

OPEQUON CREEK PROJECT TEAM, INC.  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
August 6, 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, John S. Jacko, John L. Jacko, Bill Zinner, Andy Johnson (DEP), Seth Sheldon (DEP)

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

**Introductions** John L. Jacko

**Financial Report:** As of 08/05.08 the Treasurer reported a balance of \$3,401.70 in the general fund a balance of \$1,971.3 in the Stream Partners Grant fund and \$2,500.00 in the Freeman Foundation fund for a total account balance of \$7,873.01 .

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

**Upcoming Events:**

1. Upcoming OCPT meetings:
  - September 3, 2008 @ 6:00 PM
  - October 1, 2008 @ 6:00 PM
2. August 16 Opequon Creek cleanup – contact person: Sandra Bernardi
3. August 30 Fun Float – see below for details
4. September 13 – Tuscarora Creek cleanup. See details below
5. September 17-18 – “Growing Communities on Karst” Conference @ NCTC. Register by September 5. Contact Olga Adams @304-267-8953, Ext 5; or [phrcd.6003@verizon.net](mailto:phrcd.6003@verizon.net)
6. October 2-5: Chesapeake Watershed Forum @ NCTC
7. October 25: Conley property buffer planting project. Start @ 0900. Additional details to follow.
8. Watershed Celebration Day Nov. 1 – see below for details

## New Business

1. Mill Creek: Alana posed the idea that citizens in the Mill Creek area could consider forming their own watershed association, once they begin meeting for planning of outreach and other aspects of the 319 funding we are expecting there. It was suggested that such an association be required to send a representative to OCPT meetings to keep us informed.
2. A team from WVDEP has been sampling macroinvertebrates in eastern panhandle streams, including tributaries of the Opequon. Two of the team members, Andy Johnson and Seth Sheldon presented some information about what they were doing and what they had found. The goal is to learn if there is a new “metric” (way of calculating stream health based on diversity and abundance of particular organisms) applicable to just the streams in limestone geology, like the eastern panhandle and Greenbrier Valley. To do this they need to sample some streams not impacted by heavy agriculture, residential development, etc. – has been hard to find!

Another team has also been sampling the Opequon watershed for its every-five-year “checkup” based on the Watershed Management Framework cycle. This year marks 5 years since the pre-TMDL sampling, and will serve as baseline data in Mill Creek particularly, before we begin large amounts of projects there.

The DEP staffers described other data gathered on different schedules, and OCPT members reiterated their desire to have all available Opequon watershed data compiled and analyzed to reveal ANY patterns or trends we can act on or report to stakeholders. We hope the (Virginia Tech) Opequon Targeted Watershed Grant’s new staff person who was hired to compile monitoring data will be able to fulfill this need.

Alana thanked them for their efforts to have a positive interaction with landowners, which also helps us when we reach out to landowners for help/permission for projects.

3. George Snider met with Barbie Elliot of the Conservation Agency ([belliot@wvca.us](mailto:belliot@wvca.us)) on July 22 to discuss possible projects on the Opequon. Concerns raised at the meeting, and projects EPCD/WVCA can possibly help with included stream restoration, logistics, brochure design, and elimination of obstructions at bridges.
4. George Snider and Sandra Bernardi attended a meeting convened by the PHRC&D, where they gave a presentation on projects of OCPT. Nine counties were represented. The group toured a number of project sites and

treatment facilities. RC&D Director Rebecca McLeod offered to help with projects on Mill Creek in whatever way she can.

5. A possible resource for planting materials has been discovered – a plant resource center run by the USDA/NRCS near Lewisburg, WV. More research will be done to determine the value of this source to OCPT.
6. Tuscarora Creek Cleanup: A property on Tuscarora Creek, Demi Lewin, will attend the September meeting to discuss details and OCPT's role.

### **Old Business**

1. 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.
2. Liability Insurance: George Snider recommended that OCPT carry a liability policy to cover events but that it would be impractical to purchase a policy to cover members of the Board. A motion was made to purchase as much coverage as possible for \$800, the amount now in the Stream Partners Grant. Motion passed.
3. It was reported that CVI is now working on maps for Tuscarora Creek using funds from the current Stream Partners Grant.
4. Watershed Celebration Day Nov. 1. "Travel Scholarships" of \$200 are available.
5. 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.
6. Fun Float scheduled for August 30: Put in at the Stone Bridge and takeout at George Snider's property. Start @ 0900
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: Bill Zinner watered all the newly planted trees (as well as those that have survived from the initial planting) on August 7

## **Project Updates**

1. Baltimore Street Rain Garden: Text for the new sign has been drafted, to emphasize more our desire to see some homeowners create smaller rain gardens.
2. Rain Garden Videos: Alana requested 4 copies of the Baltimore Street Rain Garden video(s); Bill Zinner provided one copy at the August meeting.
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. Septic pumping project in Mill Creek (actually New Business): 25 homes will be able to have \$150 towards septic pumping in Mill Creek this fall through April 30 as a result of \$25,000 extra funds coming to WV from the Chesapeake Bay Program office this year. We (WV Tributary Strategy Implementation Committee) decided to give \$3750 to each of 4 watersheds to try this incentive idea and work out any kinks, in preparation for receiving Section 319 funding this coming summer, to do similar work in those same watersheds. Alana will be administering this project for Mill Creek.
5. George updated the project idea of working with Curtis Keller at the PSSD to make this building a stormwater showcase, with rain barrels, plants in the stormwater pond, and possibly a small rain garden/swale between sidewalk and building.

## **Adjourn:**

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