

VPC Board Meeting Minutes

12/3/2014 at The Bluestone

Present: AJ, Alden, Ryan, Paul, John, Tony, Chris, Ben, Mike

Calendar & Other Miscellaneous To-Do's

- Spring potluck - Do this in mid-late March. Needs to not conflict w/ WV trip or NHL Race. March 29th seems ideal. Tony will check availability of church space.
- New Haven Race - April 4th, snow/freeze/flood/drought date is two weeks later.
- WV trip - Brock will organize dates. Same week as last year seems like a good option as the weather is pleasant enough down there and you're unlikely to miss too much up here.
- There doesn't seem to be a good reason to do a Bow & Stern issue this fall. Alden will prep one for March. Speaking of which... everyone should put in some trip reports.

Finances

- Ben is basically broke and spent his last \$4 on pizza. Tony bought Ben a beer. Tony sure is a nice guy.
- oh, you mean *those other* finances....
- Hugh reported via email that the club has about \$2900 in the bank, which is a smidge more than the same time last year. ACA insurance has already been paid. Chris noted there may have been some inaccuracies listing UVM as the co-insured. Apparently the ACA insurance department has always been somewhat disorganized and their insurance certificates need to be closely checked.
- Tony can get PayPal on the website working. AJ mentioned that PayPal waives the fees for non-profits. It is not clear if the VPC is a non-profit or what sort of non-profit it is/could be.
- Non-profit status should be resolved, as the VPC may need to solicit matching fund donations for the Montpelier Whitewater Park in the relatively near future. Certain non-profit status would make those donations tax-deductible, among other benefits.

Website

- The old server is being shut down on January 15th, so the new one needs to be up and running by then.
- Tony says the migration is rather time-consuming and labor-intensive. Thus, he is focusing on having the popular/important features like the message board, membership listings, and clinic sign-up ready at first. Other features like the photo galleries will not be ready initially.
- Tony will download the historical material and archive it.
- Ryan wonders if it isn't time for a new logo. Folks generally agree that would be nice. Both Tony and AJ know people who could work on this. It would be great to have this done before Race Pinnies get ordered.

Activities

- Pool sessions

- Last year there were 5 at UVM and 3 in Berlin.
- Last year's issues at First in Fitness have mostly been resolved
- Chris will set dates in mid-December, but will probably stick fairly close to last year's dates.
- NHL Race
 - Will run basically like last year
 - Have some sponsors already
 - The race committee would like to order some Pinneys. They are thinking 60 or so, at roughly \$17 each, for a total of around \$1000. They are looking for sponsors, but also want some VPC funding as well. Will Seegers has looked at pricing, AJ sounds like he knows what he's talking about though and will see what he can find. Once the overall cost and sponsor support is known, the VPC can consider their contribution.
 - Other logistics will fall into shape when the time comes... ramp transport/set-up, safety, refreshments, shuttle, etc.
 - Ben and Catherine have offered their property for after-partying.

Montpelier Whitewater Park

- There are a number of local paddlers involved in this. The initial planning is well underway and looks promising
- The State of VT and City of Montpelier are on-board. Scott Shipley from S2O would design the whitewater features. The City is covering the feasibility study.
- There are various other elements involved in funding, planning, etc. and a variety of bureaucratic and technical considerations... but.... this thing could go down to 200 cfs or so.

Membership

- Ryan reminds folks that we need to keep working on recruiting members. Every year membership becomes slightly smaller, even though there are still many active paddlers who are not members. Some difficulty arises in that club functions are not really necessary in the digital age.
- Mike says we need to define success not just in membership numbers but in the amount of activity that is occurring. With a race, several clinics, multiple release negotiations, etc things look pretty good.
- Paul says people need to get contact information from people on their trips.
- Summer trips are good as well, and can be planned ahead of time. Mike said he plans lots of summer trips and posts them up, and only the same 4 people come each time.
- Need to focus on retaining and nurturing new boats from the class I & II clinics.
- Having borrow-able gear would help with this
- Need to make FB page more active. Pretty much everyone on the board has access to this. When stuff gets posted to the page, it gets a lot of attention.

Releases

- The Mississquoi is now a Wild and Scenic River. This includes the Trout River as well, which, for everyone's information, is a great run with one of the best boulder gardens in the state, and double 10-footers. Just FYI
 - Releases are pretty well locked down, and Enel has been very cooperative. There have been 3 releases this year. There could have been more except it's been too dry.
 - Anyone can get a weekend release going, pending available water. You need five people confirmed, then let Ryan or Bob know.
- Things have not gone well with the Little River relicensing. Many years ago boater-friendly release schedules were negotiated. But, after many years of waiting, the State of VT issued it's 401 certification. It cuts back releases to a max of about 300 cfs. This is minimum boatable.
 - Generally speaking, the Little is not a great whitewater run, compared to other local dam-release runs like the Green and West. The general consensus is that we should focus on those runs.
 - There is still some dubious science being done by the State of VT in regards to controlled flow on dam-release runs. Bob & Ryan are meeting with the Commissioner of the DEC to discuss this on Friday.
- On the West, the first time-shift release was incredibly popular with 40+ boaters. WestFest, the first two-day WestFest in several years was also a hit. Don't have hard numbers but there were easily 100+ boaters there that weekend.
 - The last time-shift release only got 6 boaters. There were several draw-downs in NH and MA that weekend, plus some stuff running naturally, which may have drawn people elsewhere. The State of VT was unhappy there was a time-shift release.
 - Basically, the State and Federal Government have strong disagreement over how to operate Ball Mountain Dam. Boaters are in the middle.
- Bellows Falls
 - This is somewhat peripheral to the VPC, but it is worthwhile and not far away.
 - AW is working on this. There will hopefully be playable features and possibly a short runnable section. There are several very large reservoirs upstream that feed water down here for most of the year.