

CHITTENDEN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
MS4 SUBCOMMITTEE
 OF CLEAN WATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE – APPROVED MINUTES

DATE: **Tuesday, January 4, 2022**
 SCHEDULED TIME: 12:15 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.
 PLACE: Hybrid: In-person at CCRPC office and ONLINE via Zoom
 DOCUMENTS: Minutes, documents discussed, presentations and a video recording accessible at:
<http://www.ccrpcvt.org/meetings/clean-water-advisory-committee/>

Committee Members in Attendance (all attending online unless otherwise noted)		
Burlington: James Sherrard	Burlington Airport: Catie Calabrese	Williston: Christine Dougherty
Colchester: Karen Adams	Milton: Dave Allerton, Kirsten Jensen	Winooski: Ryan Lambert
Essex: Annie Costandi, co-chair (in-person)	Shelburne:	VAOT: Jennifer Callahan
Essex Junction: Chelsea Mandigo, (co-chair)	South Burlington: Dave Wheeler	Univ. of VT: Lani Ravin
DEC:		
Other Attendees: Pluck: Dave Barron; WNRCD: Kristen Balschunat; DEC: Jim Pease		
CCRPC Staff: Dan Albrecht (at CCRPC office), Sai Sarepalli		

1. Call to Order, Changes to the Agenda and Public Comments on Items not on the agenda:

The meeting was called to order at 12:18 p.m. The co-chairs authorized Albrecht to facilitate the meeting. No changes to the agenda nor public comments were made.

2. Review and action on draft minutes of September 7, 2021

Albrecht indicated that CCRPC had mistakenly posted the wrong set of minutes and only just got posted today. That being the case, the Subcommittee deferred action on this set of minutes.

3. Coordination of 5-town Adopt-A-Drain program with overall WNRCD RR Stream Team

Mandigo noted that this project is now starting. 5 of the MS4 towns are participating. Balschunat noted that as part of Outreach events they would work with 3 towns each year and then in 3 different towns they would do Event-Driven Tasks such as field projects. So, for 2022, Adopt-a-Drain and working with these 5 towns (Burlington, Colchester, Essex, Essex Junction and Milton) would be the focus of her efforts for the first part of the year with a goal of signing up 300 people. She would continue the generalized Event-Driven Tasks that reach all towns such as Adopt-a-Rain Garden and Water Quality sampling. Then later on in 2022 she would work to run one hands-on program in the other 4 towns of South Burlington, Shelburne, Williston & Winooski.

Barron suggested he could promote the launch on social media and recruit volunteers using his winter-spring budget. Dougherty raised concerns that this uses all our dues to do the Adopt-a-Drain programming that some of our towns don't want to do. Mandigo noted that we have already approved time for Barron to work on the educational video about Adopt-a-Drain. Albrecht noted that every year Balschunat is always only helping a subset of towns each year. In this case, those towns have chosen to promote Adopt-a-Drain rather than do a rain barrel workshop or a stream cleanup. He noted that the Pluck budget is for generic town-wide outreach and that he is concerned about conflating his budget/time when Balschunat could do the posts. Barron noted that he can target the posts to specific towns. Albrecht agreed that if he can track that town-specific boost costs for adopt-a-drain that would be great and that could be charged to WNRCD's budget. Barron noted that yes Balschunat should be able to do the post, but Barron can detail with the logistics of the posting and associated billing and Balschunat agreed. Mandigo noted that Hamline University has lots of pre-written content ready to use. Ravin noted that we are all one watershed, so we all benefit from work in a few towns even us "non-traditional" MS4s. Mandigo closed the item noting that a majority of the subcommittee was okay with moving forward.

4. WNRCD: water quality sampling sites for 2022; review of proposed calendar year 2022 work plan; draft 2021 Annual Report

Mandigo noted the 2021 Report will be voted on at the February meeting. Albrecht will circulate the Google link for comments/edits. Balschunat walked through the highlights. Person reached was lower due to

1 COVID. Four major projects were held: Milton Rain Garden Installation, Water Quality sampling, Adopt-a-
2 Rain Garden and Planning for Adopt a Drain.

3 Balschunat highlighted the planned 2022 water quality sampling locations which will sample for
4 phosphorus and chloride with some also doing nitrogen. No E-coli sampling as lab is too far away to meet
5 needed turnaround time.
6

7 **5. Pluck: review of calendar year 2021 performance metrics; process for vetting potentially challenging**
8 **social media posts; member concern over advertising with WVMT**

9 Dave Barron recapped some key metrics. Web site sessions and discrete users bounced back up nicely
10 compared to 2020. With advertising spread out for more weeks in a year, web traffic is steadier. A new thing
11 for this year we started bringing in search ads not just display ads. Visits by town mirror results in previous
12 years. Event tracking (pdfs to download, etc.) continues. He explained that impressions are the number of
13 times that Facebook puts that on somebody's feed, clicks are self-explanatory, and reach is the number of
14 people that see it. A full watch of a Ms. Drop video also counts as a click. For the Annual Report, he will
15 provide more detail including relative weeks or budget for different types of Facebook posts.

16 In discussing low results for Milton and Winooski, he will investigate further such as where cell towers are
17 located. Winooski also has language barriers, and some populations have less access to computers. Albrecht
18 raised the larger question of do we need to do more targeted advertising to bring site visits up in the "low-
19 visiting" towns. Barron noted that some towns have less single-family homes and hence no lawns. Ravin noted
20 that Winooski has lots of residents whose first language is not English. Barron noted he can push in a
21 "translate" feature on the website. Disposal of pet waste is a BMP that applies regardless of home ownership.
22 Barron noted he is already using lots of pictograms and animations already that work regardless of language.
23 Ravin and Pease suggested using a few non-English words in some ads to attract people's attentions.

24 Barron wanted some feedback on how to vet questionable content before he posts/links to it especially if it
25 impacts a particular MS4 member. Members discussed some examples of such content. Discussion concluded
26 with direction to Dave to vet potential posts/links by Albrecht, Balschunat, Constandi and Mandigo and
27 contacting relevant member MS4 contact as needed.

28 Barron noted WVMT hosts questionable opinions. He noted on the one hand we spend a relatively small
29 amount of money but on the other hand do we want to be implicated by advertising with them, citing their
30 airing of Howie Carr, a New England conservative "shock-jock." Personally, he would be okay with dropping
31 WVMT but he would like to see what people have to say about this as it brings up a bring up a larger
32 conversation such as what if another media outlet we advertise with posts questionable content. Mandigo noted
33 that this is similar to the prior question about posting of questionable content. Albrecht noted the need to make
34 a distinction between the media outlet itself and people who broadcast through them. Barron thinks that is a
35 false distinction. He also noted radio effectiveness is harder to track but also noted Facebook enables different
36 content and even Patagonia stopped advertising with them for a while.

37 Albrecht noted that one, they reach a local audience with their morning show hosts that reaches long-time
38 Vermont residents. Two, they serve a community purpose. In the past, as part of advertising package with
39 them, we would go on the air with the morning show hosts and talk about our programming. Third, if we are
40 going to talk about advertising, then right now we are advertising with both Google and Facebook whose
41 hands are not clean with what shows up in searches, who works with foreign governments, etc. He continued
42 saying it is a dangerous road to go down. Depending upon one's political persuasion one might even say that
43 VPR filters what is news and what is not news. In the absence of a complaint that our ads were running
44 concurrent with a really objectionable host then we should stay clear.

45 Balschunat queried towns if they had experienced with this issue. Sherrard noted that the City of Burlington
46 has public information officers. He generally agrees with what Albrecht expressed. He noted we have a goal of
47 MM-1 and MM-2 and until a clearly defined need is identified we should trust CCRPC as our contract
48 administrator and for them to rely on how to do ad buys ethically and worries about having all us
49 municipalities weighing in. Albrecht indicated he would ask his colleagues as we do also administer large
50 media buys such as promoting commuting ride share options. We can also pick how we advertise. He
51 displayed a copy of a bill from WVMT for fall 2021 ad buy and that ad buy was during the 6-9 a.m. slot which
52 are the local hosts as opposed to line up of national radio hosts that follows such as Brian Kilmeade, the late

1 Rush Limbaugh and then Howie Carr in the late afternoon. Karen Adams noted that Charlie Papillo, a WVMT
2 morning host, is on the Colchester Selectboard. Christine Dougherty thanked Albrecht for displaying the
3 WVMT bill and that the ad was targeted. It is a challenge to hear other hosts criticizing EPA. Albrecht thanked
4 Dougherty noting that he has indeed heard Howie Carr go off on the EPA and were one of our ads be running
5 during his time slot it would indeed confuse the listener. Barron again noted it would be great to see what
6 CCRPC policies are on this. Albrecht said that this discussion bring up the question of how to spend
7 government beyond complying with laws like no spending of funds for lobbying, union-busting, Davis Bacon
8 wages, etc.

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10 **6. Staff and member updates as needed**

11 None

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13 **7. Items for February 1st meeting agenda**

14 Review and action on draft MM-1 & MM-2 CY2020 reports prepared by Pluck & WNRCD, respectively
15 Possible update on Stream Gauge monitoring report for 2021 and plans for 2022

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17 **8. Adjournment** The meeting was adjourned at 1:39 p.m.

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19 *Respectfully submitted, Dan Albrecht*
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