



Department of Conservation and Recreation
Stewardship Council Meeting
April 10, 2018 | 1:30 - 3:30PM
Double Tree by Hilton Hotel
99 Erdman Way, Leominster, MA

April Meeting Minutes

Stewardship Councilors in Attendance: *Walter Bickford, Elisa Campbell, Heather Clish, Michele Hanss, Whitney Hatch, Toni Pollak, Dennis Smith, Nathaniel Walton*

Stewardship Councilors Absent: *Jim Van Dyke, Wayne Klockner, David C. Murphy*

DCR Staff in Attendance: *Stephen Doody, Lisa Barstow, Joe Rotondo, Marguerite Reynolds, Shaun Provencher, John Scannell, Jennifer Norwood*

Public Attendees: *Bill Boles, North American Mountain Biking Association; Desiree Mobed, Alden House Historic Site; Robert Voseth, Duxbury 2020; Lisa Hoag, Wendell Historical Commission; Henry Woolsey, Massachusetts Conservation Voters; Doug Harris, Naragansett Tribe.*

Attachments: *DCR Land Protection Program - Paine's Campground presentation; Resume of John Scannell.*

Chairman Whitney Hatch called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

Commissioner's Report – Leo Roy, Commissioner

- This year marks DCR's 125th Anniversary as the first regional public conservation agency. You are invited June 3, North Point Park Birthday Party.
- Today's Leadership Academy meeting group 350 employees across the agency on stewardship and leadership and to learn and hear from guest speaker Edward Davis.
- We are prepping for summing; recruiting, training, certifying onboarding 700 lifeguards at a \$2 per hour raise, making DCR jobs complete in greater Boston, will help us with retention. Our Learn to Swim program is one of the best things DCR does.
- We continue to implement process made through the Agile Scrum process; we are moving to an electronic model of job bidding for seasonal workers, rolling out region by region.
- The winter storms brought down thousands upon thousands of trees. We continue to deal with impacts. Roads, paths, streets, seawalls, sidewalks, and working to get campgrounds ready.

- We are doing a coastal assessment, working on tablets for quicker assessment results. Looks to be \$30 million range. We are triaging.
- We held a public meeting in Plymouth for a \$2m project. An additional \$1m will be needed to fix a path destroyed in the storms already under renovation. DCR continues its work along the walkway, bandstand oval while we also are renovating bathrooms and other areas.
- As we plan for Earth Week celebrations. We celebrate Phase II of the Neponset River Greenway Project, connecting communities from the Mattapan side to Milton and it has been extremely popular.
- We have been on a bridge building binge connecting communities in Blackstone and work continues on Mystic Pathways, the Southbank Bridge over North Station/MBTA.
- The Governor filed a \$1.45 billion Environmental Bond Bill. Three-quarters refunds DCR's capital dollars for deferred maintenance. Focusing more investment in coastal resiliency along with communities own assessment and resiliency planning.
- Three outside sections of the Bond Bill provide access to Trust monies in Dilboy Stadium Trust in Somerville. We propose a discount parking pass program for all veterans. Adding two properties to the Curatorship program for unused.
- Asian Longhorn Beetle program has been successful and we've had a good place in Worcester to do the chipping for pest eradication. We're working on a new spot.
- Park Serve Day is coming up on April 28 -- School Vacation Week programs that are educational and fun.
- Staffing changes: Jenny Norwood, new Director of External Affairs and Partnerships. Jennifer Stowe, Chief Park Ranger is now our Central Region Director. Regional Ranger Mike Nelson will be Acting Chief Ranger. Libby Knott, new Esplanade Forest and Park Supervisor, formerly worked with the Esplanade Association. Short-handed in Planning and Engineering. We have three key hires Jeff Parenti, Deputy Chief Engineer; Greg Robbins, Director of Waterways; Ginna Johnson, Director of Design and Project Management.
- Massasoit in Taunton, reopening this year with renovations, three ponds, new playground and day-use area.

Q&A

- A councilor wants a summary of the bond bill emailed.
- A councilor wants to know when we see earmarks in capital planning process
 - Earmarks to municipalities go into account but capital plans go for statewide programs, over a five year period
- A councilor stated the process of climate vulnerability is eye opening.

Committee Reports

Policy Committee Update

- Policy Chairwoman Elisa Campbell shared here was several public meetings on Resource Management Plans (RMPs).
- Chairman Hatch discussed the RMP report and additional information in light of where we are and whether we should discuss this in light of oversight strategy
- A council member asked if we are monitoring or measuring the success or improvements of RMPs; are they being used.
 - They guide decisions about which work should be done and who to consult.

- The council member suggested doing ten percent at every park is a better utility; but that is in place.
- Chairman Hatch said we will be discussing this issues in the oversight strategy
- A council member asked if we are monitoring or measuring the success or improvements of RMPs; are they being used?
- A discussion ensued about lack of staff to monitor progress.
- A council member said no matter how long it takes us, we have a publicly vetted plan and therefore RMPs are important to maintain.
- Habitat Restoration - a capital budget established by the Commissioner has enabled ecology staff to contract for an Invasive Plant Management Plan for each Region. In 2017, we were able to contract with an invasive species control crew and that crew will continue to work on priority sites.
- Rare shorebirds - as every year, DCR has a seasonal shorebird monitoring crew for North Shore properties and for the first time it has a crew for the South Coast properties, too. Our beaches are known as the most successful beaches for plover recovery in the northeast US.

Finance Committee Update

- Finance Chairwoman Heather Clish stated FY19 Operating Budget goes before the House Ways and Means Committee on Wednesday with amendments due Friday. An amendment on the “park operations” line will be submitted.
- Another line item in the budget under EEA is new funding for trails--a one, stop, shopping grant source.
- Hazard mitigation and adaptation plans are included in the bond bill, a tremendous step forward.

Presenting Candidate for Stewardship Council Approval

Commissioner Roy explained that there are two positions for which the Stewardship Council must approve; one is Office of Water Supply Protection. The office oversees groundwater for drinking and recreational waters including lakes and ponds. John Scannell was presented to the Stewardship Council for consideration. Chairman Hatch entertained a motion to approve Mr. Scannell, the motion was seconded, all in favor, the motion stands.

Discussion of Oversight Strategy Document

Chairman Hatch reviewed priority focus for the document to be on policy, operating and capital budgets, climate/climate adaptation plans, planning and park management--an account of how far we have gotten and how far to go, recognizing we don't have the resources to do what is fully required--asset management and focus on communication and accountability.

Chairman Hatch opened the floor for comments and questions.

A member raised concern about fixing vulnerable places that have been hard hit by storms. We can't keep fixing things that got destroyed only to be destroyed within the next year or two.

The Chairman spoke to adaptation plans to address these issues.

The Commissioner spoke to doing things differently; rebuilding infrastructure in new, higher, dryer places to enjoy.

A member noted we must look the useful life of an asset. What is the vulnerability? What is the useful life of that investment?

A member spoke to the point that recent years of extreme weather has awakened his consciousness on the need to do things differently.

Chairman Hatch motioned to approve the Oversight Strategy with slight editorial discretion. The motion was seconded, all in favor, the motion stands.

Discussion about Plymouth 2020 and Illuminating Myles Standish Monument

Member Dennis Smith brought forward a discussion to add floodlights to the Myles Standish Monument -- the area is striking and visible from Plymouth Rock. Dennis introduced Terry Vose and Desire Mobed of Duxbury who are planning activities in Duxbury. Terry discussed options that are safe and resilient. Commissioner Roy looks forward to working with this group on this project.

Chairman Hatch defers February minutes to next meeting.

Public Comment Section

Lisa Hoag, Wendell Historical Commission and Doug Harris, Narragansett Tribe brought forward a concern about logging for ecological and cultural reasons in Wendell State Forest. Commissioner Roy stated that in addition to the numerous conversations DCR staff had with Lisa, a formal written letter will be forthcoming.

Bill Boles, NEMBA, first stated that only hand tools will be used by NEMBA members to help clean up after the storms. NEMBA will work with Heather on budget issues.

Chairman Hatch moves to go into Executive Session, the motion is seconded, and members approved the motion by roll call. Roll call was taken, all in favor, the motion stands and Executive Session was underway.

Chairman Hatch moved to return to public session, the motion is seconded, and members approved the motion by roll call. Roll call was taken, all in favor, the motion stands and public session is underway.

As the General Laws of Massachusetts require the approval of the Stewardship Council for the Commissioner to exercise the power of eminent domain to acquire land, Chairman Hatch motioned to vote in favor of a matter before the council to allow DCR to acquire by eminent domain for conservation and recreation purposes, a parcel of land in the Town of Wellfleet, owned by a Land Steward Trust.

The motion was seconded, all in favor, the motion stands.

The Chairman moved to close the meeting, the motion was seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 3:38P without objection

Next Meeting

Next meeting is May 3, at Community Rowing, 20 Nonantum Road, Brighton.