

Minutes of the Westmoreland Selectmen's Meeting

Tuesday November 7, 2023

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Frank Reeder, John Snowdon and Bill McGahie

1. The meeting was called to order at 1pm by Frank Reeder.
2. Opened public hearing at 1pm per RSA 31:95-b, to accept and expend unanticipated money from the Department of Natural & Cultural Resources Moose Plate Grant of \$20,000 to refinish/restore flooring in the Westmoreland Town Hall.
3. Approval of Minutes: October 17th, October 30th & November 2, 2023. Motion was made by John Snowdon, seconded by Bill McGahie to accept the minutes as printed. Motion passed 3-0.
4. Accounts Payable: Motion was made by John Snowdon, seconded by Bill McGahie to approve Manifests for: General Fund \$314,867.55 and Fire Station \$3,200.00 Motion passed 3-0.
5. Guest:
Recycling Committee
 - A. Research with solid waste companies and Northeast Resource Recovery Association (NRRRA) the committee finds the most effective way to reduce the cost of the recycling center in pay as you throw. By purchasing bags for approximately \$2.50 per bag residents would pay based on use which would help equalize use to cost. 39 towns in NH have adopted pay by bag and report that they see an increase in recycling and less waste. Bags are 33 gal and can typically hold 3 kitchen trash bags. Reeder -May still need to have a sticker even if free for Town residents since we do not have the capacity to facilitate other towns. Selectboard has authority to initiate pay by the bag, but would want the Town to buy-in to the program by having a vote. Selectmen will support a warrant article. Committee will work on language for a flier to be mailed to residents, use public media, and set up public sessions to inform the community.
 - B. Other suggestions included:
 - a. Renaming from Transfer Station to Recycling Center with new signs. Name was voted on by the Town and would need to be changed by the Town.
 - b. 1 way traffic with stations for recycling, compactor, etc. Not currently set up to handle at this time.
 - c. Separating glass from commingle which could be sent to Keene to potentially save money in trucking and tonnage cost.
 - d. Composting through Elm City Compost. Help reduce what is put in compost, save money by reducing tonnage cost to town and/or reduce bag use and cost if Town decides to go with pay by the bag.

Mark Terry - Community Power

- A. Snowdon and Terry worked with Bethlehem to get their coalition program started. Coalition now consists of 46 towns and cities and 1 county (Cheshire)
- B. Briefing handout (see attached) outlines things that are in progress. Utilities rate & CPCNH rate will be known on 12/26 and as long as it is lower than Eversource and Westmoreland says yes to purchase on the 12/29 we will be set to launch in March.

- C. Letters will be sent to residents at the end of January and community meetings will be scheduled.
- D. Chesterfield may be going with the County. Advantage of going with the County over having the town's own coalition is less work for representatives. Advantage of the town having its own coalition is the town has more of a voice and is in charge of its own destiny.

6. Old Business

- A. Right to Know record request policy. NH Municipal Association recommends requests in writing and in person. June 2019 Selectboard voted to require requests in person. Form can be found on the Town website. Reeder - Don't think it necessary to make a request in person. Requests can be denied if form is not specific which should help to eliminate people just fishing for information.
- B. Culvert Inventory Letter of Interest for Southwest Regional Planning Commission (SWRPC). Town portion to be increased from \$6,391 to \$8,956 of the total \$25,563. Remaining balance to be paid with grant for survey and report on all culverts and report level of repair/condition for Hazard Mitigation Plan. Letter of intent template received from SWRPC confusing and needs clarification prior to signing.

7. New Business

Signature Approval was given for the following:

Payroll 10/28/2023	Current Use Warrant	Assessing Contract
Payroll Taxes 11/02/2023	Tax Warrant	NHDES \$8.53
General Journal	Cemetery Deed	Staples \$295.84
#843 Capital Reserve Funds/ Expendable Trust Funds	Hazardous Waste	Amazon \$130.88
	Commitment Letter	Retirement \$4008.52

- A. Road Agent, Dave Poklemba, requested purchase of a new plow using funds from 2022 HB401 Highway Grant. Selectmen agreed the plow could be purchased using grant funding as it is additional unbudgeted equipment.
- B. Motion made by Frank Reeder and seconded by John Snowdon Per RSA 31:95-b, to accept and expend unanticipated money from the State of New Hampshire of \$4,000 for updating Hazard Mitigation plan in 2022.

8. Health Agencies - \$5000 to be distributed as follows:

Community Kitchen	\$ 600
Home Healthcare, Hospice & Community Services - General	\$1000
Monadnock Family Services	\$2000
Southwestern Community Services	\$ 500
CASA of New Hampshire	\$ 300
Community Volunteer Transportation Company	\$ 100
MCVP Crisis & Prevention Center	\$ 100
Monadnock Region Child Advocacy Center	\$ 200
Dartmouth Health Visiting Nurse and Hospice	\$ 200

9. Correspondence:

- A. Cheshire EMS - Promotion of Captain Charles "Chad" McMurrer to the position of deputy chief of Cheshire County Emergency Medical Services
- B. Connecticut River Conservancy - (see attached) Update for Westmoreland to be scheduled with the Conservation Commission.

10. 2:35pm - Public Hearing for Moose Plate Grant closed. Motion made by Frank Reeder and seconded by John Snowdon to accept and expend per RSA 31:95-b unanticipated money from the Department of Natural & Cultural Resources Moose Plate Grant of \$20,000 to refinish/restore flooring in the Westmoreland Town Hall. Motion passed 3-0.

11. Tower Clock - Bill McGahie was able to reset the timer for lights, however one light needs to be adjusted. Reeder - Find out if Chief Nelson can provide a ladder tall enough to reach with a willing volunteer or if there is someone in town with a lift that can reach to adjust the light to point upward.

12. Additional meetings to work on 2024 budget scheduled Wednesday November 8, 2023 and Wednesday November 15, 2023 at 10am

13. The meeting was adjourned at 2:39pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jodi Scanlan

Town Administrator

NEXT MEETING TUESDAY NOVEMBER 21, 2023 6:00PM


MINUTES ARE INITIALLY POSTED AS UNAPPROVED

SELECTMEN SIGNATURES DENOTE APPROVAL

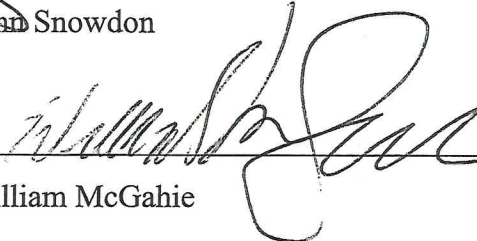
BOARD OF SELECTMEN



Frank Reeder, Chairman



John Snowdon



William McGahie

Working Wave 2 Launch Milestones

Timeline based on technical assessment comparing Feb, Mar, Apr launches, finding March Launch to realize greatest total value.

- ❑ Governing Bodies adopt (1) Cost Sharing Agreement and Member Services Contract; (2) CPCNH Policies for Risk, Rates, Reserves, and Data Protection (**target by: 11/1/23**)

- ❑ CPCNH Risk Management Committee “first purchase” meeting (~ **12/29/23**)

12/26/23: Utility rates & CPCNH rate recommendation known

- ❑ CPCNH mails enrollment letters; opens Contact Center publishes CommunityPowerNH.gov/ (~ **1/22/24**)

- ❑ Public information meeting (**week of 1/29/24**)

- ❑ Community Power launches! (**starting 2/24/24**)

- ❑ All Customers Enrolled by **April 1, 2024**

DRAFT SCHEDULE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Wave 3 Launch option available starting in or after June 2024





Connecticut River
Conservancy

Clean water. Healthy habitat. Thriving communities.

PO Box 445, Alstead, NH 03602
603.931.2448 · www.ctriver.org

27 September 2023

Dear Town Leader,

We are reaching out to request an opportunity to visit with your Conservation Commission and/or Selectboard to update you on the relicensing of the Vernon, Bellows Falls, and Wilder hydroelectric facilities.

These facilities, owned by Great River Hydro, are approaching the home stretch of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) relicensing process. This license process will direct operations at these facilities for the next 40+ years. Connecticut River Conservancy (CRC) has been involved in this relicensing process since it started in 2013, advocating for better environmental protections for the river and mitigation of impacts to the river and adjacent communities.

CRC expects that FERC will announce a formal comment period on the final license application over the coming months. We also expect a public process for issuing a 401-water quality certification in both VT and NH will commence soon after the announcement from FERC. **These are the last two opportunities for your concerns to be heard in this once in a lifetime relicensing process.**

Comments by communities are critical to ensure that FERC understands and responds to local concerns and desires. Local community members can provide invaluable knowledge of how town lands, natural resources, and wildlife populations have been and may continue to be affected by hydro operations. We value your knowledge and input!

We are reaching out to request an opportunity to come visit with your Conservation Commission and/or Selectboard to update you on this relicensing process and next steps. We can provide information on what has happened since the last time we may have talked with your town, share our concerns about the final license application, and discuss how your town can participate in the final stages of this process to ensure you have a voice in how our public trust river is used. **If we can join you for a meeting before the end of November, we think this will provide enough time for your Selectboard to determine any course of action or comments you would like to submit.**

Please contact Kate Buckman at the email address or phone number below to schedule a time for us to present to your town. You can also visit our webpage for more information (<https://www.ctriver.org/our-work/hydropower/>). We hope to hear from you soon and look forward to working with you to engage in this process.

Sincerely,

Kate Buckman
River Steward, NH
kbuckman@ctriver.org, 603-931-2448



Connecticut River
Conservancy

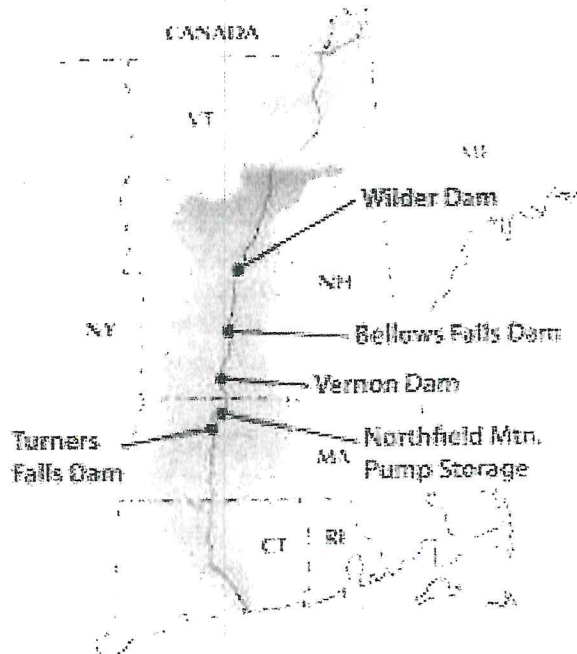
FIVE Hydro FACILITIES NOW! The heart of the Connecticut River's next 50 years.

Since late 2012, five hydroelectric facilities in the heart of the Connecticut River valley have been in the process of renewing their operating licenses in a process known as relicensing. **The licenses for two facilities in northern MA and three dams in southern VT and NH will endure for the next 30-50 years and impact more than 175 miles of the Connecticut River.** It's critical that we all speak up NOW in this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to influence these operating licenses.

The three dams at Wilder, Bellows Falls and Vernon in New Hampshire and Vermont are owned by Great River Hydro (formerly TransCanada), a subsidiary of Hydro-Québec, the largest power utility in Canada whose sole shareholder is the Québec government.

The two Massachusetts facilities, Turners Falls Dam and Northfield Mountain Pumped Storage Project, are now separate LLCs under First Light Power Services LLC, owned by PSP Investments, one of Canada's largest pension investment managers.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) last issued licenses for these facilities over forty years ago and all five licenses initially expired in April 2018.



Next Steps

Comments by local communities, the states, individuals, and other stakeholders provide a rare opportunity to improve the health of our river. The current relicensing process for these five hydropower facilities will dramatically affect the health of the river and watershed for generations to come. Anyone with thoughts or concerns can comment and those comments become part of the official record for that project.

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802-258-0413

Kelsey Wentling, MA
kwentling@gmail.com
413-772-2020 x216

Kate Buckman, NH
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603-931-2448

CRC river stewards Kelsey Wentling (MA), Kate Buckman (NH), and Kathy Urffer (VT) are participating in all the formal proceedings related to this relicensing effort. They review reports, prepare CRC comments, and are working to engage the public in the process. They would be glad to answer any of your questions or speak to your group about the relicensing.

Both companies submitted revised final applications in December 2020. Since then, the companies engaged in some specific settlement discussions to resolve some of the issues. FERC will review all application documents and issue a request for the public to comment and formally intervene. CRC expects a public comment period sometime in fall of 2023 or winter of 2023-2024.

CRC'S ROLE

CRC's desired outcomes and priority areas where CRC is advocating for change include:

- Safe, timely, and effective upstream and downstream fish passage
- Operational changes at the dams to minimize surface water fluctuations both upstream and downstream to minimize bank erosion and impacts to rare and threatened species
- Healthy aquatic habitat for river critters
- Seasonally appropriate minimum flows in the river channel
- Ecologically compatible and accessible recreational facilities
- Protection and interpretation of historic and archeological resources
- Consideration of Traditional Cultural Properties

YOUR ROLE: YOU have a say!

It is important for the public and municipalities to **submit comments** to make sure that local concerns and desires are voiced and are responded to as part of the new license. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is interested in maintaining these energy facilities and they are in constant communication with the companies as a course of their relationship as regulators. FERC needs to hear from the public to understand and balance local ecological and public access concerns.

Hydroelectric facilities use a **public trust resource** – your river – to produce power. In exchange for this privilege, FERC requires that hydropower operators provide *direct benefits to the public*, be protective of the ecological health of *the river*, and mitigate for impacts of the dams. The license serves as a public contract that we revisit periodically to examine the impact of the facility on our public trust resource.

There are official comment periods at different stages of licensing, and you can file comments, concerns, or complaints... **AND YOU SHOULD!**

See the instructions on our website about how to submit comments. CRC encourages public participation and our staff is glad to help answer any question that you may have.

www.ctriver.org/hydropower

