

## MRBA Meeting Minutes Thursday October 5th, 2023: MRBA Office

Attendees: Craig Cimmons, Sarah Cushing, Paul Stanley, John Little, Cynthia Scott, Sarah Lunn, Lindsey Wight, and Ellen Fox, Brian Jerose, Tyler Knapp, Katri Haanterä via zoom

- 1) Meeting called to order at 6:34pm.
- 2) CC motioned to accept the September meeting minutes, PS seconded. All in favor; and the minutes were accepted.
- 3) Guests: Tyler Knapp and Katri Haanterä have been meeting with groups to discuss their work with how we can use human behavior to promote changes and healthy land choices for watershed management. Specific areas include how we can engage all of a community with water quality management; how we can bring communities together and encourage them to adopt BMPs; how we can remove barriers to make it easier for people to change behaviors.

They discussed a project they did in New York state called Our Owasco. It's important to get farmers to show up and adopt BMPs, but also how to build relations between farmers and external agents, and how to make farmers leaders in their communities. Changed communications: hosted "Barn meetings", provided community coaching "hops & crops" - different populations brought together: farmer case studies in lay person publications. This project was lacking baseline data on farms, so couldn't track those changes - and data is important.

They are interested in doing a pilot test another small area, based on what they learned from Owasco. A takeaway: technicians need to listen to farmers - not just push the \*new\* solution; let the farmers tell you what they and why they are doing good water quality work.

### 4) Administrative business

- Board members looked over and accepted the September Warrant.
- Budget to Date: Lindsey reviewed our numbers for Quarter 3 of 2023. Request to also show what we currently have in the bank.

- 5) Projects: Stream Wise assessments - 2 done; 2 upcoming. The major advantage of this program is connecting with landowners, with the opportunity to do other assessments, mapping, visits, and just a chance to talk to landowners about what "good" looks like. Board suggestions: include conversation about nutrient management (especially when landowners lease land for agriculture); follow-up is important: don't just award and walk away.

Lake Lessons 2023: 5 days, 6 schools, great weather! Successful year - looking forward to even better next year.

Bank Stabilization - shifting from Taft Brook to a location just downstream of where Taft meets the Missisquoi; eroding into farm road.

- 6) Grants update: Vermont Community Foundation: extended grant for Abenaki paddle trip into this year, but let us know too late to pull it off. LW will request another extension for next year - otherwise, may have to

pay it back. Possible to do a different project that doesn't require good weather? Could be done over the winter?

- 7) 2023 events: Knotweed Bonfire event - lots going on in Montgomery around Halloween; too many conflicts: look at November dates instead.
- 8) 2024 event priorities: Open House - Sunday morning; end of March again? Worked well last year. Soiree in Swanton - maybe? Clean-ups. Abenaki Event (VCF funds?)
- 9) Organization Planning: Priorities. DISCUSS NEXT MEETING
- 10) Other business: North Troy Trustees have let us know that they are willing to sign a lease for the property off Dominion Avenue for the Nursery!
- 11) Next meeting - November 2, 2023: MRBA office.

Meeting adjourned at 8:04pm.