

Pure Water Forum Board Meeting
Friends of the North Fork Shenandoah River Office, Woodstock VA
August 28, 2015

Attendees

Nesha McRae (DEQ)	Laura Naftel (PATB)
Tara Sieber (DEQ)	Ben Craig
Jean Andrews (ACSA)	Charles Newton (SVSWCD)
Otis Bilkins (HWSWCD)	Paul Bugas (DGIF)
Mary Gessner (LFSWCD)	Stephanie Langton (NSVRC)
Alan Lehman (Shen Riverkeeper)	Concha Mendoza (FNFSR)
Chris Anderson (White House Farm)	Brad Fink (DGIF)
John Eckman (FNFSR)	Eric Paulson (USDA)
Joe Lehnen (DOF)	Joe McCue (FOMR)

Meeting Summary

Ben Craig presented the May 2015 meeting minutes and asked for a motion to approve. Charlie Newton made the motion and Joe Lehnen seconded, motion carried.

Secretary's Report

No correspondence to report

Treasurer's Report

Otis shared a financial report with the board. He noted that the total income for the YTD is \$9,378 with \$8,500 in expenses distributed through the DEQ grant. Charlie Newton asked about the project that PWF was supporting involving the installation of educational signs at James Madison University. Three educational signs are being installed with support from PWF (one through a small grant and the others through the DEQ grant). Some funds in the DEQ grant have been shifted around in order to cover expenses associated with having Water Words That Work conduct a training at the annual meeting. \$500 was shifted out of travel into contractual, and \$600 was shifted out of other direct into contractual. These funds were slated for a venue and a bus for a field trip at the annual meeting, but are no longer needed. Mary Gessner made a motion to accept the financial report and Joe Lehnen seconded, motion carried.

Executive Committee Report

Ben Craig distributed a handout showing the PWF work plan along with a time table. Ben reviewed progress on each project in the work plan. He noted that we may have the December 4th board meeting at Merck so that attendees can see the completed switchgrass project at the farm. The float trip has been scheduled for Sunday, September 27th and a registration link is up on the website. It was noted that DEQ stressed the importance of getting a diverse group of new participants if DEQ funds are to be used to support the event. The group will meet at noon, have lunch and then float the river. The partner projects included in the DEQ grant are moving along well, JMU is currently installing the signs,

the Valley Conservation Council outreach events were completed back in April, and an amendment to the DEQ grant has been issued to allow for completion of the Trout Unlimited streambank stabilization project. The grant has been extended through April 2016 to allow for completion of the project. The delay is due to the fact that TU staff had to find a different site in the Smith Creek watershed after the landowner at the previous site passed away. The Shenandoah Valley SWCD internship program is complete and staff is compiling a final report for the project. The demonstrational beds project is also underway. Joe Lehnen asked whether small grants are still available. The Small Grants Program is still open. Ben concluded the report noting that the Executive Committee met two times since the May board meeting, and authorized the purchase of enhanced liability insurance to protect the Peak at the Bay Program.

Small Grants Committee

One proposal was declined for funding from VA Cooperative Extension. The committee felt that it would not have a very far reaching impact. Two small grant projects were approved for funding since the last board meeting, both to support workshops to be held by the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission and the Environmental Finance Center.

Education Committee

The committee has developed guidelines for a PWF Scholarship Program. Otis shared the guidelines with the board. The application is very simple, with a requirement that applicants submit a handwritten essay on why they want to attend the particular workshop or training. There is a \$500 maximum and no specified age range for applicants. John Eckman noted that Friends of the North Fork are preparing to announce a scholarship program as well; however, their program will be targeted at college students pursuing adventure learning opportunities. PWF will set aside \$2000-\$2500 for the program in 2016. Laura has a synopsis of activities completed through the Peak at the Bay Program over the last year. 53 elementary school students, 24 middle school students, and seven high school students participated in the program. Laura noted that a group of 8th graders will be going to the Chesapeake Bay for three days with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. This event will be partially funded with money left over from the previous year. Grant requests were made to Merck and Dominion that were unsuccessful. However DEQ awarded the program \$2500 through the Meaningful Watershed Experience Grant Program. Laura is currently looking for additional funding to support a study of diversity of Appalachian salamanders in the Cub Run watershed. She asked the board if their organizations had materials that could be donated to serve as prizes for groups of five student teams.

Website Committee

The group will be getting together soon to discuss plans for a website update. John Eckman suggested making the site more mobile friendly and noted that Google indexes websites that are not mobile friendly much lower when they are searched.

Board Development Committee

Ben will convene the committee when Tom Benzing returns from sabbatical in order to select a slate of officers for 2016.

Annual Meeting Committee

The annual meeting will be held on October 15th at the Woodstock Presbyterian Church beginning at 9:00. Water Words that Work will be doing a three part training at the event. Registration will be capped at 80 participants. Lunch will be at 12:15, during which Ben Craig will deliver the president's address. The training sessions will wrap up at 2:30, after which we will have a local successes panel from 2:30-3:30. Panelists will talk about successful outreach events that they have held in recent years. We have secured three commitments for financial support at this point, and 18 letters requesting assistance were sent out on Monday. We are currently looking for \$1600-\$1700 in sponsorships, with \$600 already secured. Joe Lehnen asked if there will be enough room for groups to set up displays at the meeting. Due to the size of the church, only sponsors will be able to put up displays.

The board discussed the need for members to sign a conflict of interest statement. Tammy Stone's husband is a lawyer and has agreed to review the bylaws to see if this is needed. Ben will follow up with members through email. John Eckman agreed that it is necessary for the board to sign such a statement.

Otis discussed the recent purchase of liability insurance for the Peak at the Bay Program. Enhanced insurance was purchased previously; however, Otis learned that the policy did not actually cover Peak at the Bay activities (just increased the premium). Otis looked for additional policies through other agents and found one that covered the program. We are now paying \$1294, up from \$570 previously. The idea of a recreational insurance cooperative was mentioned to the board, this could be done through the Shenandoah Valley Network. This could be really helpful to a number of non profits in the region who do outdoor activities with the public.

Partners went round robin with updates and the meeting was adjourned.