# Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

Committee Members Present: Jennifer Wilson, Jeff Collins, Ann Canedy, Phil Doherty

Other Councilors Present: Jack Buckley, Dicken Crane

DCR Staff Attendees: Matthew Perry, Nick Connors

**Public Attendees as Registered:** None

## Call to Order and Welcome – Committee Chair Jennifer Wilson

Chair Wilson welcomed the attendees and went over the meeting agenda.

## Approval of Minutes

Councilor Canedy moved to accept the April 26, 2023 meeting minutes.

Councilor Collins seconded the motion.

Chair Wilson noted a change in the minutes that she notified Mr. Perry about.

## Roll Call on Minutes Approval

Councilor Canedy: Yes

Councilor Collins: Yes

Councilor Wilson: Yes

Councilor Doherty: Abstain

The minutes were approved.

## Landscape Designations Update

Mr. Perry reported that Commissioner Arrigo reviewed the Landscape Designations and that they have been sent to Secretary Tepper’s office at EEA for review.

Councilor Buckley asked if the Stewardship Council is responsible for reviewing and approving the Landscape Designations.

Mr. Connors clarified that the Stewardship Council approves the policy portion.

## Resource Management Plans (RMPs)

Chair Wilson said that the committee received a great written update on RMPs from Paul Cavanagh and that she had the opportunity to speak with him after the last meeting.

Councilor Canedy asked when the next briefing to the full council on RMPs will happen.

Chair Wilson said that it is still up in the air on what the timing will be.

Mr. Perry said that he attended a meeting with Mr. Cavanagh and that the South Coast RMPs are moving along and should be up for review soon.

Councilor Canedy said that the council should have October as a goal for review.

Councilor Collins shared a dashboard of RMP progress on Zoom for everyone to view. He noted that timing of review will depend on how long the public meeting and public comment periods take.

Chair Wilson said that the committee will keep encouraging movement forward.

Councilor Canedy said that it is important that the Council has something to review and that it can be refined at a later date.

## Strategic Oversight Plan

Chair Wilson thanked Councilor Collins for taking all of the information provided to him and creating a draft. She noted that Councilor Dennis Smith provided information on the Nominations Committee, Councilor Susan Smiley provided information on the Stakeholders Committee, Councilor Buckley Provided information for the Finance Committee, Policy Committee members provided information on RMPs and managing for climate, and Mr. Perry provided charts and data about committees, members, and dates. She noted that although the parts don’t fit together quite yet, it is a great draft to work with.

Councilor Canedy stated in response to the question of whether the RMP section was too long, that she didn’t think so and that it said what it has to say about RMPs.

Chair Wilson said that the Plan targets a two-year outlook which is what has been done in the past and asked the other councilors if that seemed reasonable to them.

Councilor Buckley said that he thinks it is very reasonable as a timeframe for them to work in.

Chair Wilson asked for overall impressions of the document including tone, details, and information.

Councilor Collins said that he liked the recommendations from the Finance Committee’s portion and was wondering if other sections should have that language or if recommendations could be called out in a similar fashion for other committees.

Councilor Buckley said that he thinks recommendations are appropriate as is the two-year frame. He said that this makes the document useful, otherwise its just a process document.

Chair Wilson added that there were some overall recommendations that may have gotten lost in the shuffle. They included the annual election of officers and filling out the full council, receiving RMPs by a certain date. She said they were high level target and that if they are successfully executed, they are what they can point to as accomplishments over the next one to two years. She asked if everyone though that those goals were feasible.

Councilor Buckley said that he thought so. He added that one of the finance committee’s focuses is on a capital dashboard and that he would like to see the entire council list that as a priority over the next two years. He said that he thinks the benchmarks and activities that they would like to see DCR accomplish are worthwhile.

Chair Wilson said that the capital dashboard is something we would like to do that would be helpful for beyond two years and that the RMP schedule is the same.

Councilor Buckley added that financial recommendations annually can be different but that there should be some sort of concrete actions or recommendations for DCR that should be made up. He said that it would be up to the agency or secretary to act on these recommendations.

Chair Wilson asked what the committee thinks should be said about the Strategic Readiness Initiative and keeping those goals as part of the plan. She noted that it was moved to the appendix.

Councilor Buckley suggested that they recommend the continuation of SRI activities and reference it as something that DCR continue actively pursue.

Councilor Crane said that the more documents that there are, the more difficult it is to keep track of what each document is or what the point of it is. He added that when there is repetition it makes the overall goals of DCR more apparent and helps to reinforce points.

Councilor Doherty said that his company uses Microsoft teams to keep track of documents in the manner Councilor Crane is describing.

Chair Wilson noted that DCR and Mass Audubon both use teams as well.

Councilor Collins said that he will go through the draft again and make it more specific.

Chair Wilson said that there should be a more consistent format for each section, one part about what has happened and another part about recommendations.

Chair Wilson asked when it should be shared with the full council.

Councilor Canedy said that Councilor Collins should work on it and the committee should review one more time before it goes before the full council.

Councilor Collins agreed that it would not be ready for the June 8, 2023 council meeting.

Chair Wilson said that there needs to be a public comment period and that if the public comment occurs after it goes to the full council, it would be in August. She asked if that was okay and if 30 days of public comment would be enough.

Councilor Canedy said that she thought 30 days is enough.

Councilor Buckley agreed.

Chair Wilson said that the schedule will be that the plan will be looked at by the Council in July, public comments will be taken in August, the committee will review comments in September, and the plan will be approved in October.

Councilor Buckley said that public comment can be an opportunity to give comments that are relevant to the document and that they should anticipate there being extraneous comments as well.

Councilor Canedy clarified that the comments would be written.

Chair Wilson asked what the public comment process would look like.

Mr. Connors said that he and Mr. Perry will work with Daniel Cushing who does public engagement for the agency to see what he suggests.

Chair Wilson said that she wants to make sure Commissioner Arrigo is aware of the document and asked Councilor Buckley to update him.

Councilor Buckley said that he speaks with the Commissioner every two weeks and that he will make sure he knows.

Chair Wilson said that there is a little more writing and organizing to do and that the committee will shoot for a prepared draft by the end of the June Policy Committee meeting. She said that if any councilors have comments on what was reviewed, they should send them to Mr. Perry. She noted that Mr. Perry will also be working with Mr. Connors and Mr. Cushing on the public comment process. She said that they will share the draft with the council at the July meeting, will ask for comments in August, and will hopefully have it finalized in September.

Councilor Collins said he will look for elements of consistency in the sections of the plan.

Councilor Canedy said that she doesn’t think the document is too long and that she likes the idea of circling back at the end of each section with recommendations.

Councilor Buckley said that if there is a need for a clear message, an executive summary should be added to the beginning.

Councilor Canedy agreed and said that recommendations can be listed there.

## Councilor Comments

Councilor Buckley reminded the committee that before the next Council meeting, there is a joint meeting with the Fish and Wildlife Board that will allow the Stewardship Council to meet with them and talk about shared interests. He said that during the Stewardship Council meeting that they will be hearing a presentation on the endangered species act with a focus on the importance of DCR land. He noted that he is waiting for a response from DER about a presentation concerning dam removal.

Chair Wilson asked if the joint meeting fulfills a statutory requirement about meeting with a Fish and Wildlife board.

Councilor Buckley said that the requirement is vague but assumes that it does.

Chair Wilson asked if someone from the committee can give an update because she will not be in attendance at the upcoming meeting.

Councilor Collins said that he can.

## Adjournment

Chair Wilson thank everyone for their attendance and 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)