



Meeting Notes

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

Public Attendees: Dennis Annear, MA Forest Fire Council – James McCaffrey, Sierra Club

DCR Staff in Attendance: Commissioner Rick Sullivan, Lisa Bishop, Stuart Conner, Stephanie Cooper, Conrad Crawford, Jeff Daley, Jack Murray, Joe Rotondo, Patti Vantine

Chairman Dick Cross called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m.

Chairman Cross announced that there was not a quorum, therefore any items that require a vote (minutes) will be held until the November meeting.

Commissioner's Report - Commissioner Rick Sullivan

Commissioner Sullivan informed the Council on/of the following matters:

- The Department of Education has awarded \$300k grant funding to DCR's Universal Access Program to develop a progressive recreation model that will expand social, recreation and outdoor experiences for individuals with severe disabilities in Massachusetts over a three-year period. In addition, Universal Access received \$71k grant for the Macy's Promotion.
- DCR partnered with the City of Boston's Hub on Wheels, a citywide bike ride and festival. More than 6,000 riders, including a team of 16 DCR employees, explored many DCR properties along the route.
- On September 19, three of DCR's skating rinks in Milton, Dorchester and Medford were opened for private ice time.
- The Quabbin Watershed Advisory Committee met and voted to support the current washing and tagging program to protect the Quabbin and to keep it open for boating and fishing. DCR worked collaboratively with the Department of Fish and Game to complete an Interim Zebra Mussel Action Plan that includes a comprehensive set of regulatory measures and outreach activities designed to prevent the spread of this invasive species to other Bay State water bodies. To date, zebra mussels have only been found in Laurel Lake.
- Bridge transfers (BU Bridge, Craigie Bridge, and most bridges in the Charles River Basin) and transportation reform to the new MassDOT will officially transfer November 1. Over the next couple of months, ABP staff will move over to MassDOT payroll with additional transfers of staff that are non-ABP staff but associated with the eight parkways. DCR's small, but important piece of the transportation reform, is moving rapidly.
 - *Councilor Elisa Campbell informed the Council that she heard that some people at the Quabbin Watershed Advisory Committee meeting were surprised to learn that boats are allowed in the Quabbin, and many members of QWAC, including the fishing public who were present, were displeased to hear that.*
 - *Commissioner Sullivan informed the Council that public access to the Quabbin has been a rich tradition for the past 50 years.*
 - Councilor Henry Lee asked the Commissioner if DCR had a clear consistent policy regarding "volunteers" and if we had any relationships with educational institutes to incorporate a work program into student's curriculum.
 - *Commissioner Sullivan informed the Council that we get as many volunteers as possible through friends groups. Conrad Crawford, Director of Partnerships works with friend groups to attract volunteers to help maintain our properties. Presently, we have 160 friends group; however we do not work in conjunction with educational institutes.*

- Councilor Henry Lee informed the Council that the Six State Forestry Projects presented their findings to the governors at their St. Johns' meeting and the governors "enthusiastically" accepted it. They are trying to set aside funding to implement the project. *Inherent* in the project, is expanding the role of government to work more with private land owners and think of forest holistically, instead of breaking them out as state, federal and private lands. It was also discussed where this should be placed within; a decision was not made other than it was not to go to the Department of Agriculture. Councilor Lee would like to see this project included in our visionary process.
 - *Commissioner Sullivan informed the Council that the speakers and presenters at the governor's meeting have been presented in the visioning process.*
- Councilor Whitney Hatch asked Commissioner Sullivan for an update concerning green certification?
 - *Commissioner Sullivan informed the Council that an audit was completed on green certification and significant findings need to be corrected. The Commissioner also stated that technically we are not green certified, however within the next 30 days, certification should be back within the four regions that have forest plans approved. DCR is not asking for green certification on non-approved forest plans. Legislative outcome will not happen before the Forest Future Vision Process is complete.*
- Councilor James Van Dyke asked the Commissioner for an update concerning OHV.
 - *Commissioner Sullivan informed the Council that all OHV legislation is still sitting within the legislation committees, however hearings have been held and they went well.*

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 budget update.

Patti Vantine informed the Council on/of the following matters:

- It was reiterated that DCR's numbers have been reduced for FY2011 and a 9C exercise was established.
- The proposals that we have submitted for the first round of 9c cuts were on the low end range; there will not be any official statements until October 15.
- Rolled out from HRD, voluntary retirement incentive (20+ \$10k incentive, 15% health insurance) or voluntary layoff incentive (\$5k and 15% health insurance w/2 year callback) was finalized. As of today, there are approximately 50 volunteers. Due to the date of retirement (12/31/2010), savings will not affect DCR this fiscal year.
- Volunteer departures will save approximately \$1.7m in FY2011.
 - A discussion was held concerning the effects of losing valuable employees during retirement/layoff and other ways for communities and unions to help offset during these dismal times.

Policy and Planning Committee

Resource Management Planning – Councilor Henry Lee

Councilor Henry Lee informed the Council on/of the following matters:

- The Beaver Brook RMP is moving rapidly and an update has been drafted. A public meeting is tentatively scheduled on November 17 to work with Western Greenway partners to develop a 2-year action plan for resource stewardship and recreation opportunities.
- The Blue Hills RMP held a public forum in September to gather input. A draft will be posted by January and ready for Council review by early Spring.
- It has been indicated that there has been issues of "what is a light RMP"; Councilor Lee and Andy Backman are continuing to work and clarify it.

Special Business

Office of Partnerships Overview and Update –Director, Conrad Crawford

Conrad Crawford gave a presentation on Partnerships; a lengthy discussion was held afterwards.

- The Director of Partnerships provided an update on activity with outside partners over the past 6 months. Information regarding the total number of Friends groups and other partners, programs and projects done collaboratively, and DCR staff participation was presented.
- The Partnerships Department, located within the Department of External Affairs, works with outside organizations to support DCR facilities through the Matching Funds Program. Applications are accepted from Friends groups and other park advocacy groups, civic and community organizations, institutions, businesses, and dedicated individuals with an interest in improving the Commonwealth's natural, cultural, and recreational resources. Under the program, DCR considers applications that will provide a match of non-state funds for capital projects in state parks. DCR assigns a project manager to each approved project who will oversee implementation of the project in close consultation with the partners making the contributions.
- 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 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.

Asian Longhorn Beetles –Jeff Daley, Senior Policy Advisor

Jeff Daley informed the Council on/of the following matters:

- Recently a further quarantine has been issued into the entire town of the West Boylston area expanding it out an additional 2k acres to prevent further spreading. The regulated area covers 77 square miles, which totals over 750k host trees to be surveyed during the eradication process.
- The Obama Administration allocated \$10m into the Worcester Project, and we are asking the Commodity Credit for an additional \$24.5m; however after this year, we cannot apply for monies from the Commodity Credit Corp., it will need to be budgeted.
- On Tuesday, September 29, Commissioner Sullivan welcomed 44 people from the Department of Agriculture and spoke in relation to invasive species and the Asian Longhorned Beetle.
- Two grants have been submitted and should be awarded within the next few days: (1) Native Species Invasive Species Control Ecological Restoration grant from the American Recovery Reinvestment Act for \$538k, DCR will hire five ALB survey support staff for two years; (2) TNC, cost sharing three positions for the Nature Conservancy so they can assist DCR with ALB and invasive in the Worcester area.
- From the \$4.487m in federal stimulus funds that DCR received, a strategic plan to create ten Forester positions for a two year period and to hire an additional 40 employees during planting is being considered.

ARRA Stimulus Funds Update, Jack Murray. Deputy Commissioner of Operations

Jack Murray informed the Council on/of the following matters:

- DCR has submitted grants under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The objectives of the "Recovery Act" include preserving and creating jobs and promoting economic recovery, investing in transportation infrastructure that will provide long-term economic benefits, and assisting those most affected by the current economic downturn.
- The TIGER grant funds highway or bridge projects, public transportation projects, passenger and freight rail transportation projects and port infrastructure investments.
- DCR has submitted an application for two grants; [1] The Gateway Project in the amount of \$50m, (threshold is \$30m) for improvements to Squantum Point Pier (\$26m), Adams National Park, and the JFK Library Pier (\$9m), Plymouth State Pier (\$10m), Wellfleet Pier (\$2.2m); [2] The Boston Harbor Islands in the amount of \$24m with the bulk for George's Island Pier (\$16m), Peddocks Island (\$2.2m), Hingham (\$5m), Spectacle Island (\$800k)
- The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (AARA) is requesting proposals for projects that increase the use of woody biomass that is removed during hazardous fuels treatment projects on both public and private forestlands. It is also to create and retain jobs. DCR is finalizing a grant from the US Forest Service: Hazardous Fuel Reduction in the amount of \$1.9m.

New Business

- No new business

Public Comment

Dennis Annear, MA Forest Fire Council

- Mr. Annear voiced his concern regarding forest fire control not being a core mission of DCR and explained how it can affect million of dollars. The bureau's job is to protect its natural resources.

James McCaffrey – Sierra Club

- Mr. McCaffrey thanked DCR for convening the Forest Future Vision Process and is hopeful of a good outcome. Mr. McCaffrey noted the process has not been perfect and there have been some communication issues between the AGS & TSC. Mr. McCaffrey stated that although the process is still underway, there is a growing consensus for having an increase in reserves. A sub-committee of the AGS, which the Sierra Club was not a part of, has recommended a split of 80% reserves and 20% active management. The Sierra Club is supportive of an increase in reserves and is reviewing the numbers in the proposal put forth by the AGS sub-committee.
- The Sierra Club is finalizing a new biomass policy which will include opposition to utility-scale biomass generation and will review smaller combined heat and power facilities on a site-specific basis.
- Mr. McCaffrey informed the Council that the Sierra Club was opposed to the transfer of parkways; he also stated that DCR had to submit a report for the remaining parcels and properties. The Sierra Club is hopeful that it will outline that the transfer does not make sense to transfer any more out of the agency.
- The Sierra Club has finished their google map project and it can be viewed at sierraclubmass.org/earth. DCR timber harvests are up.

Closing Comment

- No closing comments

Meeting Schedule

- Next meeting will be held Friday, November 6, 2009 at Camp Nihan, Saugus, MA.

Meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.