

Regional Stormwater Education Program

Steering Committee Notes

November 21, 2023

Attending: Chip Sawyer, City of St. Albans; Dave Allerton, St. Albans Town; July Medina-Triana, St. Albans Town; Dean Pierce, NRPC; Sara Gratz, NRPC; Kent Henderson, FNLC; Bridget Butler, FNLC; Hannah Mahar, FNLC; Lauren Weston, FCNRCD.

1. Introductions

Meeting began with a round of introduction.

2. Adjustments/changes to the agenda

None.

3. Review of July meeting

Dean Pierce provided a brief recap of the July meeting the meeting notes.

4. Overview of year so far

Sara Gratz provided a brief summary of activities during the year so far, with emphasis on activities occurring since the meeting held since July 12. Activities included:

- Storytelling event held July 19
- Lake Lessons, held during weeks of September 18 and 25.

Dean thinks there was also an additional stream clean up event held prior to Dea Devlin's departure but must confirm. Bridget Butler mentioned her interest in continuing contact with schools beyond the Lake Lessons timeframe and Kent Henderson concurred. Dave Allerton mentioned the need for education of property owners regarding homeowner responsibilities.

5. MOU expiration/next steps

Dean summarized contents of the Memorandum of Understanding that was created between NRPC ("Lead Agency") and the City and the Town (MS4 communities or "MS4s"). He explained that the MOU expires at the end of December.

- The City and the Town will need to decide on next steps, which could include renewing the agreement as is, renewing with changes, or going through a new process.
- For the purpose of the presentation on the coming year, status quo was assumed.

6. 2024 work plan and budget

Dean provided a general overview of the work and budget, emphasizing the three main categories of expenses, which are ECO underwriting, NRPC and FNLC staff, and direct expenses and contracts. The anticipated total cost is just below 11,000 and would rely on a carryover from prior years. Sara provided a more detailed description of work areas and possible activities.

- Some new ideas relating MCM 1-1 are adding a link to the cyanobacteria tracker, embedding maps of watersheds or stormwater infrastructure.
- Ideas relating MCM 1-2 include webinars on cyanobacteria, road salt, microplastics, wildlife habitat, or rain gardens and an in-person workshop on rain barrels.
- New ideas relating MCM 1-3 include creating a flier to mail out or post on bulletin boards. Dave sees the potential for using a flier to educate homeowners. Chip does not see a need for a specific new initiative in the City, at least in the coming year.

- Ideas relating MCM 2-1 include a dog poo clean up event branded as April Stool's Day and assisting in the construction of a rain garden in a public place.
- Ideas relating MCM 2-2 include recruiting volunteers to the April Stool's event.

Following Sara's request for feedback and suggestions there was additional discussion of:

- a public meeting to explain the whole 'stormwater issue' and clarify the role of a utility vs the role of homeowners.
- Conservation block party.
- Making presentations to teachers as part of teacher "in service" days.
- Reconnecting with St. Albans Area Watershed Association (SAAWA).

Dean then provided a more detailed description of the possible spending plan, and there was discussion of the MOU and possibility of increasing annual funds RSEP funding (to cover increased costs/ provide more services):

- Dave indicated he would be willing to consider a new total somewhere between 5,000 and 10,000.
- Chip indicated the MOU is basically sound. He could consider a new total as high as 7,500 but implementation would need to be staggered until after June, owing to the timing of budget years.

Dean asked about the timing of a meeting to discuss the MOU. The consensus was to meet sooner rather than later. Dean will coordinate with others regarding an updated spending plan before the meeting.

7. Updates/comments

None

8. Date for next meeting

December 12 at 8AM for discussion of a revised MOU and spending plan reflecting a potentially increased annual total. Dean will distribute a meeting notice.

9. Adjourn

Meeting finished around 12:20 pm.