



**Sudbury, Assabet and Concord
Wild and Scenic River Stewardship Council Meeting
February 25, 2020**

RSC Representatives present: Anne Slugg, Co-Chair (Sudbury), Emma Lord, Co-Chair (NPS), Ron Chick (Framingham-Alt), Bill Fadden (Framingham), Alison Field-Juma (OARS), Ralph Hammond (Bedford), Marlies Henderson (Billerica), Laura Mattei (SVT), Linh Phu (USFWS), David Witherbee (Concord)

RSC Representatives absent: Mary Antes (Wayland-Alt), Elissa Brown (Alt-Concord), Jim Lagerbom (SVT-Alt), Joseph Piantedosi (Bedford-Alt), Trek Reef (Billerica-Alt), Tom Sciacca (Wayland)

Guest: Frank Richichi, Bedford resident

7:12 pm

The January minutes were passed unanimously.

Ms. Lord reported that this year's Riverfest planning meeting went well, that we will have the same number of events as last year, and that the deadline for submitting new events is March 30th. Mr. Chick suggested printing multilingual Riverfest brochures, in particular Spanish and Portuguese ones. It was agreed that we should provide some multilingual text in our digital and Riverfest promotional literature next year, including multiple Asian languages, but that it is not feasible to print more brochures this year. Ms. Phu suggested we might evaluate whether to hire someone next year to expand our social media outreach. That would be an opportunity to connect with more diverse communities.

Ms. Field-Juma said that she and Ms. Dugan would be traveling to Washington, DC in March to lobby each of our state's Representatives and Senators to vote in favor of funding the Wild & Scenic Rivers as part of this year's Appropriations bill.

A discussion centered on a Mass DEP notice about construction related to dewatering associated with a Cumberland Farms processing facility in Westboro. The discharge will be released into Cedar Swamp and the Sudbury River in Westboro. Ms. Field-Juma said that the dewatering is related to a tank removal and the water will not be acidic nor contain suspended solids. It was agreed that the activity is far enough upriver that it will not be necessary for the RSC to comment.

Ms. Lord, Mr. Chick, and Ms. Field-Juma attended a PFAS seminar sponsored by the Environmental Business Council of New England. Ms. Field-Juma said that the state will take the lead on regulating PFAS because the EPA is slowed down by publishing in the Federal Register and waiting for public comments. She said that there are over 7,000 PFAS chemicals. These chemicals float and are found in fish but do not rest in the sediment of rivers. Massachusetts is proposing to set the combined limit for six PFAS chemicals in drinking water at 20 parts per trillion.

Budget

Ms. Slugg said that our new budget will start in September. We have \$1,000 remaining for our website maintenance, which includes updates. We have increased our Mass River Alliance dues to \$250. This

year the RSC allocated money to place two Wild & Scenic signs in Concord and one in Carlisle. The Council will consider placing new signs during the next fiscal year. Mr. Chick suggested adding QR codes to our signs which would then link to our website. Ms. Slugg suggested that in the coming year we fund a scoping study in preparation of any future flow study. She thought that the Council might consider funding this item generously since we are not certain of its actual cost. She recommended proceeding with the scoping study in 2020-2021 because we have talked of a flow study for many years and it will give us a better understanding of whether this topic is worthy of fuller study.

Ms. Lord said that the grant proposal committee voted not to jointly fund an intern with the MMNHP next year because educational outreach is already being addressed and because a large amount of money is expected to be spent on the flow study. Ms. Phu said that we could reconsider jointly funding an intern with the USFWS if the work of a USFWS intern happened to converge with social media opportunities for the RSC, though that idea would need to be looked at carefully. Ms. Henderson said that an intern could help us with valuable tasks such as creating an RSC handle for Twitter and Instagram as well as a unique RSC brand separate from the Mass DEP account where our social media posts now appear. Ms. Phu said that social media material must be targeted, posts must be regular or they will be ineffective, and that we should determine our audience. If our target audience is those over 35 then perhaps social media will not be as important as other forms of outreach. It will take specialized research to determine which platforms would be best for us. Ms. Henderson noted that Riverfest is our only major outreach now and that a social media campaign throughout the year would give us much more visibility.

Mr. Fadden motioned that we accept the expenditures for three RSC signs, updates to our website, and our Mass Rivers Alliance dues. Ms. Henderson seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Partner Grant Proposals

The RSC considered CISMA's grant proposal of \$7,220 for administrative and membership needs as well as its small grant program. The Council then reviewed SVT's proposal of \$24,500 to fund land protection, land maintenance, and land stewardship. The group studied OARS' proposal for \$26,932 and then primarily discussed the water quality and water flow sections. Ms. Slugg explained that all our partners were given the opportunity to include an additional proposal because of the increase in federal funding we received for the fiscal year ending in August 2021. In response to this additional funding opportunity, Mass Audubon submitted one proposal for \$23,000 to fund their Riverschools program during the coming academic year and a second one of \$25,000 in order to document, evaluate, and share the Riverschools curriculum with more teachers in SuAsCo's member towns.

After further discussion a motion passed unanimously to fully fund CISMA and both of Mass Audubon's proposals, to award \$23,500 to SVT, and \$24,332 to OARS.

9:12 pm

Ms. Phu motioned to adjourn, Ms. Lord seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.