, Maine Coast Heritage Trust, York Land Trust and USFWS. There will be a community marsh walk to talk about the restoration needs on Tuesday, September 17th.

Old York Historical Society will be hosting a virtual talk on the McIntire Garrison on September 25th @ 6 p.m.

Jenn will draft an annual report, work with the Outreach Committee, and coordinate with the committee members that will present in all four towns. Mary agreed to work with Joan for the York presentation.

River Access Ad Hoc Committee: Mary reported that the Select Board approved the RFP to move forward with the engineering study for the proposed dock at Grant House (\$30K from town, \$10K from Harbor Board, \$10K from YRSC).

7. Public/other comments:

Sally attended a speaker series on NPS coastal resiliency and thought it was excellent; interest in finding out more about NPS technical assistance that was mentioned.

Jim S. noted the Maine Monitor series on salt marshes. He appreciates the river more and more as he has been volunteering to take groups up the river. Volunteering to have councils from towns or other groups take a trip up the river.

Paul encouraged folks to watch Nova's three-part series on the Gulf of Maine. The final episode features Mike Masi's green crab work and Wells Reserve's research.

Mary made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:08.

Submitted by Karen Arsenault, Secretary