

The **January 11, 2017** meeting of the Stonycreek-Conemaugh River Improvement Project was called to order at 9:37 AM at Gander Mountain by Len Lichvar, with Karlice Makuchan, Melissa Reckner, Joe Gorden, and Larry Hutchinson present. James Eckenrode, Jr., and Adam Cotchen joined the meeting in progress.

The meeting was also attended by John Dryzal of the Cambria County Conservation District, Pat Ferko of the PA Fish and Boat Commission, Dave Steele of the USDA, Greg Shustrick of the Somerset Conservation District, Ryan Keita of Johnstown Vision 2025, and Matt Hughes, Shirley Glover, and Pam Milavec.

Introductions were made.

Makuchan/Hutchinson made a motion to accept the November meeting minutes as submitted. All in favor. Motion carried.

Election of Officers

Reckner/Makuchan made a motion to retain the same officers as last year. All in favor. Motion carried.

Secretary's Report

Reckner reported that in 2016, SCRIP had 58 dues paying members, which was down slightly from the year before, and five new members. She said SCRIP's Facebook page has 276 "likes" and reminded that it is a good way to share news and volunteer opportunities. Anyone can post to it.

Stonycreek River

Shustrick reported that the Conservation District is applying for a Growing Greener grant to do some land reclamation on 3-5 acres, next to Oven Run site F, that have vegetation burnout. They will incorporate soil from the SGL 228 project and plant native grasses and shrubs. Rehabilitation at the other Oven Run sites is slated for this year.

The Allegheny was named River of the Year.

Lichvar reported that on Christmas, an oil/fuel spill from an undetermined source occurred on Quemahoning Creek. Lichvar said despite what the newspaper said it was not abated by that Monday. Jenners Fire Company was called out again to another so-called fuel spill the week after. DEP has not returned Lichvar's calls.

PA Angler and Boat magazine had an article about the Clear Shade Fly Fishing Area Memorial.

Lichvar shared a photo of a river otter that was accidentally trapped and released back into Que Creek. Ferko said there have been reports of otters over the years in the Stonycreek.

Lichvar suggested a separate meeting to discuss discharges and projects in the Upper Conemaugh River Watershed. Milavec shared that Jeff Means is retiring at the end of March.

Lichvar shared a news article that said an energy company is again pursuing a wind farm on Shaffer Mountain.

Treasurer's Report

Eckenrode reviewed checks written since the last meeting and said SCRIP has \$106.72 in its checking account, \$9,647.61 in its CFA account, and \$8,553.08 in its PA Invest. Makuchan/Cotchen made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. All in favor. Motion carried.

Shade Creek

Hutchinson said the SGL 228 project is on hold. He expressed frustration with having to pay to move a water line to Gahegen at the project site, when another line from Central City will be run in 2018. Reckner suggested explaining the situation and asking for grant extensions.

Hutchinson said the Shade Creek Watershed Association and Kiski-Conemaugh Stream Team are still doing weekly monitoring of the Big 4 discharges in Central City.

Technical Committee

The board agreed to remove Technical Committee from the agenda, noting it could always be added or discussed under New Business.

Education Committee

Makuchan said the newsletter went out in December. She said the deadline for the next one is March 3.

Reckner said she shared news of SCRIP's scholarship with numerous professors, department heads, and financial aid offices of local and regional colleges. No applications have been received yet.

SCRIP will participate in NatureWorks on March 4 from 10-2 by possibly making chalk colored with iron oxide. Set-up begins at 8. Lunch provided. Makuchan will oversee the activity, but will need help. Perhaps Kelsea or Stefan could assist. Len has SCRIP's display.

Events Committee

SCRIP hopes to hold a Family Fishing Activity at Que Dam, but Gorden hasn't heard back from PFBC yet regarding a date.

Kiski-Conemaugh Stream Team

Reckner reported that the Kiski-Conemaugh Stream Team's winter sampling round starts next week and that she continues work with Trout in the Classroom schools and on the KC Rivers update. She announced that there will be a Green Drinks to benefit the Stream Team on Thursday, January 19 from 5:30 – 7:30 at the Boulevard Grill. All are welcomed!

Website

Gorden shared usage data for the website. Reckner reported that the updates she submitted to Dutch have not yet been done. She'll follow up with him.

Old Business

Johnstown Riverwalls

Keita gave an overview of the Riverwalls project and said in the fall of 2015, the City asked the Army Corps to reinvest in the Riverwalls and to begin thinking how to open up the walls for access, improved habitat, etc. A \$250K hydrologic study of the watershed will wrap up in mid-2018. Among other things, it will determine how much flood protection Johnstown needs today. Keita said a charrette / visioning was held in September. Part of the ACOE's scope includes facilitating the first of quarterly workshops with state and federal agencies to begin talking about the project and gaging their interest and potential investment. The first workshop will be February 23rd. The deconstruction of the river walls would be the first such project for the ACOE's Pittsburgh District, but would model after similar projects in other parts of the country, including the Los Angeles River in California and New Bedford in Massachusetts. Johnstown has 9.2 miles of river walls.

Hughes said a committee has been working to develop an increased communication strategy, which will include a social media content calendar. Keita added that Vision 2025 will be hiring a person to help with marketing and communication.

Geocaching

Gorden reported on potential sites at which SCRIP or SCRIP in partnership with the Johnstown Visitors Bureau could establish geocaches. A discussion followed. It was decided to whittle the list down, share it with Nikki Waligoria, and see where we need to go from there. Reckner, Ritko, Hutchinson, and Milavec are willing to help Gorden, the chairman of this committee. Ritko is willing to help establish and maintain a few caches for SCRIP.

New Business

Reckner said Malcolm Crittenden is a very good artist and will have his artwork displayed at the Community Arts Center of Cambria County in Westmont from January 28 – February 28. An opening reception will be held February 4.

Lichvar said a new book: *Keystone Fly Fishing* is available on Amazon or Target and features some waterways, like the Stony, Wells Creek, and Benscreek in the Upper Conemaugh Watershed. (I looked and it's cheaper at Target!) He helped author it.

Next meeting

Gorden said he would like SCRIP to go back to monthly meetings, but the idea received little support.

Next meeting: March 17 at 11:00 AM at Windber Hotel

Meeting adjourned.

Minutes by Reckner.