

Bertsch-Hokendauqua-Catasauqua Watershed Association

Minutes from Steering Committee Meeting

Monday, March 9, 2009, 7:00PM

Northampton County Parks & Recreation Division Office

3rd Floor Conference Room, Greystone Building, Gracedale Complex, Nazareth, PA

- The steering committee meeting was called to order shortly after 7:00pm, with the following committee members & technical assistance advisors (TA) in attendance: Chris Amato, Martin Boksenbaum, Bud Cole, Bob Hosking, Terry Kleintop (TA), Shawn McGlynn, Debbie Miller, Colin Murphy, Rick Ritter, Jason Smith (TA) & Jim Wilson (TA).
- The February 4, 2009 minutes were accepted as presented.
- The committee developed & adopted the following mission statement for BHCWA: *“The mission of the Bertsch-Hokendauqua-Catasauqua Watershed Association is to promote stewardship of, protect, enhance and restore the watersheds that are tributary to the Lehigh River from the east, between Catasauqua Borough and Lehigh Gap.”*
- In reviewing the draft BHCWA Bylaws that Jason provided at the February 4 steering committee meeting, which were emailed to committee members on February 10, the committee was in favor of adopting Article III (Objectives) as presented in the draft bylaws. Article I (Name) & Article II (Purpose/Mission) will be revised to reflect BHCWA’s now-adopted name & mission. Jason suggested that Article IV (Membership) & Article V (Board of Directors) be revised to reflect BHCWA’s rules relating to membership & directorship regulations, once they’ve been developed & adopted, i.e., dues or free membership, maximum number of directors, etc. Jason highly recommended offering free membership in BHCWA, citing the Martins-Jacoby Watershed Association & Bushkill Stream Conservancy membership models. Jason also suggested that the remaining rules (Articles VI through XVII) are standard enough to be adopted as presented in the draft bylaws.
- As soon as BHCWA’s bylaws and articles of incorporation are developed & adopted, BHCWA will apply to the IRS for an EIN & for federal tax-exempt nonprofit status, and to the PA Departments of State & Revenue for state sales tax exempt nonprofit status & charitable organization status. These federal & state application/registration fees will total approximately \$500. The committee hopes to solicit the pro bono assistance of an attorney or CPA to process these forms & paperwork. If that doesn’t happen, Bob & Jim will complete & submit the forms & paperwork.

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- Jim reported on startup funding inquiries to the Cora L. Brooks (CLB), Green Knight Economic Development Corporation (GKEDC) & Save Our Local Environment (SOLE) foundations; CLB asked to meet with BHCWA representatives in June to discuss future funding opportunities, GKEDC denied funding opportunities (BHCWA is outside GKEDC's geographical funding area) and SOLE has yet to respond. Bud, Rick & Terry reminded the committee to target local sportsman's organizations & watershed associations for startup funding, as was suggested at the February 4 meeting. Bud will follow up with Dale Ott from the Hokendauqua Chapter of Trout Unlimited for funding they've reportedly agreed to donate. Jim will solicit funding from the Martins-Jacoby & Monocacy Creek Watershed Associations & the Bushkill Stream Conservancy. Bob suggested several potential startup funding sources (PA Environmental Council, Coldwater Heritage Partnership, etc.), which Jim will pursue. Chris pledged \$250 to BHCWA. A discussion ensued on how to account for donations at this time without a BHCWA bank account.
- A lengthy discussion was had on how, when, where & with whom to conduct near-term community programming & outreach in the BHCWA service area. A number of community program possibilities, partners & places were discussed, including Lehigh Canal cleanups with local Scout groups & the Walnutport Canal Association (WCA); interpretive "bike hikes" circumnavigating the BHCWA region; nature walks/hikes along the Appalachian Trail, Lehigh Canal and local & county parks, greenways & rail trails; Lehigh River kayak/canoe floats; watershed education programming at Allen Township's Kreidersville Covered Bridge Festival; etc. Program planning for April (Earth Day Month) & May (Watershed Awareness Month) was discussed at length, with the understanding that timing is & will be a real limiting factor in near-term programming reality. Bud & Colin will inquire about partnering with WCA for community programming at Walnutport Canal Park on either April 25 or May 2. Debbie suggested incorporating a silent auction fundraiser into this potential event, with arts & crafts donated by local artisans. Bud & Colin will contact WCA to investigate the possibilities of coordinating a near-term partnership program. Bob will contact Allen Township to investigate the possibility of partnering with them during the Kreidersville Covered Bridge Festival.
- Colin offered his business post office mailbox in Walnutport as an immediate mailing address for BHCWA at PO Box S, Walnutport, PA 18088.
- Debbie offered to start creating BHCWA logo/branding layouts for committee review & consideration.
- Jason suggested contacting nearlyfreespeech.net to investigate "nearly free" website development, hosting & email account(s) for BHCWA; Jim will make contact.
- The next steering committee meeting was scheduled for 7:00pm, Monday, April 6 in the 3rd Floor Conference Room at the Greystone Building.
- The steering committee meeting was adjourned about 9:30pm.