

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OPEQUON CREEK PROJECT TEAM, Inc.
APRIL 10, 2007

Meeting held at: 400 Stephen Street, Martinsburg, Dunn Building, 2nd floor cafeteria.
Facilitator: Alana Hartman, WV Department of Environment Protection

Members Present: Bill Zinner, Mary Beth Bennett, Bonnie Stubblefield, Ron Gunderson, Sandra Bernardi, George Snider, Diane and Gary Sylvester, Richard Demoske, Mary Palmer, Tanya Borisova, Frank Rodgers, Sharon Lee, Lou Scavnicky, John Jacko

Handouts: Rain Barrel Workshop 3/28/07

6:05 p.m. Meeting Opened by Alana Hartman

Financial Report: Alana reported there is \$1409 in the rain barrel workshop account and \$1416.51 in the Stream Partners account and that these accounts will be joined as soon as the OCPT, Inc. has a bank account.

Correspondence: Alana reported that since March 13, 2007, both the Jefferson County Opequon Creek and Mill Creek property owners were mailed a letter of OCPT introduction and a survey to be returned. (the Mill Creek letter/survey and Jefferson Co. letter/postcard were different). Sandra wrote to Canaan Valley Institute to request a circuit rider, but now will follow that up with a call.

Introductions: The order of the agenda was changed to allow Gary Sylvester and Frank Rodgers time to attend the meeting after they delivered several rain barrels to people that were unable to attend the rain barrel workshop.

Upcoming Events:

April 20, noon to 3:00?, Team member volunteers are to plant some of the 110 bare root trees from EPCD as a creek buffer on the John Jacko property. Alana will email more information to volunteers prior to the workday. Alana reported that buffer tree stakes cost \$1.50 each, which when combined with the cost of the trees, exceeds the existing budget of \$282 by several hundred dollars. After discussion by the team, it was agreed that the team's priority was to plant buffers and that the team wants to complete the Jacko planting as scheduled this spring. Mary Palmer made a motion to use rain barrel funds to pay the additional cost of the buffer stakes and the trees to finish the Jacko buffer planting. Bill Zinner seconded the motion and all members voted in favor and the motion was adopted. Sharon suggested pricing surveyors' bundles of stakes.

May 4, 9a.m.-4 p.m. Is a rain day for planting trees on the Jacko property on May 5 should there is a hurricane or serious storm predicted for Saturday May 5.

May 5, 8a.m.-4 p.m., Finish planting trees at Jacko property.

May 5, 9 am-noon, Tuscarora Creek ailanthus roundup treatment day. Team volunteers to bring gloves, shovels, water to drink, pruners, nippers, and wear appropriate clothing for the weather. Volunteers to contact Bill Zinner for more information.

May 8, regular meeting

New Business:

1. Alana reported that the deadline for the new Stream Partners Grant application is April 16, 2007. The team then held a brain storming session of the projects that OCPT would like to include in the proposal. The team discussed the categories of the projects, costs of the projects, in-kind OCPT volunteer hours and funds to match the projects that would be paid by the grant. The team developed a general list of projects to be included in the proposal. Under the category of field activity: buffer planting, stream cleanup, fecal coliform monitoring of Opequon Creek, E. coli water sampling and Mill Creek assessment. Under the category of information management: intern cost, mailing letters & surveys, office supplies, table top exhibit displays, travel to conferences, rain barrel workshops, and web site hosting. Under the category of outreach: tabletop displays and creek cleanups. Alana and Sandra Bernardi will write the proposal for OCPT.

2. The team then agreed to include in the proposal \$500 to Sandra Bernardi to reimburse her for the cost of her mileage, and for the costs of supplies, including the purchase of a waterproof camera bag to do the Mill Creek assessment this year.

3. Alana reported she is doing the watershed based plan for Opequon Creek, (now that we have a final TMDL) and is meeting with Berkeley County health department officials to begin with identifying failing septic tank locations located on the watershed.

4. Bonnie Stubblefield reported that the EP Community Foundation Conservation Grant application deadline is now and that this grant money is to be used to protect open spaces, habitats, help public awareness, etc. She believes OCPT buffer planting may qualify as creating a habitat and will try, working with Sandra, to obtain the maximum of \$1,000 for 2008 buffer project.

5. George Snider reported the Bedinton Methodist youth float trip at the Snider's property has been postponed until warmer weather in July or August and is expected to involve about 50 people. George expressed preference to work with established youth groups

6. Alana reported that the new bridge over the Opequon to replace the historic stone bridge on Golf Course Road at the Blairton Road intersection is to be built in 2008 and that this work will affect the adjacent Hess property creek bank. The team may want to consider this property for a buffer planting after the bridge and subsequent road work is complete.

7. Future Leaders of Watersheds (FLOW)-WV EPA. Sandra Bernardi reported this group needs more applicants to apply for their grant money. The grant focus is to get youth involved more in watersheds. Frank Rodgers states that the funds are usually granted to youth organizations such as Girl Scouts who have a specific watershed project. The team decided not to apply at this time, but to find out if there is a local recipient we can support later.

Project Updates:

1. By-laws and Incorporating. Sandra Bernardi reports that OCPT, Inc. has a Federal Tax Number and OCPT incorporation paperwork has been filed with the state. The team is now a West Virginia corporation. She is still working on the I.R.S. 501C application for Federal non-profit status. Sandra questioned whether the by laws were accepted by the team and Mary Palmer stated the by-laws were corrected and accepted and adopted by the team at the March 13, 2007 meeting.

2. Mill Creek cleanup: Alana reported that this was a huge success; 10 volunteers, including a Martinsburg High School student, picked up 49 bags of trash at two locations along Mill Creek. Mary and Sharon noted the Kodak plant area on E. side of Opequon is a dump site that needs attention.
3. Buffer Planting project: Discussed under upcoming events.
4. Website: Tanya Borisova requests team members write reports or summaries to be included on the OCPT website of current projects. George Snider agreed to write a report about Mill Creek Cleanup and possibly a report on other current projects. Richard Demoske reported his research on web hosts was incomplete and Tanya agreed to help locate a web site host.
5. Rain Barrel Workshop. Alana handed out a report, including financials, of the 3/28/07 workshop and noted the team must consider when and where the next workshop will be done which will actually net the team's profit on the barrels. Frank Rodgers said he thought the workshop went well and maybe OCPT should consider doing a workshop on a quarterly basis. Bonnie suggested OCPT try to keep a count of overall sales and do a survey of how people are using them, etc.
6. Mailing to Jefferson County landowners. Sandra Bernardi reported a handful of returned letters have been received due to non-deliverable addresses and that seven post card surveys have been returned as of April 5. Keep on May agenda.
7. Survey of Mill Creek landowners. This mailing was completed by WVU and will be posted April 11. Mary Palmer reported that only landowners whose property actually touched Mill Creek were included on the mailing and that other landowners in the watershed were not included on the mailing list.
8. Booth/tabletop display. The team is looking for a volunteer to assume the leadership duties of OCPT exhibits and displays. Sandra Bernardi and Mary Palmer agreed to set up and man the Yankauer Preserve Earth Day celebration on April 21, 2007.
9. Berkeley County Judicial Center parking lot rain garden. Mary Beth Bennett reported the Master Gardeners are working on replanting and cleaning of the garden. Alana stated WV DEP needed a funding agreement with the Master Gardeners.
10. War Memorial Park natural stream restoration/shrub planting. Alana reported Steve Catlett is okay with the estimate submitted by Rebecca MacLeod for the riparian buffer planting where the Tuscarora Creek restoration work was done and that the plants will be ordered. OCPT volunteers will be needed to do the planting.
11. Opequon Watershed (VA and WV) Targeted Watershed Grant update. More details are to be provided at the next regular meeting.
12. Monitoring.
 - A. fecal coliform – monthly sampling continues; preliminary results graphed.
 - B. E. coli – monthly sampling underway. Monitors are to meet at 5:30 pm on May 8th – just prior to the next regular meeting.

Biological – George Snider, Sandra Bernardi and Lou Scavnicky (Bill Zinner interested, too) will follow up with a spring meeting. Adding an easy test for turbidity might be useful.

8:35 p.m. Meeting adjourned.

Minutes prepared by Mary Palmer, Secretary, OCPT, Inc. cottagecreek@earthlink.net

Minutes posted at: www.wvnet.org/wvts_imp.htm