

MINUTES
Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership
Education, Outreach, and Research Committee Meeting – July 20, 2022

Committee Members In Attendance: Kate Conlin (MFA, Chair), Hannah Poplawski (Rowe, Note taker), Joseph Nowak (Adams)

Public Attendance: Whit Sanford.

Staff/Board Present: Board Chair Hank Art (Williamstown); Lisa Hayden (NEFF), Sophie Argetsinger (NEFF)

Call to Order at 5:03pm by K. Conlin.

Approval of Meeting Minutes from Education, Outreach and Research Committee Meeting January 24, 2022: J. Nowak motioned to approve the minutes and H. Poplawski seconded. Approved unanimously by roll call vote.

There was no public comment.

Discussion of Regular EOR meeting times: It was suggested the EOR committee meets at least quarterly but once every two months is preferred. Members were in agreement that Wednesdays at 5 PM seem to work as a good meeting time for everyone but meeting times should be confirmed in advance. There may be a replacement for the Conway representative soon who could join this committee in which case we would not have to worry as much about having a quorum.

Working groups could meet more often to handle small tasks, i.e. advertising for upcoming workshops and events, organizing a new website and other specific projects. Working groups would not deliberate on committee matters, but bring any significant questions to the full Committee for discussion.

Brainstorming Ideas for Workshops and Events: K. Conlin is going to reconnect with Bill Keeton to schedule a zoom webinar with him. L. Hayden suggested he should be scheduled for later in October or November after the Listening Sessions for the updated Partnership Plan. K. Conlin suggested we should agree on the stipend to offer presenters: \$200 was the stipend for the Oaks webinar and it was agreed the amount should be consistent but perhaps increased in the future. Midmornings during the weekend seem to be good times for the public to attend these webinars/events.

J. Novak suggested that webinars and events should focus on all the goals of the MTWP. The previous and upcoming webinar have respectively focused on climate change mitigation strategies and forestry in the region but we should incorporate other topics including local recreation, tribal groups, and public engagement such as site walks. L. Hayden suggested we could host a round table with local tribal groups where they could share knowledge about natural resources and answer public questions. H. Art suggested we invite them to one of our

meetings to see if there is any interest. W. Minor suggested inviting Margaret Bruchac who is a professor of anthropology at the University of Connecticut and of Abenaki descent.

K. Conlin and H. Poplawski will work on a calendar to organize webinars, press releases, Facebook posts, advertising and share with L. Hayden and S. Argetsinger once the draft is complete. K. Conlin will work on a budget for the EOR committee. This will include “in kind” work and all of L. Hayden’s or S. Argetsinger’s work.

It was suggested that local residents and businesses could be interviewed for the updated partnership plan. If anyone has suggestions they should email L. Hayden or S. Argetsinger. K. Conlin suggested releasing a memo to newspaper and media services to spread the word.

For the last webinar we used NEFF’s Webinar zoom account, which automates RSVPs and allows at least 100 attendees (as opposed to the Pro Zoom account billed to the Partnership and used for Committee and Board meetings). Due to the “Pro” account specifics, it limits the number of participants and does not have the ability to allow for RSVPs. If the committee can organize and schedule “regular” webinars/events that would justify the increased cost, NEFF could upgrade the Zoom account to include these features with a dedicated Partnership webinar account through the Agent budget. Another option would be to apply for a grant to purchase an EOR Zoom License with the ability to host larger events with organizational features like breakout rooms.

MTWP Forest Center and Partnership with Local Organizations: In planning for a Forest Center, it was suggested we should create a master list of all agencies, nonprofits, tourism and recreation centers, private foresters, etc. within the MTWP Region. We can use this list to increase our understanding of what the area offers and who we could collaborate with in the future. W. Minor has an existing list of Western MA agencies that can be shared and updated. It is expected that members will begin brainstorming and as a homework assignment, bring their lists of non-profits, foundations and businesses related to the Partnership’s mission to share at the next meeting.

Website Updates: After the upcoming listening sessions and the approval of the updated partnership plan, administrative focus will turn to updating the website. It was suggested the EOR committee could create working groups to help with this important task.

Adjournment: H. Poplawski motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:26 PM, K. Conlin seconded (J. Nowak had left at this point).