

Mill Brook Watershed Management Planning committee

Minutes of 1/23/17 meeting

Present: Cindy Mitchell, Selena Roman, Tim Boland, Rez Williams, Kristen Fauteux and Prudy Burt

Absent: Nancy Huntington, Chuck Hodgkinson

Also present: Bill Wilcox, Kent Healy.

Minutes for past meetings (1/12/15, 1/16/15, 4/6/15) were approved, all in favor with Kristen abstaining. Minutes of the 1/9/17 meeting were approved without correction/comment.

Cindy proposed that the committee discuss a timeline for next steps. Given that Greg Whitmore will not be here until the end of February to further identify the Mill Brook invertebrates collected by BiodiversityWorks, our final report should wait and include any further conclusions/findings from that work. The committee discussed whether to include a warrant article for annual town meeting for ongoing water quality monitoring of Mill Brook. The deadline to file warrant articles is February 7.

Prudy indicated that one large remaining gap in data is continuous dissolved oxygen readings. Right now, we have just over a dozen readings, all taken in the morning before the impoundments heat up the water in the brook- as water temperatures rise, the level of dissolved oxygen in the water column, essential for aquatic life, decreases.

The committee discussed what would be involved in purchasing and deploying a number of dissolved oxygen data loggers. Kristen said that she would contact some of the stream experts that she knows to find out which loggers are best, cost and what level of technical expertise is needed to deploy and monitor them. The committee also discussed ongoing water quality monitoring, possibly six times a year of phosphorus and nitrogen baseflow testing at the same sites where existing data has been collected, and whether Sheri Casseau might be able to help with either of these ongoing efforts. Kristen added that the Edgartown Great Pond Foundation has a boat with on site testing as well as seasonal interns.

(The committee also discussed Chuck's previous suggestion that water quality testing/monitoring would qualify for CPC funding, and we might continue work by applying for money via that route).

In regards to gathering further water flow data, Prudy reminded the committee that the town might reach out once again to the Ma. Division of Ecological Restoration (DER) and engage with their River Instream Flow Stewards program (RIFLS). Michelle Craddock and Laila Parker (DER) came here in March of 2015 to give this committee a presentation about their program and how they could help us measure water flow in Mill Brook. At that time, the committee decided to wait until ESS Group finished their work and see where any data gaps might emerge.

Cindy said that she would rough out a warrant article.

Selena presented draft #4 of the final report to the committee. The main intent with this draft was just to arrange watershed study tasks in a logical order, for instance, grouping all discussion of ESS Group baseflow water quality testing under one heading, all water flow data under one heading, etc. Kristen asked that the section on water temperature data include only data from ESS Group for the year 2015.

Selena and Prudy will continue to work on the draft and will circulate Draft #5 in advance of our next meeting on 2/13/17 for committee review.

Submitted by Prudy Burt