

OPEQUON CREEK PROJECT TEAM, INC.  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
July 2, 2008

Meeting held at: PSSD Headquarters, Conference Room, Martinsburg, WV  
Facilitator: Alana Hartman, Potomac Basin Coord., WV Dept. of Environmental Protection

Present: Sandra Bernardi, George Snider (President), Gary Sylvester, Diane Sylvester, Ron Gunderson, Bonnie Stubblefield, Mary Beth Bennett, Bill Zinner, Steve Knipe, Curtis Keller, Jim Lawrence, Heather Kepple

Meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Alana Hartman

**Introductions**

Jim Lawrence, Heather Kepple, both representing Opequon Targeted Watershed Grant, Curtis Keller, Berkeley County PSSD, Steve Knipe, City of Martinsburg

**Financial Report:** The Treasurer reported a balance of \$4226.94 in the general fund as of 07/02.08 and a balance of \$(2396.31) + (2500) in the grant fund for a total account balance of \$ 9123.25 .

**Previous Minutes:** A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes of the May meeting. Motion passed.

**Upcoming Events:**

1. Upcoming OCPT meetings:
  - August 6, 2008 @ 6:00 PM
  - September 3, 2008 @ 6:00 PM
2. August 5 – Potomac Headwaters RC&D Annual Meeting: George Snider, Sandra Bernardi to make a presentation to the meeting
3. August 16 Creek cleanup – contact: S. Bernardi, coordinator: G. Snider
4. August 30 Fun Float – see below for details
5. September 17-18 – Karst Conference @ NCTC. Register by September 5. Contact Olga Adams @304-267-8953, Ext 5; or [pcrhd@verizon.net](mailto:pcrhd@verizon.net)
6. October 2-5: Watershed Forum @ NCTC
7. Watershed Celebration Day Nov. 1 – see below for details

**New Business**

1. Fats / Oils/ Grease Recycling Program (FOG) Curtis Keller stated that there is a need to implement this program throughout the County to reduce impact of these materials on the District's pump stations and treatment plants. Collected grease, fats, and oils can be rendered into bio-diesel fuels to be utilized by certain of the District's vehicles. The program is to be considered by the PSSD Board in the near future. OCPT may be able to help in this effort by disseminating information. More information will be developed in the future. Awareness of the negative impact F/O/G can have on septic systems is something OCPT can address with homeowners in the watershed now. A motion was made by George Snyder to support the PSSD "in principal" in this effort: seconded and passed.
2. Curtis also noted that the PSSD is also now in charge of county-wide storm water management efforts. The initial project in the planning stages will take place in Inwood and is estimated to cost in excess of \$30 million. It will include design and construction of a collection and detention system, treatment of collected water and release of the detained water to existing watercourses. The goal is to reduce the flooding problem there.
3. Credit card(s): Sandra Bernardi suggested that OCPT open a credit card account to facilitate some of the bill paying and record-keeping for the organization. Attendees agreed that this would be a good idea. Gary Sylvester agreed to investigate this matter and report back.
4. George proposed we consider elaborating more on job descriptions of board of directors in the by-laws. We discussed the pros and cons of requiring 2 signatures on checks. Gary will also investigate this. No action taken at this time.
5. CVI Maps: Alana proposed to utilize up to \$700 left over from the current Stream Partners Grant (Budget Item – Information Management) to acquire maps of the Tuscarora watershed. This in anticipation of developing a project similar to Mill Creeks in the near future. This proposal was approved. Alana will explore the actual cost for these maps and report back.
6. United Way: OCPT has been classified as a **designated recipient** for the upcoming year. Specific, tax deductible donations can now be made to OCPT via the UW.
7. Continental Brick staff have begun to communicate with OCPT representatives. Next step is to see where each of us is currently sampling water, and whether we can help each other with that.
8. Didymo algae is an invasive that is spreading to creeks in the region – necessitates that we clean felt bottomed boots after wading to stop the spread.

9. Stream Partners Grant: OCPT has been awarded its third \$5,000 Grant, to begin Sept. 1 2008.

### **Old Business**

1. Watershed Celebration Day Nov. 1. “Travel Scholarships” of \$200 are available. George Snider will compile a list of OCPT accomplishments (from 07/01.07 thru 06/30.08) for submission. Submittals are due by July 15
2. Water Quality Monitoring – Ron Gunderson agreed to develop a Study Design or Monitoring Plan for Opequon and Mill Creeks. We might plan a macroinvertebrate sampling day at George’s property again soon.
3. Mill Creek monitoring program: Volunteers have come forward to take over the sampling of 3 to 6 sites presently being done by Jim Lawrence. Volunteers attended their first training course and will soon be at work in the stream if they become certified by Friends of Shenandoah lab.
4. Creek Cleanup scheduled for August 16: will start at George Snider’s property. The takeout point is still to be determined. A minimum of 2 “Jon” boats and 2 large canoes will be needed. Contact Sandra Bernardi if you plan to attend.
5. Fun Float scheduled for August 30: Put in at the Stone Bridge and takeout at George Snider’s property. Additional details to follow.
6. New meeting location: For the foreseeable future OCPT will meet at the new headquarters building of the PSSD. The facilities are first rate and we thank the PSSD for its generosity.
7. Fall Buffer Planting: Will take place on the Conley property, on Mill Creek, in October. Planting will include trees, native grasses and wildflowers. These last two are a first for our buffer planting efforts.
8. Supplemental Tree Planting @ Roach Property: Frank Rogers reported that the volunteers arrived on time and worked hard to plant more than 70 trees along the southern fence line of this ongoing project. He also reported that the ailanthus plants have reached the stage of epidemic distribution and recommends this be addressed before more planting is undertaken. Any suggestions as to how best to do this will be appreciated.
9. Roach / Tuscarora Stream Improvement Project: The stream topographic survey field work has been completed. Drawings of the existing project area will now be prepared. In addition, the stream was “electro-shocked” to determine the quantity and type of fish and other aquatic life-forms present. In a stretch below the existing dam an abundance of fish and crustaceans were found. Above the dam, however, very few fish were present –

a testament to the role of this dam in diminishing aquatic life in the stream. The dam stops fish migration and backs up silt in the water which smothers invertebrates thereby eliminating food sources for any fish which might end up there. We are now seeking funding for the design and construction phases of this project.

10. Liability Insurance: George Snider continues to pursue this matter.

### **Project Updates**

1. Baltimore Street Rain Garden: Steve Knipe reported that the garden is doing well, with impressively low plant mortality. It was weeded on July 2. Steve also reports he still cannot collect adequate samples from the monitoring wells despite the heavy rainfall this Spring. He has been assured by the design engineers that this situation will improve.
2. Rain Garden Videos: Alana requested 4 copies of the Baltimore Street Rain Garden video(s); Bill Zinner to provide.
3. Sign for Baltimore Street: Alana and Steve Knipe are to work together to develop a sign for the Baltimore Street project – the money to come from the Stream Partners Grant. The money must be spent or committed by September.
4. War Memorial Park Natural Stream Restoration project: Alana reported that the grass along the banks is not being mowed as much as before allowing it to do a better job of bank stabilization. Bonnie reported someone has possibly moved the large stones in the middle structure to make it more orderly. Downstream neighbor appears to be clearing the banks on his side of the creek, cutting down trees and shrubs, clearing brush and applying (she thinks) herbicide.
5. Judicial Center Rain Garden: George Snider met with County representatives. It was determined that the Master Gardeners will weed the garden while the County will keep the area cleaned up. The City installed an automatic watering system. George feels that a larger drop inlet is needed at the “top” of the site to stop runoff from going over the hill during heavy rains.

### **Adjourn:**

Motion to adjourn by George Snider, seconded and passed by all attendees. Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM