

Present: Keith Ross, Rick Chandler, Whit Sanford, Rebecca Stone, Hank Art, Lisa Hayden and Charlie Cary

The meeting was called to order at 3:01 pm by Chair K. Ross.

- Committee members introduced themselves.
- K. Ross introduced discussion of duties and focus areas for the committee, including:
 - Fund manager
 - Annual Budget
 - Audit
 - Committee Mission statement

Among the issues discussed included: Where is our funding currently kept and managed? Board Chair H. Art clarified that so far most of the MTWP's funding has come from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts via EEOAA. Regarding the Agent role, NEFF bills EOEEA for tasks within its Agent budget. The Committee draws some of its charter and mission from the enabling legislation and bylaws.

Eventually, the vision is for the MTWP to set up a Trust Fund for MTWP, through affiliation with the U.S. Forest Service through the Shared Stewardship Agreement. However, H. Art has been in touch with Cong. Neal's office exploring how this can happen, as it appears Congressional action is needed to allow a FS rep to sit on the Board. In the meantime, the Partnership likely needs to pursue funding and grants from the Commonwealth, USFS/USDA, foundations, etc. It was suggested the contact from Rep. Neal might be invited to a future Committee meeting, as the Executive Committee seeks support for a MTWP Forest Center.

- Set up framework or receiving funds. The Committee agreed there is a need to set up a Bank Account and Chart of Accounts, potentially via NEFF, so it can manage the MTWP's current budget and funding. Especially if MTWP is a pass-through for a variety of sources of monies. There could potentially be cost share funding to help towns through a revolving fund, for example.
- State EEA grant for MTWP region, May 24 deadline: The Committee questioned whether the Partnership is in competition with the towns for the state grants. The consensus was no, not really, as the Partnership is more of a regional organization, and there are 2 categories, municipal, and groups of towns or region-wide within the EEA grant.
- There was discussion about the need for a mechanism to administer grants. There is no oversight by MTWP on any funds at this point. And thus, no audit is needed for the current fiscal year.

- NEFF is capable of handling delivery of the Partnership plan, but is also looking for some guidance from the Board about prioritizing proposed funding of tasks that are in their contract, but may have overlap with activities already underway. There were several suggestions for next steps for the Committee to build progress including:
 - Draft Chart of Accounts
 - Review the Admin. Agent Budget
 - Draft Budget – ask standing committees about their budget priorities and then figure out where to seek funding
 - Report on Admin. Tasks from Keith and Lisa
- There was an update that Board Treasurer Mark Phelps may step down from his role. Hank is following up with him.
- Future meeting dates may be needed about once a month. It was noted that the Executive & Budget Committees are closely allied.
- Public Comment: C. Cary expressed his interest in assessing the region's industrial wood businesses in order to determine once a tree is cut, what is its highest and best use?

The meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m.