



South Lake Champlain Basin Water Quality Council (BWQC)

July 27, 2023, 11:00 am

Online and in-person at the Rutland Regional Planning Commission offices.

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting called to order 11:05

Council Members present: Erin Rodgers, chair (TU) was present at the beginning, but lost cell phone service; Shayne Jaquith (TNC); Adam Piper (VLT); Katy Crumley (PMNRCD); Mike Winslow (ACRPC); Rob Terry, (BCCD/Merck)

Staff present: Barbara Noyes Pulling, RRPC/CWSP; Hilary Solomon; PMNRCD/CWSP.

VTDEC present: Angie Allen, Basin Planner; Alison Marchione, Lakes and Ponds

Partners/public present: Katie Raycroft-Meyer, ACRPC/Otter Creek CWSP; Andy Sample, Otter Creek Engineering; Mary Beth Poli, Otter Creek Engineering

APPROVE AGENDA

Motion to approve agenda made Katy Crumley, seconded by Rob Terry. Motion was tabled after Erin dropped off the call and we lost quorum. We proceeded through the agenda as written, however.

APPROVE MINUTES

Motion to approve minutes as written from June 15, 2023, made by Mike Winslow, seconded by Shayne Jaquith. Vote tabled because we did not have a quorum.

INITIAL REVIEW OF PROJECTS RECEIVED IN RESPONSE TO THE JULY 20 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

I. ARNOLD BAY BOAT LAUNCH

This project, located at a busy boat launch in the town of Pantton, was submitted by the Addison County RPC/Otter Creek CWSP and presented by Katie Raycroft-Meyer. The project budget is roughly \$18,225 for a final design with a check-in with the BWQC at completion of the 30% design (to check the phosphorus reduction/cost benefit). The project involves regrading the site and adding several small bioretention areas to capture runoff from the

upper parking area and access road, in conjunction with upgrading the site for multiple uses, including high levels of recreation.

Meeting attendees asked about 1) requiring the check in with the BWQC at 30% design and asking for a budget number for the 30% design (from the total), 2) reporting back the phosphorus and cost numbers so we can make sure the project is a good fit for the formula grant, 3) enquiring if the CWSP (or any project manager) can use more than 15% of the project cost for administration costs, 4) if after the 30% design comes back, can we consider using funds from other sources (transportation related for example) to cover costs of various components.

Alison Marchione reminded the group that we need to notify the DEC permit staff ahead of time for new projects. Mary Beth Poli added that permittees should be notified for comments at the initial project stages, but they need the final design for the final permit approvals.

II. MERCK FOREST/METTOWEE SCHOOL WETLAND RESTORATION

This project was presented by Rob Terry the director of Merck Forest, which owns 150 acres adjacent to the Mettowee School in West Pawlet and would like to design a wetland restoration project to reduce phosphorus from adjacent agricultural lands, while providing ongoing educational opportunities for the students. The project is a 30% design, and the proposed budget is \$6000. Mary Beth Poli and Andy Sample (present) with Otter Creek Engineering (OCE) worked to identify the project and the wetland has been delineated by Zapata Courage (DEC wetlands).

Because the project is not completely conceptualized, the exact details are not available, however, the project team plans to map the watershed draining to the wetland and use the FFI tool to inform design and to plant native vegetation in the areas with invasive reed canary grass. Shayne asked if there was a stream restoration component to the project. Rob responded that the stream is more like a farm ditch and restoring it may be part of the design, but they do not have enough information at this time. Mary Beth noted that the project area is associated with a stream, but that the stream fans out and loses its channel in the vicinity of the project. There is also an old stock pond on site that contributes to changes of the natural hydrology of the area.

Barbara noted that Merck Forest has not submitted their qualifications with the CWSP and Rob agreed to follow up with requested information. Merck will need to use their procurement process to secure OCE (ideally put the project out to bid or request three price quotes).

III. WEST RUTLAND MARBLE STREET WETLAND RESTORATION

This application is for a conceptual design of a wetland restoration project along Marble Street in West Rutland. The conceptual design (and related work) budget is \$7,000. The Town of West Rutland is the project manager and OCE assisted with the application and presented the project information.

The Town of West Rutland owns much of the lands in the marsh complex including the area where this restoration would occur. The town is proposing to remove part of Marble Street where it often floods and restoring the wetland in this location.

IV. SHOREHAM GULLY RESTORATION

This project may remain with the Vermont Association of Conservation Districts (VACD) Design Implement Block Grant (DIBG), where it has an initial contract, for the additional funds needed. We will continue to follow up with the applicant and VACD staff. The project request was for roughly \$6,000.

V. FY24 EARLY-STAGE PROJECT DEVELOPMENT FUND

The South Lake CWSP would like to set aside \$30,000, with BWQC approval (and the related project management funds to be used (as needed) to administer the project subcontracts or task orders). The funds would allow for up to \$1,500 per identified project to be used by project partners or the CWSP to hire a limited amount of environmental consultant or engineering time for a field visit and some desktop evaluation. The results of the hired work would include a recommendation about the amount of phosphorus that might be mitigated, the type of project that might be suitable, the rough cost for the project type, and a recommendation about which funding source would be most appropriate for the project to move forward to conceptual or final design (or a recommendation to not move forward if significant barriers exist or the project is otherwise not feasible).

This project brought lots of questions and discussion. Shayne verified that the BWQC needs to approve CWSP spending of the Formula Grant, which they do. Mike was concerned that the language was vague about how projects would come to be identified or funded through this source. He preferred a stormwater master plan as a vehicle. Hilary pointed out that the South Lake watershed (at least the Poultney/Mettowee area) already has recent stormwater master plans, so it would be hard to justify another one so soon. This funding is for projects that were not identified in those plans or for projects identified in older plans where we don't have enough information for the Formula Grant. Mary Beth thought the funds would be helpful to consultants who had to do much of this work for free right now, so that it would incentivize new project development. Angie advocated for both SWMP and this type of flexible funding source. She pointed out that SWMPs are best suited for stormwater projects, where this type of funding would be useful for any sector. Katy requested that the CWSP share with the BWQC the projects that are funded through the fund and noted that they would come back to the BWQC if they were selected for additional funding.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mary Beth Poli asked if Otter Creek Engineering needed to officially notify the CWSP that Andy Sample was replacing her as the wetland biologist who would represent the firm on projects. Hilary noted that the CWSP planned annual communications with qualified partners/subcontractors to identify any major changes that might affect project work. Mary Beth will submit a new resume for Andy, and we will add it to the OCE file.

NEXT MEETINGS

The next meeting in August will include a vote on projects.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Shayne Jaquith and seconded by Mike Winslow.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 12:46 PM

Respectfully submitted by Barbara Noyes Pulling & Hilary Solomon