



**Meeting Minutes**

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

**Public Attendees:** Jane Abbott, Citizens for the Protection of Waquoit Bay - Bill Boles, Friends of Wompatuck/NEMBA - Sharl Heller, Forest & Park Friends Network – Fred Heyes, Land Owner - Claudia Hurley, Friends of the Robinson State Park - Steve Kaiser, Association of Cambridge Neighborhoods - A. Richard Miller, Cochituate State Park Advisory Committee - Jill Miller, Citizen - Heidi Ricci, Mass Audubon – Sylvia Salas, Esplanade Association

**DCR Staff in Attendance:** *Commissioner* Rick Sullivan, Andy Backman, Lisa Bishop, Jim Comeau, Stuart Conner, Conrad Crawford, Jeff Daley, Gary Davis, Priscilla Geigis, Leslie-Ann McGee, Samantha Overton, Joe Rotondo, Brian Shanahan, Patti Vantine, Suzanne Wilson

**Chairman Dick Cross called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.**

Leslie-Ann McGee, Park Supervisor of Waquoit Bay welcomed and briefed the Council about the Reserve and offered a tour after the meeting. In addition, Ms. McGee introduced Ms. Jane Abbott, Secretary of the Citizens for the Protection of Waquoit Bay.

**Commissioner's Report - Commissioner Rick Sullivan**

- *Commissioner Sullivan informed the Council on/of the following matters:*
  - DCR is partnering with Harvard Forest to present a Forum on the Forests of Massachusetts on May 18 to frame and explore the key issues related to forests, including presenting a baseline of current conditions, history and current challenges to our forests.
  - Jim DiMaio, Chief Forester had resigned and the position has not been filled.
  - DCR has attended several meetings with the Director of Environmental Police regarding the OHV regulations. Commissioner Sullivan proposed that a more formalized presentation be presented at the June meeting.
  - DCR is actively implementing a goose monitoring program throughout our properties; we are working with the lakes, ponds, planning and engineering to make it less inviting to the geese.
  - DCR's signature event, Park Serve Day and Cub Scout Day at Blue Hills with the Governor was a great success.
  - "Vote for Faith:" DCR's National Monument to the Forefathers in Plymouth, was among 25 historic sites in the Boston area chosen to compete for a grant from The National Trust for Historic Preservation and American Express.
  - "Macy's Partnership:" Macy's chose the DCR Universal Access Program as the beneficiary of the department store's *Turn Over a New Leaf* program. The program is aimed at raising environmental awareness and inspiring interest in park protection and preservation.
  - The Legislation concerning the transfer of parkway and bridges to MassHighway has not been finalized.
  - Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray, DCR, USDA, the City of Worcester and others participated in a ceremonial tree planting; Walmart presented DCR with a \$150k grant as a kickoff.
  - The Governor will be joining DCR for the grand re-opening of Mt. Greylock on May 22.
  - The Commissioner thanked Councilors Elisa Campbell and Frank Frey for joining DCR at the Supervisors' Academy.

- Maudslay State Park and Bascom Lodge were awarded a new contract with the Historic Curatorship to rehabilitate and reuse historic properties in exchange for a long-term lease on the property.
- The Commissioner proudly announced that Ken Foley, DCR's Deputy Director of State Parks and Recreation, was selected to receive a Lifetime Achievement Award through the Environmental Protection Agency New England's Environmental Merit Award Program.

### **Committee Updates and Meeting Schedules**

#### **Finance Committee**

*Finance Report – Councilor Whitney Hatch and Patti Vantine, Director of Administration and Finance*

- *Councilor Whitney Hatch introduced Patti Vantine to report the finances.*
- *Patti Vantine informed the Council the following matters:*
  - Numbers are still in motion and that management has a mandatory furlough determined by salary for FY09. DCR will save \$107k from these furloughs.
  - The surplus for the end of 2009 will be used to close the final gap of the budget. Ms. Vantine also mentioned DCR has not refilled approximately 100 positions.
  - DCR obtained an extra \$1.5m cut from House Ways & Means budget on top of \$5m cut in January from House 1. Presently it is probable that DCR will incur an extra \$8m cut for 2010. At this point the seasonal budget is down by 5% from last year.
  - Answering Councilor Whitney Hatch's question concerning our Capital Plan for FY10-14; the Capital FY10-14 Plan was approved at \$92m and A&F iterated not to request additional monies until after FY14.
    - *A lengthy discussion was held after Councilor Whitney Hatch suggested to the Council that they ask DCR to reveal the implications of this \$6m reduction. Commissioner Sullivan informed the Council that DCR is preparing for closings, shorter seasons and hours. State Police are also being affected and DCR is working with both the cities and towns. The Council continued the discussion suggesting that they will meet and prepare a draft of their recommendations.*

#### **Policy and Planning Committee**

*Resource Management Planning – Councilor Henry Lee and Andy Backman, Director of Regional Planning*

- Andy Backman gave a brief presentation on a new streamlined approach for preparing Resource Management Plans (RMPs), referred to as Phase I RMPs. A workshop conducted at the Park Supervisor's Academy helped to clarify the plan components and format that will be most helpful for the DCR field staff. Given a two to three-month timeframe for completion of plans, the RMP team will have to use new strategies to be able to incorporate meaningful public participation. DCR will look for support from Friends groups to assist with outreach in gathering public input whenever possible.
  - *Councilor Henry Lee commented that he would like this RMP proposal to be put into context and deal with reality during this economic downfall. In addition to the lite RMPs, the agency will complete at least one full RMP per year.*
  - *The Council held a lengthy discussion concerning the pros and cons of streamlining, identifying gaps in information needed for RMP's and public participation.*

#### **Special Business**

*Asian Longhorn Beetles –Jeff Daley, Senior Policy Advisor*

- *Jeff Daley informed the Council the following matters:*
  - Approximately 22,000 trees have been removed.
  - Walmart presented DCR with a \$150k grant as the kickoff to replanting. DCR will also receive stimulus money to replant and finish the heavy cutting.
  - He has been working with other State health boards preparing them for the chance of infestation.

*Eminent Domain Taking of Mlynek, Horseneck Beach, MA – Jim Comeau, Assistant General Counsel*

- Jim Comeau proposed to the Council to take, by eminent domain, a parcel of land containing approximately 6 acres in the Town of Westport by eminent domain. The land is located within DCR's Horseneck Beach State Reservation, on the East Branch of the Westfield River, on a tidal inlet known as "The Let". The property is currently owned by Madeline Mlynek. The taking will be "friendly," as the owner has agreed to the purchase price and the taking as a means of clearing title. The purchase price is \$30,000. Good title has been certified as of 1926, however in doing further back title research to confirm the property location, record title defects were uncovered. The purpose of the taking is to eliminate those title defects. DCR legal asked that those approving Councilors sign the approval document.
  - Motion by Councilor Laura Johnson, seconded by Councilor Henry Lee to approve the acquisition to acquire eminent domain taking of Horseneck Beach State Reservation. All in favor, motion carried. See Copy of the Vote attached hereto.

*Partnership Chats Update, Conrad Crawford, Director Partnerships*

- Conrad Crawford explained to the Council that Partnership Chats are a series of informal forums planned for our partners and Friends groups to talk about broad number of programs conducted within DCR parks and the policies that govern them. Scheduled once every 6-8 weeks and held at various locations throughout the Commonwealth, these sessions are planned to attract new and old partners alike, and provide a forum for Conrad Crawford, DCR's Director of Partnerships, to facilitate conversations where DCR's Friends and Partners can learn more about the internal workings of the agency while meeting the staff responsible for running the agency's facilities and programs.
- The next meeting will be held at Quinsigamond State Park, 10 North Lake Ave., Worcester, MA on May 14 from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.; this session will cover DCR's Park Watch Program.
- Upcoming topics include trails, dog policy and historical curatorships.

*Spring/Summer 2009 Activities Update, Priscilla Geigis, Director of State Parks and Samantha Overton, Acting Director of Urban Parks*

- Samantha Overton and Priscilla Geigis presented to the Council the new spring/summer initiatives in State parks. These programs include the creation of First Day Hikes, Healthy Heart Trails Program, Trail Grants, the Recycle Program and enhancements in the Passport Program and Park Serve Day.

**Approval of Minutes**

- Motion by Councilor Laura Johnson, seconded by Councilor John Natoli to accept the February, 2009 minutes. All in favor, motion carried.
- Motion by Councilor Whitney Hatch, seconded by Councilor Henry Lee to accept the March, 2009 minutes. All in favor, motion carried.

**New Business**

- No new business

**Public Comment**

*Steve Kaiser, Association of Cambridge Neighborhoods*

- Mr. Kaiser expressed his concern of the Stewardship attendance; he would like to see a full quorum more often.
- Mr. Kaiser expressed his pleasure with the success of parkways and bridges.

*Claudia Hurley – Friends of Robinson State Park*

- Ms. Hurley made comments from the SCS Assessment of our Lands website. She pointed out that management foresters used to report to Regional Directors of Forests and Parks. These regional directors would be more aware of the social uses of the particular properties. Ms. Hurley stated that management foresters now report to managers of the Bureau of

Forestry and under our former Chief Forester, the focus was very firmly on harvesting, and consequently could have neglected some of the social uses.

*Sharl Heller, Friends Network*

- Ms. Heller expressed her concern for illegal activities in our forests and noted that Friends groups are willing to help. She believes in greater support for Park Watch, publishing notices and offering brochures outlining these illegal activities and sharing information for enforcement.
- Ms. Heller asked the Council for a statement supporting the development for an OHV detection system.

*Bill Boles, Friends of Wompatuck/NEMBA*

- Mr. Boles expressed his regret that the bike path in Wompatuck is not open and would like to see it repaired and reopened.
- Mr. Boles also expressed his gratitude to the Council for its open public meetings to allow the public to share thoughts and suggestions.

*Richard Miller, Cochituate State Park Advisory Committee*

- Mr. Miller informed the Council that he would like the Henry Wilson foot trail finished. He explained how the trail was to have inscribed boulders placed along the trail. However, due to the cost, Mr. Miller would like permission to recycle stone to make inscribed look-alike historic markers.
- Mr. Miller expressed his disappointment that Park Serve Day did not have a rain date.

*Heidi Ricci – Mass Audubon*

- Ms. Ricci suggested to the Council that DCR should have a brochure outlining all information regarding OHV including penalties and is glad to hear that this will be discussed in June.
- Ms. Ricci expressed her satisfaction regarding the forest public process.

*Sylvia Salas, Esplanade Association*

- Ms. Salas urged the Council to have DCR hold a public process regarding the installation of the six foot fence at the Esplanade.

**Closing Comment**

- No closing comments

**Meeting Schedule**

- Next meeting will be held Thursday, June 4, 2009 at Community Boating Boathouse.

*Motion to adjourn at 3:30 p.m.*