**CONNECTICUT RIVER CONSERVANCY**

Board of Trustees Meeting

May 3rd, 2019

11am – 2:30pm

15 Bank Row

Greenfield, MA

**ATTENDEES**

Trustees: Melissa Ocana (phone), David Mears, Tim Keeney, Dave Hewitt, Annette Spaulding, Astrid Hanzalek (phone), Melody Foti, Amy Tran, Bob Sproull, Neftali Duran (phone), Tom Ciardelli.

Absent: Liz Austin, Bob Moore, Ron Poltak, Lora Wondolowski, Kate Putnam.

Staff: Andy Fisk, Phil Girton, Corey Kurtz, Aliki Fornier, Brett Morrison, Angela Chaffee, Stacey Lennard.

Meeting begun at 11:02am

1. **WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS**
2. **CONSENT CALENDAR**

MOTION: To accept the items as submitted. Keeney/Judge on the motion; unanimous.

1. **RIVER CELEBRATION**

Stacey Lennard informed the board of the schedule of the River Celebration, and gave a quick run-down including the activity booths, excursions, the presentation and speakers and Kari’s swim. She added information on what is expected of board members during preparations and the day itself. Andy clarified the annual meeting logistics.

Stacey also took some time to discuss upcoming events to the Board. It was agreed that we would send the board electronic copies of flyers of the program, for them to use as they see fit.

1. **ADOPTION OF FY 19-20 BUDGET**

Andy presented the Fiscal year 2019-20 budget as recommended by the Finance Committee. He discussed the revenue targets for programs and departments and expenses. Andy presented page 11 of the agenda where he pointed out main revenue sources, including donations/gifts, grants, store sales and rent for the building tenants. He explained fee revenue as well, including service agreements, fiscal sponsorships and revenues from tree plantings. The board focused on grants the organization had applied to, and their allocations. Andy also announced that 80% of their grant asks were accepted, which is a great accomplishment for an organization such as the CRC. New expenses on the organization due to staffing changes were mentioned next. With a growing organization, it is expected to see an increase in payroll expenses. The operating budget and the reserve target status for FY20 was explained.

Andy described how the restoration projects affects the CRC budget, pointing out large expenses for the program and how its driving a lot of the operation budget adding that if we don’t get the grants, we don’t do the project.

Andy concludes the conversation by stating that the budget will remain as is, and adjust or modify as the year goes.

An update on Spaulding Pond was brought up. Andy stated that we are very close to selling the property to the Highstead foundation. The board asked if the revenue from the property was included in the budget, and were told that as of right now, the FY20 budget isn’t relying on that money.

An update on the Campaign for Our Rivers was also included, with a breakdown of the revenues and expenses. Andy sets a goal for the board to assist in raising funds for the capital campaign, Astrid Hanzalek adds to that.

MOTION: To accept FY 19-20 Budget as recommended by the finance Committee. Putnam/Keeney on the motion; unanimous.

1. **Finance Report**

Andy presented the FY19-18 finance report. He stated that our status in reaching our revenue goal and sticking to our budgeted expenses is in much better condition that it was in March of this year. We went over the performance metrics given in the agenda on page 14: we were awarded most grants we had applied for, except for three. The high acceptance rate was true in dollars as well as numbers. Though, where the new grants helped with the increase in payroll expenses, the indirect expenses were still a bit behind. Overall, the CRC is behind pace with the budget, mainly due to dam removals, that require more grant money to cover the expenses. Andy added that some of the money from grant reserve were borrowed for capital expenses. The CRC is making sure to be putting money back in the grant reserve, so when we the capital projects start and large bills arrive, we don’t get stuck waiting for other money to come in to pay said bills. We also discussed the prediction on contributed and indirect revenue and operating expenses.

Finally, Andy announced Alicea Charamut departure from CRC; Alicea was the River Steward in Connecticut, and had recently filled to role of executive director at the CT Rivers Alliance. Andy explained what the transition for Alicea and the organization involved, and concluded by informing the board that the vacant position won’t be filled for another several weeks, until a right candidate is found for the role.

MOTION: To accept FY 19-20 Budget as recommended by the finance Committee. Mears/Ciardelli on the motion; unanimous.

Kate Putnam gave a status update on the finance committee’s request for proposal service from potential new auditing firms was going, as the contract with our current auditor was soon expiring. The finance committee recommended we stay with the current firm.

MOTION: To accept finance committees’ recommendation to stay with boisel, with slight increase in fees. Putnam/Keeney on the motion; unanimous.

1. **Lunch**
2. **Development Report**

Corey Kurtz presented the development report to the board. She announced that we had passed our goal on major donor gifts, and we still had more to go on membership donations, but were close. Corey emphasized on our need to up our game with new and recurring donors, adding an update regarding Valley Gives, simply put that they did not host the event this year and no plans have been announced to organize it again in the future. Corey thanked the board for their contributions, and informed us that annual giving is past our overall goal. She concluded by stating that if trustees had not given yet this year, they should give this week so the CRC could have a 100% supporting board.

Corey started discussing new methods on how to keep new members on board. Volunteer opportunities has been and is a great way to connect with new members and involve current members more. Corey Kurtz updated the board on the spring appeal status; progress to date and matching challenge. “One more cup a month… for the fish!” is a new initiative put in place by the development team and was introduced.

Annette Spaulding talked about her thank-a-thon with Brett and Kathy and pushd to include the board, and have them participate in solicitations and/or thank yous to our membership. The board discussed ideas to potentially implement, to get members to renew their membership. Tony complimented the organization on the quality of our outgoing mail, specifically graphics.

To conclude, Corey gave a status update on the Campaign for Our Rivers; gifts and new relationships with donors.

1. **CT RIVER MUSEUM COLLABORATION**

Andy explained that it’s been a long time since we’ve been trying to get more connected with the CT River Museum, located in Essex, CT. The museum has also been interested in exploring north of their location, and they reached out to CRC to help them understand native American and European history of the river, North of Essex. So board members of the museum are coming up, to Montague/Turners Falls, MA (to the Great Falls Discovery Center), Holyoke (to the Fish Elevator), and a few more locations. The museum has also brought us in contact with the Hartford Community Foundation grant reviewers that would help us fund projects. A 4 all-day trip has been scheduled with set dates; trustees were encouraged to sign up for a date or multiple, to connect with museum trustees, and guide them or even perhaps explore things even they hadn’t seen themselves.

1. **One Great river initiative**

Andy gave review of the Clean Water Act. Its purpose: restoring and maintaining the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation’s waters. He explained CRC’s role in this act, and our work towards this goal. He reported on our accomplishments over the years in this one great river initiative, mentioning our water quality monitoring program, and the challenges we regularly face. Challenges such as the effort it takes to strategies over a 410-mile-long watershed, spreading across 4 states, where every state hold their own obstacles. So how can we tell how healthy our river is? Andy gives the board a presentation on our stream bugs can tell us more about the health of our river, through population and diversity. Andy also updated the board on the CRC’s advocacy work for our rivers.

1. **Audit selection & risk assessment**

Phil initiated the conversation, discussing the insurance company and how we fit in the risk assessement with them???? Im kinda lost. Next February is when the policy is up for renewal, and we need to assess the risks.

1. **Kari Kastango’s epic swim**

Angie introduced Kari Kastango’s story to the board. She explained how it is important for CRC to find storied related to the river, to communicate the importance of our work, and to connect on higher levels with our network. Angie briefly explained the logistics of Kari’s swim (whens, wheres, hows, whos). She asked the board to let them know if they’d be interested in working with Corey in helping coordinating this adventure. Kari also has decided to help CRC by raising funds during her swim, and using her story and swim to bring attention and more connections to CRC. Kari is interested in getting to the source of the CT River as part of her journey, and we are just trying to figure out the details of this expedition. Corey asked the board if any of them would be interested in joining Kari’s trip to the source. If they are interested, in getting involved, or in general, they should reach out to Corey and Angie.

1. **Executive session**

MOTION: Lora/kate

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30pm

Prepared by: Aliki Fornier and Andrew Fisk

Reviewed by: Humphrey Tyler