



Meeting Minutes

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

Public Attendees: Carol Gilmour, Friends of the Robinson State Park - Claudia Hurley, Friends of the Robinson State Park - Steve Kaiser, Association of Cambridge Neighborhoods – Mike Leonard, North Quabbin Forestry

DCR Staff in Attendance: *Commissioner* Rick Sullivan, Andy Backman, Lisa Bishop, Stuart Conner, Stephanie Cooper, Conrad Crawford, Gary Davis, Jeff Daley, Jack Murray, Joe Rotondo, John Scanlon, Patti Vantine

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

Commissioner's Report - Commissioner Rick Sullivan

- *Commissioner Sullivan informed the Council on/of the following matters:*
 - Zebra Mussels have been discovered in Laurel Lake in Lee.
 - Zebra Mussels have been considered the most "important" invasive species to ever exist in the United States. They significantly alter lake ecology in many ways and out-compete juvenile fish for food. They also cling by the thousands to everything including docks, boats and other aquatic organisms.
 - These small mussels have been documented as high as 750,000 individuals per square meter. The microscopic form will get into boat cooling systems and other water intakes where they begin to grow and completely clog the system causing engine seizure and power plant closures.
 - The boat ramp on Laurel Lake has been closed for 45 days while an action plan is developed.
 - Other lakes that are infested include Twin Lakes in Salisbury (CT), Lake Champlain (VT), Lake George (NY), the Hudson River (NY), the entire Great Lakes region.
 - DCR celebrated the dedication to the \$1.7m rehabilitation of the Ponkapoag Dam in Canton.
 - DCR awarded \$465,000 in grants to local communities and friend groups to fund 22 trails projects across the Commonwealth under its Recreational Trails Grants Program funded through the Federal Highway Administration.
 - DCR initiated "Sundays in the Park" in the Blue Hills Reservation by closing a section of Chickatawbut Road to all vehicles to allow recreational use for walkers and bikers.
 - DCR celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the Trailside Museum at Blue Hills Reservation in Canton.
 - DCR kicked off an initiative to sponsor Free Youth Soccer Clinics throughout the summer.
 - DCR's National Monument to the Forefathers will receive an honorable mention of \$5000 from American Express, Partners in Preservation.
 - Twelve artists were submitted for consideration in response to this year's Iron Ranger Painting Program's Call for Artists.
 - DCR hosts the nation's July 4th Celebration at the Hatch Shell on the Esplanade. This year hundreds of thousands of spectators and more than 1,400 spectator-filled boats on the river enjoyed the celebration. Approximately 70 DCR employees were involved in the weeks-long preparations and set-up for the event. Working through the night and early morning, DCR crews, aided by 140 inmates from the state Department of Correction (DOC), collected more than 26 tons of trash. This event went flawlessly.
 - Commissioner Sullivan read a letter from a constituent, Laurel Oster expressing her gratitude for the 4th of July celebration quoting "it really did help us remember why this is

the best place to live in the world". This e-mail was submitted to the Boston Globe for publishing.

- Commissioner Sullivan thanked all the employees of DCR and Stewardship Council for the support of DCR as well as our Friends Groups.

Committee Updates and Meeting Schedules

Finance Committee

Finance Report – Councilor Whitney Hatch

- *Councilor Whitney Hatch informed the Council on/of the following matters:*
 - DCR still does not have final numbers because the legislature has yet to decide on the Governor's vetoes. It is expected that the budget will be \$11m below a "maintenance budget."
 - The States June receipts were shy of the \$200m that was predicted for June.
 - A total of \$450k DCR line items were vetoed by the Governor; we are aware that proposals have been sent to encourage the legislature to override those line item vetoes.
 - The Stewardship Finance Committee will meet with Patti Vantine and staff to understand the budget, to review the agency's preliminary plans to reduce expenditures and to discuss other strategies DCR might consider if it needs to operate under continued, tight financial constraints in the future.
 - The objective for DCR is to operate its parks at its highest quality as possible under the constraints of the budget.

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

- *Patti Vantine informed the Council on/of the following matters:*
 - Councilor Hatch reviewed much of the budget matters to date.
 - At the end of last fiscal year, we notified most 120 day post retirement employees that DCR was not renewing that option. This is the first step requirement before any other reductions.
 - With revenues going down, the challenge is to prepare budgets that will address the \$11m deficit, however to be prepared for a possible 9(c)[1] cut.
 - The following is a summary of the lengthy discussion held concerning the budget.*
 - *Commissioner Sullivan informed the Council that suggestions submitted due to the impact of these reductions will go through a public process.*
 - *Commissioner Sullivan and Patti Vantine informed the Council that DCR will not directly be affected with Federal Stimulus monies; however we did receive monies from the Economic Stimulus Jobs for Youth[2]. We may also be in line to receive some monies through partnerships for transportation, firefighting and forestry projects. Stimulus money for energy is geared toward the private sector.*
 - *Patti Vantine informed the Council that Union Leadership wants to be part of the solution, however it needs to be handled at the HRD level, not DCR.*

[1] Chapter 29: Section 9C. Deficiency of revenue

Section 9C. Whenever, in the opinion of the commissioner of administration, available revenues as determined by him from time to time during any fiscal year under section 5B will be insufficient to meet all of the expenditures authorized to be made from any fund, whether by appropriation or distribution, he shall within 5 days notify in writing the governor and the house and senate committees on ways and means of the amount of such probable deficiency of revenue and the governor shall, within 15 days after such notification, reduce allotments under section 9B, and submit in writing a report stating the reason for and effect of such reductions, or submit to the general court specific proposals to raise additional revenues by a total amount equal to such deficiency. Any action challenging the legality of an allotment reduction pursuant to this section shall be commenced in the supreme judicial court for Suffolk County.

Whenever the governor reduces allotments under the preceding paragraph, the governor shall notify the house and senate committees on ways and means in writing 15 days before any alterations to the original allotment reduction plan. Any alterations to the original allotment reduction plan that would seek to increase an allotment must provide an equal reduction in other allotments or propose to raise additional revenues to total the amount of the allotment increase.

As an alternative to the submission of such proposals to raise additional revenues and to the extent funds are available, the governor may recommend an appropriation equal to such deficiency from the Commonwealth Stabilization Fund in the manner provided in section 2H.

[2] Promised through the Obama Administration, funds primarily target low-income youth between 14 and 24 so they can receive necessary job training and pick up social and school skills to prepare themselves to enter the work force. Depending on their age, the youths have the opportunity to work between 20 and 32 hours a week at \$8 an hour.

Forest Vision Update – Commissioner Sullivan

- Commissioner Sullivan informed the Council of the kickoff meeting at Harvard Forest that was very well attended and most recently had a public walk in the woods at Leominster State Forest, where a DCR forester showed various forest conditions and areas where forestry work had been done in the past.
 - A healthy discussion followed and notes of this meeting will be posted. The next walk in the woods and public forum will take place on July 14th with a walk at Savoy Mountain to be followed by discussions conducted by UMass MODR Group as well as the Technical Steering Committee and Stakeholders Group. We are looking forward to have a report with a series of recommendations by the end of the year.

OHV Update – Commissioner Sullivan

- Commissioner Sullivan referenced a handout which lists several bills that have been filed with the Legislature. Two of the bills include many of the priorities identified by the OHV Working Group that was convened last year.
- Hearing dates had not been established for these bills as of the council meeting. (A hearing for SB 366 was subsequently scheduled for July 28th). DCR is coordinating its testimony on these bills with the Executive Office.
- We have been working with EPO's on enforcement actions and on improving park signage and web and other communications regarding OHV's.

Policy and Planning Committee

Resource Management Planning – Councilor Henry Lee

- *Councilor Henry Lee informed the Council the following matters:*
 - A version of The Beaver Brook Preservation RMP will be completed for circulation and comments by mid July. This RMP will be ready for discussion with the Council at the September meeting.
 - A full version Blue Hills Reservation RMP is being prepared with an anticipated completion date of early next year. A public meeting will be held on July 29.
 - The agreed upon light version Horseneck Beach Reservation RMP is to be used as a template to develop protocol.

Special Business

Transportation Reform Update – Commissioner Sullivan

- *Commissioner Sullivan informed the Council on/of the following matters:*
 - Transportation Reform has been passed and signed.
 - All vehicle bridges will transfer to the jurisdiction of MassDOT by 2014; designated parkways will transfer ASAP.
 - Bridges that are presently under construction will stay within DCR; upon completion these bridges will move to MassDOT. Storrow Drive will stay under the jurisdiction of DCR.
 - DCR and MassDOT will have a discussion to decide if there are more appropriate transfers; this will be a public process.
 - Parkways that will transfer are: McGrath & O'Brien Highway, Carroll Highway, Middlesex Avenue, William Casey Highway, Columbia Road, Morton Street, Gallivan Blvd.
 - *Councilor Elisa Campbell would like DCR to focus on parks.*
 - An impact statement has been filed with the courts concerning the iron that was stolen at the Longfellow Bridge; the two individuals will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

Asian Longhorn Beetles – Jeff Daley, Senior Policy Advisor

- *Jeff Daley informed the Council the following matters:*
 - Cutting has been halted in Worcester and we are putting together an aggressive plan for fall replanting.

- We have been working on project plans to send to Congress for funding next year (federal FY2010); a 3-tier funding level proposal will be submitted.
- Storm debris clean-up has been completed in Holden, West Boylston and Worcester using the same protocol as ALB and we will continue to work with FEMA and towns.
- Some surveys were completed with a pocket of trees in Holden and they did not find any more infestation. We are working on awareness about transferring the wood to other states.
- Wood chips have been going to ME through the winter and spring months and they are now going to CT for the summer months.

Approval of Minutes

- Motion by Councilor Elisa Campbell, seconded by Councilor Laura Johnson to accept the June, 2009 minutes after the following amendment:
 - *Page 3 under OHV, third bullet, second sentence – delete “at the eight locations where OHV use is allowed.”*
- All in favor, motion carried.

New Business

- No new business

Public Comment

Carol Gilmour, Friends of the Robinson State Park

- Ms. Gilmour expressed her concern to the Council regarding the fact that DCR does not have the authority to remove Robinson State Park from Green Certification or give Western Parks the same privileges as Urban State Parks. She would like Robinson designated for protection.

Claudia Hurley – Friends of Robinson State Park

- Ms. Hurley would like to resubmit the request from 2007 to the Council that parks and parkland type areas be taken out of Green Certification.
 - Councilor Elisa Campbell suggested to the Council that a new classification should be a future agenda item; however we must wait until our Forest Future Vision process is concluded.

Steve Kaiser, Association of Cambridge Neighborhoods

- Mr. Kaiser stated to the Council that he is optimistic with the Forest Future Vision process.
- Mr. Kaiser informed the Council that the OHV Senate Bill SB366 has moved to public safety and that OHV has a great deal of work ahead.
- Mr. Kaiser expressed his disappointment with the Transportation Reform.

Mike Leonard, North Quabbin Forestry

- *Councilor Elisa Campbell left the room*
- Mr. Leonard expressed his distress to the Council concerning the time it takes to get forest management plans approved.
- Mr. Leonard disagrees how the State requires a duplication of Green Certification.

Closing Comment

- No closing comments

Meeting Schedule

- Next meeting will be held Thursday, August 6, 2009 at West Region Headquarters, Pittsfield.

Motion to adjourn at 2:42 p.m.