

## **VCTU Executive Committee Meeting Notes – June 30, 2025**

**Attendees:** Jim Wilson, Burr Tupper, Bill Pierce, Scott Allen, Tom Benzing, Amy Orr, Mike Makufka, Tony Hill, Lane Thurgood, Eric Tichay

**Meeting Start:** 7:37 p.m.

**Meeting End:** 9:00 p.m.

### **1. Approve Minutes from 17 March ExComm Meeting**

- Approved

### **2. NPS proposed SNP fishing rule changes—regular July-August closure and catch and release in all Park streams**

- Discussion about the pros and cons of supporting the proposed changes. The Executive Committee agreed that it would not be prudent to weigh in at this time. Jim will inform the SNP staff of the Council's decision.

### **3. Marion meeting report and follow-up (Eric Tichay)**

- [[Attachment 1](#)]

### **4. Chapter reports/updates**

- (Jim) Virginia Capital - Rob Thomas assuming the treasurer duty temporarily  
- (Scott) Recharter all current Chapters and put Little Stony Creek on a watch list for this year.

### **5. NLC Rep report (Tom Benzing)**

I. Summary of my recent activities

This month, I participated in three NLC meetings. I learned more about my role as the NLC representative to facilitate communication among national, council, and chapters. At the national level, two changes of note are the new branding tagline, "Every River Needs a Champion" and the renaming of Volunteer Operations to the Engagement Department.

A slate of nominees for Grassroots Trustee positions was approved at the NLC Business Meeting on June 17. The nominees are Linn Beck (WI), Steve Miller (WA), and Gene Slusher (KY) and the slate will be voted on in September. During the same meeting, Beverly Smith (Director, Engagement Department) provided a preliminary summary of annual reports provided by TU chapters last month. Her staff are reviewing these reports and will provide a final summary as well as "state impact reports" within the next few months. In her preliminary summary, Beverly reported a total of 645,191 volunteer hours (with a median of 1,099 hours per chapter) in the annual reports. This number of volunteer hours equates to 310 full-time

employees meaning our volunteer efforts roughly “double our workforce”.

## II. Communications to councils and chapters from TU national

As I wrote in my NLC report for May, the National Conservation Agenda (NCA) is currently in a comment period. On August 12, a virtual Town Hall meeting is scheduled to discuss the draft NCA and post questions. If your chapter has comments or questions, please send them to me at [benzintr@jmu.edu](mailto:benzintr@jmu.edu). A vote on the proposed NCA will be held in October.

## III. Upcoming events and deadlines at regional and national levels

- a. August 12: Town Hall discussion of National Conservation Agenda for state council chairs and NLC representatives (online to members through [tu.org](http://tu.org))
- b. August 15: Deadline to submit an “Embrace-A-Stream” grant application using the online form at [tu.org/eas](http://tu.org/eas)
- c. October 22, 6-7:15pm: NLC Annual Business Meeting (online at [tu.org](http://tu.org))
- d. October 22, 8-9pm: TU Annual Membership Meeting (online at [tu.org](http://tu.org))

## 6. TIC report (Mike Makufka)

- By all accounts from the TIC Coordinators, this was a very good year for TIC. There were very few schools that encountered total fish loss and at least 12 schools that released over 100 fish.
- The TC Energy grant is being used by chapters. Just recently, the Northern Virginia Chapter requested mileage reimbursement for their volunteers to travel to the release site and to help with macros and casting demonstrations. That chapter’s 16 volunteers logged 6,899 miles. At \$.14/mile, that was \$965.86. The new TC Energy grant remaining balance is \$12,080.32. The Smith River Chapter is putting together the numbers for mileage reimbursement as well.
- I am preparing a final report for DWR. I am waiting for the report from Massanutten Chapter and the New River Valley Chapter.
- I have several teachers reaching out to start a new program in the fall. One of the schools is in Leesburg which is on the border of NOVA and Winchester Chapters. We are working on that.
- I sent information to Scott Allen and Blaine Emory (from the Mountain Empire) the last list I had of schools in that chapter’s program. It will be interesting to see where that leads us.

## **7. Treasurer (Michael Heatwole Via Email)**

1. Check mailed to Lisa Patton for capital chapter has not been cashed.
2. I have not received any invoices for payment for the SNP interns. Money is still held in the checking account.
3. I'm out of town for a while and Bill P has the checkbook.
4. Total account balance as of today is \$10,000 in CD and 49,880.17 in checking.
5. Rebate not yet received.
6. Check for TIC reimbursement authorized by Michael M. not written and can do upon return or Bill P can send.

Thanks

- (Jim) The Council funded sampling this year and had agreed to try and find funding for next year and beyond; however, funding for future UVA lab analysis of National Forest stream sites is in the works through the US Forest Service

## **8. Nominating Committee (ID open positions and set meeting schedule)**

- Scott, Amy, Stan, and Tony will make up the committee
- Jim to schedule a meeting in mid-July

## **9. Annual Meeting Plan—September 20th at Graves Mountain Lodge**

- (Amy) Arrangements have been made for the meeting
- Scott will put out a request for Awards nominations

## **10. Community Committee (Burr Tupper)**

- Plan for a Fall newsletter
- Possible future actions – Council to provide quarterly training to help chapters and supplement national training

## **11. Priority Waters next steps**

- [[Attachment 2](#)]
- Jim will schedule a zoom for the Blue Ridge area
- The Winchester Chapter put in data loggers and has started to monitor the information

## **12. DWR report (Lane Thurgood)**

- Quarterly meeting in June had no fishing topics.
- Next meeting August 20th
- Trout stocking survey sent out in June to 'select' Virginia fishers
- Update to Trout Management Plan scheduled for September

## **13. Open Discussion**

- (Scott) 2026 VA Fly Fishing & Wine Festival – table reserved; meeting room at

festival hotel reserved from 8:00 to 12:00 on Friday, 9 January

- (Jim) Citizens Climate Lobby Conference is scheduled for July 21-22; he plans to attend. Congressional meeting will be on the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

- (Tom) Regional Rendezvous for 2026 will be in Black Mountain, North Carolina in March

- (Jim) Two council meetings in 2026 may be held in Charlottesville and Roanoke

**-- end**