

Blackstone River Watershed Council/Friends of the Blackstone
Minutes of the meeting of November 28, 2007

Place: Cumberland Hill Fire Station

Present: Frank Matta presiding, Dave Coutu, Keith Hainley, Judy Hadley, Dave Newton, Roland Gauvin, Paul Roselli, John Marsland, Frank Geary, Alice Clemente, Peter Coffin

The minutes of the October meeting were approved as submitted.

GRANT APPLICATIONS:

Two applications have been submitted for legislative grants, each for \$1000. One is for website improvement; the other for water quality testing. Both of these are ongoing projects tied to other BRWC/FOB initiatives.

A proposal to apply to the RI Rivers Council for money to support the Clear River project that Roland Gauvin has been working on was discussed. NRCS has money for watershed restoration but needs information to decide where to spend it; this mapping project could be of help. Roland Gauvin spent over 100 hours on the culvert mapping project over this past summer. A motion was made and passed that Dave Newton and Roland work on the Rivers Council application and submit it.

BRWC/FOB also needs a project board. Paul Roselli will do a presentation on this, possibly at the next meeting.

STORAGE BUILDING:

A meeting will be held in the next week to move this project forward. Steel worker apprentices are willing to donate their services to put the building in place.

WEBSITE:

The invoice submitted for work on the website has been paid; a few more hours are still to be billed.

An upgradeable current events page has been created. Brian will try to get meeting notices on it. Upgraded letterhead will also be available, as will the last water quality report. The latter will include only the RI segment and take the form of a report card with interpretive commentary.

Sandra suggested putting a blog on the site. A motion was made and passed to ask Brian how much a blog on the website would cost.

Judy suggests that brief bios and pictures of the Board also be put on it.

Frank Geary moved to remove the BVTC link from the webpage. By a vote of 6 in favor, 3 against and 1 abstention, the motion passed.

FISH LADDERS:

A meeting with 36 public and private supporters of this project was held today. Paul Roselli lauded the level of interest and detail that each one was able to provide. Another meeting will be held in approximately two months. A presentation package is being put together for fundraising purposes. Sandra suggested that a list of donors be put on the website.

\$110,000 in matching funds is needed for the first dam; \$425,000 is needed for the others. A committee made up of Paul Roselli, Chris Ratcliffe and Jan Reitsma will make up a "visual" to show and sell the project.

NRCS will take responsibility for permitting.

A motion was made that the information needed to apply for a grant be brought together.

BRWC/FOB's fishladder committee is made up of the following:

Frank Geary, Frank Matta, Dave Newton, John Marsland, Roland Gauvin and Alice Clemente.

BRC REPORT (Peter Coffin):

- A grant application has been submitted for a laptop computer and Power Point equipment.
- Peter reviewed several staff projects: brochures, low impact development, etc.; the In Business for the Blackstone project needs updating to get citizens to participate.
- Matrix: a meeting has been scheduled to prioritize items on the action plan
- There is concern over low flow in the river. While drought conditions may account for some of it, there appears to be more to the problem.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Paul Roselli – the Cumberland mayor's proposal to cut off 8 acres from the Monastery has pointed to a problem that needs to be addressed. The existing Conservation Easement (that, as it stands, expires after 30 years) needs to be recorded on a permanent deed that rides with the land (or on a separate document attached to the existing deed). The restriction would then become RI law and not just town law.

A motion was made and approved that Paul and Joe Pailthorpe look into this and try to move it forward.

John Marsland moved that the FOB account be closed and the funds combined with BRWC funds as of December 31, 2007. The motion was approved.

A Christmas dinner has been scheduled at Casa Fernandes Restaurant on Dec. 12, 6:30 p.m.

A letter sent by Joe Pailthorpe praising the work done by Frank Matta, Ron, John and Keith at the Industrial Park was read. Joe enclosed a check for \$50, a donation to pay Frank Matta for the use of his equipment that he hoped would be matched by BRWC/FOB. A vote was taken to match the donation.

Frank Geary announced that a State preservation grant for \$69,000 has been received by Franklin Farm (a project that BRWC/FOB supports).

Roland presented two ideas for fundraisers:

1. A Bike Path road race (possibly a marathon in the future) Larry Mouradian would be someone to approach about this.
2. Earthfest: a two-day fest using Diamond Hill State Park, with music groups, vendors, etc.