

Draft: Penn's Woods West Trout Unlimited

Board Meeting—February 3, 2022

TU Mission: To conserve, protect and restore North America's Coldwater fisheries and their watersheds.

Attendees: Ian, Bryan, Chuck, Ron, Nora, Ed, Jamie, Andy

Topics (Meeting Opened 7:02 PM):

Review/approval of previous Board Meeting minutes: approved with change to Exploration Committee to “Outdoor Adventure” Committee.

Officers and committee chair reports: See below.

Old Business:

- 1) January Minutes. Ed proposed accepting, Jamie seconded **<passed>**
- 2) Science projects—discussion
 - a) Bryan wants the Board to read the examples he provided and get feedback from them. He’s proposed 3 broad areas to consider and is trying to see if any attract our attention. “What floats the Board’s boat”?
 - b) One suggestion from Chuck is to shift the existing Tom Walsh scholarship to help TiC at Chatham and provide focus for the scholarship more directly.
 - c) One of the concerns is that, while we have a lot of members, we don’t have a read on how many might get actively involved. At the same time, we can use this focus on conservation to grow our membership in a more diverse and broader based way as a conservation organization.
- 3) Service Award for departing Board members – deferred.
- 4) Board member replacement—Alani Taylor proposed as board member-at-large for a 1-year term, obviously re-electable in 2023 should she wish. Alani is a wetland scientist with the Army Corps of Engineers in Pittsburgh with a passion for conservation and an interest in angling. Bryan nominates Alani, Nora seconded. **<passed>**
- 5) Website revisions—Board input
 - a) Jamie really likes the updates and has been very impressed. Several other Board members concurred. Bryan specifically noted that it works very well on his phone.

New Business:

- 1) Annual meeting—February 14
 - a) Reports from Chuck & Ed to be short
 - b) Nominees from Dale are Ian Brown, Nora Cline and Nick Cobler

- c) Vote by Zoom poll
 - d) Budget discussed earlier. Proposal is a deficit budget with substantial increases in spending for conservation efforts predicated on the Equitrans donation last year. Ed would like some additional input and the formal proposed budget is planned for presentation at the annual meeting.
- 2) Clearances
 - a) Re-emphasizing that all board members need their clearances; a couple need to renew.
 - b) This also applies to any members interested in participating in events that have youth involved.
 - 3) Monetary support for Outdoor Adventures events
 - a) Canopy purchase – Brian indicates he has a 10'x10' purchased for the chapter. Chuck is willing to start with this and, if it doesn't fit the bill, then we can look at a larger one.
 - 4) COI declarations
 - a) Annual update – please send to Ian
 - b) New Board members
 - 5) Allegheny Cleanways has responded to the Board's request for donor information (as in who the corporate or non-profit donors are). Bryan's motive is to try to use this as a way to get some of AC's folks involved with TU, which might help us with our cleanups down the road. AC does have plenty of liability insurance; we have TU on top of that. Jamie proposes we sponsor at the \$5000 level, Bryan seconds. **<passed unanimously>**
 - 6) Volunteer hours – Nora will follow-up with Bob.

Adjourned

Meeting closed 8:05 PM

Important Dates:

- Opening Day (Trout): April 2, 2022 (First Saturday in April, now state-wide)

Committee Reports

Penn's Woods West Chapter of Trout Unlimited

Officers and Committee Chair Reports

For January Year: 2022

Conservation Committee Chair: Bryan Mathie

- Connected with engineering company responsible for the Little Pine Creek project adding ADA public access and in stream features to hold trout. We worked on their grant submission and are waiting for the results. More to come when we find out. The total grant request was \$850K
- Met with Montour Run Watershed Association to discuss possible projects and opportunity to leverage a PWWTU member who is a fish biologist/consultant who wanted spots to do electro-fishing. We are working together to determine some good projects for the fall of this year and next year on Montour run. We used the very recent Watershed Assessment report for locations of projects as well as good electro-fishing sample places
- Reached out to Allegheny Cleanways several times but have not gotten a response back. Don't know what is going on. More as it comes in.
- Received \$5,000 grant from Equitable Midstream for the Virtual TIC. Working with Roy Weitzell to get it running. Picking up eggs on 2/2/22 but won't have the cameras up and running for the start – still working on logistics. A significant issue came up with Roy's time availability we should discuss as a board - can we help him for the next couple of years with some sort of grant to hire a dedicated grad student focused on environmental education so they are vested in this program as a project?
- Tried 1st advocacy Action Alert regarding stocking on Freeman's Run. We were able to prevent the vote from even taking place and killed this issue so it won't come back up to vote. We didn't get the individual voices we would have liked - only 60 individual letters/comments on the PFBC website out of 17,000 members. Need to do better next time

Women & Diversity Committee Chair: Nora Cline/Jodie Minor

Membership Committee Chair: Jamie Schroder

I continue to tell people about our group, the conservation, youth, women's activities and what a welcoming group we are. I shared our website this weekend with a spin angler who recently bought a fly set up and wants to learn!

Education Committee Chair: Ron Milavec

Program Committee Chair: Christian Shane

President: Chuck Buffington

Pleased to see Bryan and Ed present a check to Larry and Monty of FTTU to assist the effort to get the Trout Trail reinvigorated. Nice collaboration between chapters thanks to Bryan's outreach and his position as SW PA Regional Vice President for PATU. Kudos to Bryan Mathie for success in obtaining a grant from Equitrans to help fund a virtual Trout in the Classroom based in Chatham's University's Eden Hall Campus. Nice to see our women honored in a front-page article in PA Trout about a multi-chapter women's outing on Spring Creek last fall. Website revision coming along well, largely because of Joe Birch's efforts. Nick Cobler had useful input. Very happy that Andy Andrews has organized the inaugural Adventure Outdoors camping/fishing event. It will occur in late May at Little Pine Creek Campground in north-central PA. Andy is proving his worth as a Board Member. Good that we're having an Annual Meeting prior to the Chapter Meeting on February 14th. A little awkward, voting by Zoom, but Dale Fogg, Chair of the Nominations Committee has generated a good slate of candidates. National TU wants turnover on Chapter boards, and we're likely to have three new members when the dust settles. The cancellation of Cabin Fever remains controversial, but the Board felt it was the prudent thing to do. Six more weeks of winter, according to Phil, but that means snow in the mountains.

Vice President: vacant

Officer: Treasurer: Ed Barger

Transactions in January included

- \$3900 to Forbes Trail TU. Previously approved grant for work on Laurel Highlands Trout Trail
- Board-approved expense of \$550 to the RCFF Youth Camp, as sponsorship for Grant Volek
- Expenses totaling \$448.64 (\$175.98 to teacher Michael MacDonnell of Riverview School District and \$160.49 to Emily Ferraro of David E Williams Middle School in Cornell School District for new Aquariums; along with an additional \$110.17 reimbursement to Christian for TIC supplies
- Speaker fee of \$150 to Bill Nagle for our January meeting

Receipt of the \$5000 grant from Equitrans Midstream supporting establishment of a Virtual TIC setup at Chatham University.

As of Today, we have \$68,157.41 in our account, including the \$5000 in restricted funds (Virtual TIC) grant from Equitrans. Immediate upcoming known expenses include \$250 to Carol Morris for presenting at the February ZOOM meeting, and an estimated \$200 for a speaker at our March meeting (ZOOM or in-person).

Please review the attached budget for FY 23. If no input was received from you regarding anticipated expenses for your committees, I used what was in last year's budget. Please note that Bryan has requested a large amount in this year's budget for various conservation-related activities that have not yet received board approval. I have included them for discussion.

On another front, members of the Laurel Highlands Trout Trail task force met virtually via ZOOM on January 13. We will be getting assistance from UPJ professor Skip Glenn and an intern in his department in preparing marketing strategy for the effort. Monty Murty of FTTU gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding the history of the Trout Trail, along with what we hope to accomplish in the update. This potentially will be presented to PWW during our March meeting.

We have an upcoming Task Force meeting next week with the UPJ folks to kick off their effort.

Ex-officio: Dale Fogg

Communications Committee