# December 1, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Committee Members Present: Susan Smiley, Ted Dooley, Dennis Smith

**Other Councilors Present:** Jack Buckley

DCR Staff Attendees: Matthew Perry

**Public Attendees:** Jeff Miller

## Call to Order – Committee Chair Susan Smiley

Chair Smiley welcomed the attendees, took attendance of Councilors, and went over the meeting agenda.

## Update from Councilor Buckley

Councilor Jack Buckley, Chair of the Stewardship Council, updated the committee on the upcoming council meeting on December 14, 2023.

## Approval of Minutes

Councilor Smith moved to approve the October 6, 2023 committee meeting minutes.

Char Smiley seconded.

The minutes were approved.

## DCR’s work with Municipalities

The committee discussed the relationship between DCR and municipalities where the agency’s properties are located. Mr. Perry explained that the relationship happens on different levels, including with municipal conservation commissions, police departments, fire departments, and occasionally other areas. Mr. Perry said that in larger municipalities like Boston and its surrounding area, the relationship is more constant because of the population and use. For smaller municipalities, there might not be as strong of a connection. He said there is no policy across the board and that interactions occur on a case by case basis.

## Requests to Present at Meetings

Mr. Perry reported that there were no new requests from outside groups to present at meetings.

Councilor Buckley asked about the Charles River Watershed Association (CRWA) which had requested to present several months ago and asked if they can be approached again to present.

Mr. Perry said he would follow up with CRWA and the backcountry skiing group from Western Mass that is working on restoring Civilian Conservation Corps ski trails at state parks to see if they are interested in presented.

Mr. Perry also said that Paul Jahnige, Director of the Mass Office of Outdoor Recreation, will be presenting to the council on the office at the January meeting.

Chair Smiley asked for an update on the Friends and Partners meeting that was proposed for the spring.

Mr. Perry said that there are no firm plans for it yet, but that he will be discussing it with Deputy Commissioner Zach Crowley.

Chair Smiley said that she is getting a lot of phone calls from friends and partners of DCR asking for an update on the current status of partnerships at the agency.

It was suggested that Deputy Commissioner Crowley come to the next stakeholders meeting to discuss more with the committee.

## Locations for Next Year’s Meetings

The committee discussed possible locations for 2024 in-person meetings. Suggestions included the Leo J. Martin Ski Track and Mt. Wachusett. It was also suggested that Councilor Ortiz may have locations in the Boston area that would work for a meeting space.

Councilor Smith said that the Transportation building meeting in September didn’t work because it was in the evening so DCR staff was not around to come in and meet the council. He suggested that if the meeting is held there again, it should be at an earlier time.

Councilor Smiley also suggested the Saltonstall Building where EEA is headquartered.

Councilor Smith said that when all meetings were held on site, there were a lot of locations that worked and maybe those can be revisited.

## Stakeholders Listening Session

Councilor Buckley asked if Chair Smiley was still planning on holding a listening session on Zoom for DCR stakeholders.

Chair Smiley said that she would like to involve the committee in a meeting that was already happening like the proposed friends and partners conference.

Councilor Buckley suggested that the committee could hold a listening session without the participation of DCR.

Chair Smiley asked if there were any concerns about doing that.

Mr. Perry said that there weren’t and noted that the Finance Committee holds a similar meeting about the budget.

Chair Smiley said that it can be discussed more at the meeting on the 14th and figure out a date in late January. She said that a Zoom call like that would give a springboard for what should be covered or addressed at the spring meeting.

Councilor Buckley suggested that the friends can take the lead on invitations, so it won’t be a heavy lift.

Councilor Smith commented that this sounds like a great idea and that they might want to have a handout explaining it to give to councilors at the upcoming meeting.

Councilor Buckley said that the finance committee has done this for three years now and that at first they only had 8 participants, but this year they had over 40. He said it can be done on Zoom and run like a public comment session.

Chair Smiley said that she will move forward with planning it.

## New Business

Chair Smiley asked if the nominating committee also nominates committee chairs.

Councilor Buckley said that they only nominate council officers and that committee chairs are appointed by the council chair.

Mr. Perry said that the upcoming council meeting will be held in the Senate Reading Room at the State House and will feature a presentation from the Golf Operations Manager at DCR. He also said that the council will receive print copies of the Strategic Oversight Plan.

## Public Comment

Jeff Miller, Executive Director of Sled Mass, thanked the committee for having him and said that it was encouraging to hear everything they are working on.

## Adjournment

Chair Smiley thank everyone for their attendance.

Chair Smiley adjourned the meeting.

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