



September Meeting Minutes

Council Members Present: Jack Buckley, Ann Canedy, Esq., Jeffrey Collins, Dicken Crane, Melissa Harper, Vivian Ortiz, Susan Smiley, Dennis Smith, Nate Walton, Jennifer N.S. Wilson, Esq.

Council Members Not Present: n/a

DCR Staff Attendees: Lisa Barstow, Paul Cavanagh, Nick Connors, Rick Corsi, Julie Martin

Public Attendees as Registered:

Chris Redfern
Janet Sinclair
Bill Boles
Buzz Constable
canopy.bart@gmail.com

Glen Ayers
Catherine L
Chuck Anastas
Judy Lehrer Jacobs
Laurel
Lizzie Roche

LWVMA
Lynne Man
Michael Nichols
Miriam Kurland
Sarah Freeman

Call to Meeting – Chairman Nate Walton

Chairman Walton opened the meeting with greetings and instructions for virtual meeting format. He provided additional information about the DCR Special Commission, noting a final report is expected by year end. Chairman Walton introduced DCR Deputy Commissioner Nick Connors to provide the DCR Report.

DCR Report – Nick Connors, Deputy Commissioner of Policy, Public Affairs & Administration

Deputy Commissioner Connors noted a successful end to lifeguard coverage over Labor Day weekend that began Memorial Day weekend, grateful for the work of our guards, including 50 saves, while feeling the acute shortage of lifeguards as a nation-wide issue on waterfronts. To address the systemic shortage, and increase awareness of water safety, DCR working with the Governor’s Office, posted an RFP seeking partners at private and municipal pools to provide learn to swim program this winter and spring supported by a \$400,000 budget.

This follows our partnership with New England Swimming and USA Swimming to run half day programs across the state that included both land based and pool based activities to drive awareness around water safety and build a level of comfort. Events were held in Roxbury, Cambridge, Fall River, Worcester and Lawrence.

Turning toward winter recreation, DCR operated rinks are making ice and opening this weekend. DCR is working in coordination with the Friends of Leo J Martin Skiing about the Nordic ski season. DCR also has an RFP out to offer Nordic skiing at Great Brook Farm.

DCR Design and Engineering has the contractor onboard and site analysis is underway at Edgewater Drive. There has been close coordination between the City of Boston, MAPC, the project team and the community on the City effort to secure a grant for a trail that will connect to Edgewater Drive. DCR also has been part of discussions within the administration supporting efforts to have the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency designate the Lower Neponset River as a Superfund site for environmental clean-up. A public comment period would be part of next steps.

Mr. Connors congratulated members of the council on their work to create draft budget priorities and looks forward to sharing final drafts with the Secretary and others when instructed. He also noted in his remarks that a complete RMP update would be delivered to the Policy Committee by Paul Cavanagh.

~ Q&A ~

Councilor Buckley recommended the council “not be silent” on how to use ARPA money in Governor’s budget, especially to address the infrastructure backlog and asked for a deferred maintenance list. Chairman Walton will draft a letter to share with the council.

Councilor Smiley asked for a list of organizations receiving, “learn to swim” money, seeking distribution for her district. She also asked if Nordic skiing would be expanded westward. Deputy Commissioner Connors replied that Leo J. Martin has snowmaking capability, which puts it in a unique position, but he would be open to suggestions Councilor Smiley may have for suitable properties. She asked for specificity on \$1.2 million allocated for DCR by the legislature, on which Mr. Connors said he would follow up with her.

Chairman Walton noted that the Special Commission expects report by October and then a four- to six-week period of review/feedback and a final vote in December.

Councilor Ortiz thanked Mr. Connors and DCR for its work on Edgewater Drive project and for trail signs on Neponset Greenway.

Councilor Wilson said she has a copy of the Volpe Center report [on e-bikes] and will discuss with DCR and EEA for their reaction/response.

Regular Business I

Approval of Minutes – July 22, 2021 Meeting

Chairman Walton motioned to approve the minutes which were seconded by Councilor Wilson. Chairman Walton called the roll on the adoption of the minutes, as indicated for virtual meetings:

Councilor Buckley – Yes
Councilor Canedy - Abstain
Councilor Collins – Yes
Councilor Crane – Yes
Councilor Harper – Yes
Councilor Ortiz – Yes
Councilor Smiley – Yes
Councilor Smith - Yes
Councilor Walton – Yes
Councilor Wilson – Yes

The July 22, 2021 minutes were adopted.

Public Comment – [Guidelines](#) are available on the DCR Stewardship Council website.

Chairman Walton invited members of the public for comment, which was offered by the following:

- Mary (MP) Feitelberg
- Chris Redfern
- Nancy Polan [LWVMA on attendance roster]
- Glen Ayers
- Bill Boles
- Lynn Man
- Sarah Freeman

Regular Business II

[Summer Nights Presentation](#) – Julie Martin, Director of Visitor Experience and Programming

~ Q&A ~

Councilor Buckley applauded the program and recommended the funding go directly to DCR so running the program(s) are not dependent on who is political changes.

Councilor Smiley inquired how additional service providers could get involved [contact Julie Martin].

Councilor Ortiz noted how great it has been to hear happy voice into the evening at Ryan Playground—just to hear kids playing safely in our neighborhoods—and applauded the various programs offered and overall Summer Nights program.

Councilor Harper noted past discussions with Ms. Martin and said she has information on many youth organizations she would be happy to share as a resource should Summer Nights be in a position to expand.

Regular Business III

Committee Meeting Breakouts and Updates

Before moving into the committee updates, Chairman Walton shared plans to hold Stewardship Council officer elections at the end of the year—concurrent with the delivery of the Special Commission report. He also suggested a change in next month’s council meeting from October 14 to October 15 to allow for greater participation in the Special Commission meeting without overlap. The council members voiced agreement with these decisions.

Stakeholders Committee

Committee Chair Ortiz shared on behalf of the group. She reported the guest presenter form is available online and the committee determined a response plan for incoming forms. Ms. Ortiz is working to assess how many Friends Groups have signed on to a revised MOU and looks to continue conversations for a Friends Group gathering along with assessing Partnership’s capacity.

Finance Committee

Committee Chair Buckley shared on behalf of the group. He reported that the Commissioner had a favorable response with the budget priorities the council set forward and said those will be advanced to the Secretary, with Mr. Buckley monitoring through DCR finance staff. Chair Buckley understored the once-in-a-generation opportunity to weigh-in on the federal stimulus money and believes the council should have a voice in it.

Policy and Operations Committee

Councilor Wilson shared on behalf of the group. She said partnering with Paul Cavanagh, who presented a great dashboard, will serve us well going forward and expressed excitement at having an RMP to approve in 2021. Ms. Wilson said the group conversed on e-bikes and noted that the committee wants to be helpful and responsive but acknowledges the myriad views and need to better informed about mixed use on properties in general.

Adjournment

Chairman Walton adjourned the meeting until October 15, 2021.

Please check the [DCR Stewardship Council webpage](https://www.mass.gov/service-details/dcr-stewardship-council) for notice of upcoming meetings.
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