



Department of Conservation and Recreation
Stewardship Council Meeting
June 4, 2009
Community Boating Boathouse, Boston

Meeting Minutes

Stewardship Councilors in Attendance: *Chairman*, Richard Cross **Councilors:** Julian Agyeman, Elisa Campbell, Christina Crowley, Michael Dutton, Frank Frey, Whitney Hatch, Laura Johnson, John Natoli, James Van Dyke, Daniel Wolf **Excused:** Henry Lee

Public Attendees: Ken Anderson, Mass ATV Association – John Bartley, NETRA - Jason Belanger, Mass Trails Association - Carol Berkowitz, Protect Water Resources Natick - Bill Boles, Friends of Wompatuck/NEMBA - Sharl Heller, Forest & Park Friends Network - Steve Kaiser, Association of Cambridge Neighborhoods – Larry Kiernan, Mass Central Rail Trail – James McCaffrey, Sierra Club - A. Richard Miller, Cochituate State Park Advisory Committee – Chris Murton, The Esplanade Association - Paul Remington, NETRA/King Philip Trail Riders - Sylvia Salas, Esplanade Association

DCR Staff in Attendance: *Commissioner* Rick Sullivan, Gary Briere, Lisa Bishop, Stuart Conner, Stephanie Cooper, Conrad Crawford, Jeff Daley, Joe Rotondo, Patti Vantine, Chris Williams, Suzanne Wilson – Also in attendance Director of Environmental Law Enforcement, Aaron Gross and Captain George Agganis

Chairman Dick Cross called the meeting to order at 1:07 p.m.

Chairman Dick Cross informed the Council and the public of the proper procedure for media presentations, (eg. video or PowerPoint). Any requests by the public to give such presentations to the Council must be submitted in advance for approval through the office of Jeff Daley, Senior Policy Advisor. Once reviewed, a recommendation will be made to the Chairman for inclusion in the agenda.

Commissioner's Report - Commissioner Rick Sullivan

- *Commissioner Sullivan informed the Council on/of the following matters:*
 - DCR has officially opened its recreation season and is expecting an increase in visitation to our state parks due to the economy; unfortunately eleven state parks will be unstaffed.
 - Congratulations to Breakheart Reservation in Saugus celebrating its 75th anniversary on May 22.
 - DCR held the Healthy Heart Trail Kickoff and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony of DCR's Sugar Bowl Shade Shelter at Castle Island in South Boston on May 22.
 - On May 20, MHD Commissioner Paiewonsky and I jointly accepted an American Public Works award for outstanding achievement for the Charles River Sequencing Study.
 - Harvard Forest hosted a Forum on the Forests in MA on May 18 which was to lay a foundation for Forest Futures Visioning process by providing background information on the history, present conditions and possible future scenarios for the state's forests.
 - The Advisory Group of Stakeholders will hold its initial meeting on June 9.
 - A joint meeting with the Advisory Group and Technical Steering Committee will be held on June 23.
 - The next forum is planned for July 14 in the Berkshires.
 - The BU Bridge deck and downstream sidewalk replacement project is anticipated to go out to bid sometime this week.
 - Craigie Bridge contract was awarded to J.F. White Contracting Company with a completion date of 2011. The dam work has not been scheduled for this year.
 - We issued a Notice to Proceed on May 22 to WES Construction Corporation for the deck and substructure repairs of the Patten Cove Bridge in Boston.
 - DCR recently had a public meeting regarding Storrow Drive and Esplanade improvements, which includes work repairing and replacing guardrails, damaged steel picket fence sections,

improving drainage and the proposed fence around the Teddy Ebersol's Red Sox Fields on the Esplanade.

- The project is estimated at \$4.8 million with a completion date at the end of June.

Committee Updates and Meeting Schedules

Finance Committee

Finance Report – Councilor Whitney Hatch

- Councilor Whitney Hatch thanked Patti Vantine for all her hard work during this year's budget.
- Councilor Whitney Hatch informed the Council that a letter was sent to Senate President Murray and Ways and Means Chair Senator Panagiotakos from the Stewardship Council highlighting the impact of reduction of services.

Policy and Planning Committee

Resource Management Planning – Councilor Henry Lee

- No Report

Special Business

FY10 Budget Update - Patti Vantine, Director of Administration and Finance

- *Patti Vantine informed the Council the following matters:*
 - DCR will take an \$11.1m cut in the maintenance budget for 2010 if approved; a 12% decrease.
 - An impact statement was generated outlining an additional \$5m cut which would include the closing of all DCR pools.
 - It is important that DCR stays within its DCR mission; to enhance the experience of an estimated 33 million people who annually visit more than 400 properties under the care and control of DCR. This will be used as our guiding force to our plan for our budget.
 - *A lengthy discussion continued concerning the budget.*
 - *Commissioner Sullivan sincerely thanked Patti Vantine and her staff for the many hours exercised in this project.*

Asian Longhorn Beetles –Jeff Daley, Senior Policy Advisor

- *Jeff Daley informed the Council the following matters:*
 - With the recent find of the beetle in Holden, MA the USDA and DCR have increased the count of trees that are infested that need to be removed prior to July 1st, which is the beginning of emergence season.
 - A total of 29 infested trees were found in Holden in early June. There are over 400 infested trees standing in the regulated area that will be taken down prior to July 1st.
 - Eight Foresters were recently hired and began working on the Asian Longhorned Beetle program in the Worcester area.
 - We will be meeting with the USDA Economist and UMass doing economic and impact studies to tie into environmental impact studies.
 - DCR and USDA began replanting efforts with the \$500k budgeted funds.
 - He explained how you work in to out to the core to prevent the spread of infestation.
 - DCR will manage \$20.5m to cutting contracts and any other line items including hiring foresters; \$45m is needed for next year (2010).

OHV Update and Presentation – Gary Briere, DCR Bureau of Recreation - Aaron Gross, Director, Office of Law Enforcement (OLE) - Captain George Agganis (OLE)

- *Gary Briere, presented a report to the Council regarding enforcement of Off Highway Vehicle activities on DCR Lands. One element of the enforcement included coordinating enforcement efforts with the OLE. Director Gross and Captain Agganis shared their commitment to working with DCR on OHV enforcement issues. The report also included activities in the following areas:*
 - Supporting and encouraging pending legislation that advances the 2008 OHV Enforcement Working Group recommendations.
 - Improving trail signage and mapping to better inform motorized and non-motorized users of trail activities.

- Enhancing DCR's Internet and print communications.
- Supporting the creation of a statewide OHV Advisory Panel.
 - *Council members expressed their appreciation for the ongoing work on the issue and the support of the OLE in enforcing OHV laws on DCR lands. Members also shared concerns that the report did not offer more specific actions for enforcing OHV regulations. Captain Agganis and Gary Briere expressed their view that the 2008 working group report offered the most comprehensive approach to OHV enforcement and that the legislation that emerged from that effort was an important key to greater effectiveness.*

Approval of Minutes

- Motion by Councilor Elisa Campbell, seconded by Councilor Christina Crowley to accept the May, 2009 minutes. All in favor, motion carried.

New Business

- No new business

Public Comment

Carol Berkowitz, Protect Water Resources Natick

- Ms. Berkowitz informed the Council that DCR is using chemicals to treat the water at Lake Cochituate. She has requested DCR to use the DASH-boat method; no chemicals.

Richard Miller, Cochituate State Park Advisory Committee

- Mr. Miller voiced his opinion concerning the Aquatic Invasive Species at Lake Cochituate. He also stated his opinion that DCR has had no partnering and no rapid response.
 - The Council informed Mr. Miller that the Aquatic Invasive Species issue has already had a large amount of cross agency investigation, in addition to private stakeholder interest statewide, as to the best way to approach the problem and, considering staffing levels within Water Supply Protection and Lakes and Ponds, DCR is not prepared to pursue it any further at this moment.

Sharl Heller, Friends Network

- Ms. Heller expressed her concern that illegal OHV riding is not enforced. Friends Network is in the process of drafting an enforcement plan.
- Ms. Heller stressed to the Council that the Friends Network is not anti-OHV; they are anti illegal use of OHV.

Steve Kaiser, Association of Cambridge Neighborhoods

- Mr. Kaiser expressed his enthusiasm on the May 18th Forest Vision meeting; it was very educational and informative and was pleased by the outcome and looking forward to future meetings.
- Mr. Kaiser expressed his concern that the OHV regulation bills have been submitted to the legislation and the noise definition is mind boggling. Mr. Kaiser requests that DCR does not support any bill with a 96 decibel noise definition.

Chris Murton, The Esplanade Association

- Mr. Murton noted to Council his pleasure with the completed projects at the Esplanade, however many more improvements need to be made. He believes that DCR needs to look closely at the capacity of friends' groups and conservancies within various parts and analyze how to get more work done.
- Mr. Murton informed the Council that the Friends of the Esplanade can raise funds to move projects forward; however to implement these projects, it is his opinion that further communication is needed with DCR and his organization.

Bill Boles, Friends of Wompatuck/NEMBA

- Mr. Boles applauded the committee involved with OHV policy and enforcement.

Jason Belanger, Mass Trails Association

- Mr. Belanger recommended to the Council that if more trails were available for OHV's, it may help curb the illegal use. He also stated that a fee would not be inappropriate.

Ken Anderson, Mass ATV Association

- Mr. Anderson thanked the Commissioner and Gary Briere for engaging riders and establishing an OHV advisory board.
- Mr. Anderson regrets that Mass ATV Association did not take advantage of grant money to help maintain the trails.

Larry Kiernan, Mass Central Rail Trail

- Mr. Kiernan informed the Council of the volunteer work from the Friends maintaining the MCRT – Wayside Rail Trail, however doing this work is trespassing until DCR finalizes the completion of the lease from the MBTA. Mr. Kiernan has requested permission from DCR to allow them to continue volunteering their time to keep this trail maintained.

Closing Comment

- No closing comments

Meeting Schedule

- Next meeting will be held Thursday, July 9, 2009 at Wachusett Reservoir Regional Headquarters, West Boylston.

Motion to adjourn at 3:45 p.m.