**16 November 2015 NETU Special Board Meeting – Minutes**

President: Fred Jennings

Recording Secretary: Ben Meade

Attendees: Fred Jennings, Ken Washburn, Kalil Bogdan, Chett Walsh, Bob Torkildsen, David Walsh, Ben Meade, Josh Rownd, James Goodhart, Mike O’Neill

President Fred Jennings called the NETU Chapter Business Meeting/NETU Board Meeting to order at 7 PM and asked for a volunteer to fill in for Peter Vandermeulen as recording secretary for the meeting. Ben Meade agreed.

Business/Board meeting minutes from 5 October 2015 are approved, no one opposed.

**Treasurer’s Report:** Fred Jennings reported that the Chapter is in good shape for funds. Treasurer’s report was approved, no one opposed.

To start the meeting, a discussion was held on several topics:

1. A discussion was held about future events at Orvis in Peabody. Ken Washburn suggested the importance of making purchases, even small ones, at events at Orvis Peabody to help support their sponsoring of their events.
2. Fred Jennings suggested to review survey information on Survey Monkey and volunteered to send a separate email with a link to the Survey Monkey survey.
3. The list of upcoming speakers was reviewed. Ken Washburn reported that upcoming speakers are lined up through March, 2016, with the exception of January, 2016. Fred Jennings to be absent on January 4th, 2016, the 1st Monday of that month. A quorum was held and the meeting date was changed to Monday, January 11th, 2016. Chett Walsh volunteered to talk to Geof Day about lining up a speaker for that date. Kalil Bogdan reiterated that he is planning to present at the April, 2016 meeting.

**Conservation Committee Report:** Committee Chair Chett Walsh reminded everyone that he has copies of reports on the Jewell Dam on the Mill River in Rowley and showed diagrams of the dam to meeting attendees. Chett Walsh described his ongoing efforts to gather information on the Jewell Dam for potential future construction of a fish ladder and he reported that the most likely viable option for a fish ladder would be around the side of the dam. In the meantime, a discussion was held about potentially organizing a “bucket brigade” to assist herring over the Jewell Dam in their spring migration. Chett Walsh also reported that Greg Murrer has had ongoing conversations with John Dold, DPW Director in Boxford, about the Middleton Road culvert project in Boxford. Chett Walsh discussed the importance of Crooked Pond Brook as it connects to the pristine Crooked Pond in Boxford. Josh Rownd reported that jersey barriers are in place around the project location on Middleton Road. Chett Walsh commended Mike O’Neill on his substantial assistance with engineering for this Middleton Road culvert project. James Goodhart reported that an article was recently published in the local paper that described how the removal project for the Larkin Dam in Newbury has been tabled. No knowledge of a timeframe or reason for tabling of the removal was provided by the article. No NETU chapter attendees had further knowledge of that recent development.

A discussion was held about supporters of these projects and potential funding sources. Orvis, Patagonia, and NOAA were suggested. In summary, there is good momentum moving forward on progress for the Jewell Dam and Middleton Road culvert projects, while Larkin Dam is on hold for now. Chett Walsh will keep everyone updated.

Fred Jennings summarized the excursion on Sunday, November 8th with Wayne Castonguay (IRWA) and Fred Jennings, Chett Walsh, Ben Meade, and Geoff Day of NETU. A stream in the northern areas of the Ipswich River watershed was walked and blockages due to beaver activity and an undersized culvert were viewed. During the stream walk, fish were seen but they weren’t confirmed as brook trout. A dam on Howlett Brook was also viewed. Fred Jennings requested that photos taken during these site visits should be sent to him.

Fred Jennings opened discussion to the idea of NETU partially financially supporting IRWA in hiring a summer intern. Potentially, this intern could be mutually beneficial to both organizations. Consensus indicated that the benefits of an intern could potentially be helpful to NETU. However, James Goodhart suggested that NETU’s own in-house expertise and willingness to offer “boots on the ground” assistance should be emphasized before our ability to provide funding to other organizations. There was agreement with this approach, and an overall consensus to be diligent about how NETU funds are appropriated. Fred Jennings volunteered to keep conversations open with Wayne about this topic and to gather more information.

In closing the conservation committee discussions, James Goodhart reminded everyone to be diligent in tracking their volunteer hours towards NETU efforts due to potential funding benefits from TU National.

**Strategic Planning Report:**

Fred Jennings is in conversations with Ray Gagnon about organizing NETU’s Strategic Planning session. Ray has committed, with an exact date TBD. Fred Jennings has suggested a weekend in January or February 2016, with a target attendance number of 12 people, and an expectation that NETU leadership should all attend.

Thinking ahead, a brief discussion was held about upcoming officer elections. The addition of Josh Rownd to the BOD, and removal of Art Howe and Kevin Correa, were discussed. Fred Jennings volunteered to continue onward as President, and Ken Washburn volunteered to continue onward as Vice President. Neither John LeJeune (Treasurer) nor Peter Vandermeulen (Secretary) were present to discuss their potential candidacies to continue onward in their officer positions. Discussion on this topic will be expanded in the future meeting. [Peter Vandermeulen has since agreed to continue on as NETU Secretary for 2016. – FBJ]

**Banquet Committee Report:**

Mike O”Neill provided a summary of the food preparation option he has explored through a local restaurant to provide the meal for the March 19th, 2016 banquet. The cost estimate from this provider is $21.75 per person for the food and preparation, with an estimate of 75 attendees. There was consensus that this meal option would provide many benefits. With this cost estimate, there was a discussion about banquet costs. There was general consensus that, financially, NETU should expect to break even with the cost of the meal, and there was discussion about the ticket price to charge for the event, with a general consensus that the ticket price should be set at $25.00, although there was no board vote on the issue. Fred Jennings opened a **motion** to proceed with Mike O’Neill’s option for the banquet meal. The motion was seconded, with none opposed. **The motion passed**. Mike O’Neill will follow up with the meal provider.

A discussion was held on assignments for banquet tasks, including organizing and soliciting donations, poster designing and printing, slideshow creation, and other items. Mike O’Neill and Kalil Bogdan volunteered to work on ticket and promotional materials.

The topic of award(s) at the banquet was also discussed. Ideas for potential award categories were raised, however there was general consensus that offering an award during the banquet to a deserving person (or persons) is an excellent idea. Decisions on recipient(s) will be made at a future meeting.

A **motion** to adjourn the meeting was made. The motion was seconded, and none opposed. The meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Ben Meade

2 December 2015