



Department of Conservation and Recreation  
Stewardship Council Meeting  
September 6, 2018 | 12 p.m. to 2 p.m.  
Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve  
149 Waquoit Highway, Falmouth, MA

## September Meeting Minutes

**Council Members present:** Elisa Campbell, Michele Hanss, Melissa Harper, Whitney Hatch, David C. Murphy, Toni Pollak, Dennis Smith and Nate Walton

**Council Members not present:** Heather Clish, Jim Van Dyke, and Katherine Sharry

**DCR Attendees:** Lisa Barstow, Paul Cavanagh, David Celino, Stephen Doody, Karl Pastore and Joe Rotondo

**EOEEA Attendees:** Faye Boardman

**Public Attendees (and stated affiliation):** Richard Starfursky, Species Forest Inc., Brattleboro, VT; Bill Boles, New England Mountain Bike Association and Friends of Wompatuck; Chuck Anastas, Massachusetts Conservation Voters; Sharl Heller, Friends Network; Frank Mand, Gatehouse Media; Mark Clark.

---

### Welcome and Call to Meeting

Chairman Hatch called the meeting to order at 12:08 p.m.

Chairman Hatch briefly reviewed the agenda and highlighted Sharl Heller's presence in the room as it relates to the agenda item on the upcoming joint meeting with the Friends Network and discussion on topics of mutual interest.

Chairman Hatch announced that there will be no Finance Committee update or Policy Committee update.

Chairman Hatch announced the resignation of Councilor Marianne Hartmann due to a conflict with her work in a school system, preventing her from attending Stewardship meetings that are held during the week. When she accepted the appointment, Marianne was unaware of the potential conflict.

Chairman Hatch also announced that Councilor Wayne Klockner's term has expired and he will not be seeking reappointment. Chairman Hatch took this opportunity to publicly thank Wayne for all his efforts and that of his organization, The Nature Conservancy, and being able to turn to a member to get those folks to help us.

Councilor Klockner occupied one of two seats appointed after a recommendation by an environmental group. As such, Chairman Hatch has asked Councilor Clish and Mass Conservation Voters and environmental groups to begin the recruiting process and furnish a recommendation as soon as possible as this is an environmental seat.

Chairman Hatch announced that new Councilor Katherine Sharry would not be able to attend today's meeting due to a prior commitment. Chairman Hatch pointed out that Councilor Sharry is filling the seat previously occupied by Councilor Walter Bickford.

Chairman Hatch introduced Deputy Commissioner Nick Gove who will be filling in for Commissioner Roy and will deliver the Commissioner's Update.

### **Commissioner's Report**

- Nick Gove introduced himself as Deputy Commissioner of Operations. Commissioner Roy asked him to be here today on his behalf.
- Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve is one of only 28 sites in the United States that comprises the National Estuarine Research Reserve System.
- This state park receives phenomenal support from the Citizens for the Protection of Waquoit and offers visitors with a unique experience.
- There is a lot to see within the 2,800 acres of land and water.
- Most notable are the salt marshes and wooded swamps of Great Flat Pond Trail and beach barrier dunes and beach plums and rugose roses along Dead Neck Trail. Also camping on an island with boat-only access.
- Additionally, there are pitch pine forests, military base remnants, programs, and fun activities planned throughout the year.
- Importantly, the Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Reserve functions as a living laboratory and an incredible resource to the understanding of coastal ecosystems.
- I encourage you to walk through the park and take in some of its impressive features.

### **Public Meetings**

#### **Dog Parks**

- The DCR continues to seek ways to increase the number of visitors to our state parks system.
- Our parks remain popular destinations of those who have dogs, where the state parkland can provide needed exercise and stimulation for our furry companions.
- Last month, on Wednesday, August 15, the DCR hosted a public meeting seeking to provide information and clear confusion of the Off-Leash Dog Recreation Area at Stodder's Neck in Hingham.

- The DCR also held a similar public meeting earlier in the month to propose potential sites within South West Corridor Park in the City of Boston Jamaica Plain neighborhood.

### **Day Boulevard**

- With increased traffic on our parkways, which many now serve as major daily used routes for commuters, it is important that the DCR continues to assess opportunities to make them safer for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles.
- With that in mind, Wednesday, September 12, the DCR will host a public information meeting regarding targeted safety improvements along William J. Day Boulevard from the State Police Driveway to Farragut Road.
- Currently, the Day Boulevard safety improvement project is underway.
- Recently, MassDOT and DCR conducted milling, paving and striping work. New signage and signals have been installed, as well.
- The Parkway will be reconfigured to better accommodate bicycles and pedestrians.
- If you're interested in receiving information regarding these public meetings, please reach out to my office, and we can send you the materials and/or the presentations.

### **Summer Nights Initiative 2018**

- I would like to mention the successful conclusion of the Fourth Annual Summer Nights initiative, which increases programming and extends the hours of operations at select pools and athletic complexes in several cities across the state.
- The program targeted urban neighborhoods and communities, offering recreational opportunities, such as increased programming at state parks and other facilities, as well as extending the hours of operations at select pool facilities.
- This year, we were able to increase the number of partner organizations, who provide specialty programming including athletics, arts and crafts, music, and so much more.
- The Baker-Polito Administration together with valuable partners offered today's youth places to build memories, stimulate their minds, and spend valuable time outdoors.
- Additionally, extended hours of operations complemented other programs already offered by the DCR for families at throughout state parks, forests, and beaches across the state.

### **Charles River Beer Garden**

- Recently, the popular Boston area Nightshift Brewery opened two beer gardens along the Charles River Esplanade.
- One location is near the Hatch Memorial Shell and the other at Christian Herter Park in Brighton.
- The beer gardens have been well received by the local community and visitors, who have expressed their joy for the craft beer and creative bites offered by food trucks.
- The beer garden locations will be open through the month of September and into early October, weather permitting.
- The opening of the beer gardens is another great example of a unique venture that will interest many to visit the state park for the very first time.

### **Beaver Brook Spray Deck & Playground Ribbon Cutting**

- As you know, this year marks the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the DCR's acquisition (then as the Metropolitan Parks Commission) of the Waverley Oaks in the Town of Belmont, which became Beaver Brook Reservation in 1893.
- To enhance the park, the DCR recently completed and unveiled a new spray deck and playground at Beaver Brook State Reservation this summer.
- The new facility replaced an old wading pool and play structure, which was antiquated, out of compliance with ADA, and lacked many amenities such as a soft resilient surface for recreation, among other features.
- The new facility has accessible restrooms, walkways and connecting trails for better access to all that Beaver Brook Reservation has to offer.
- The picnic area was outfitted with new benches and a state of the art drinking fountain.
- The tennis courts were resurfaced and repainted, and the parking area was repaved, as well.
- Furthermore, the new playground pays tribute to the great Waverley Oaks of Beaver Brook with a majestic tree shaped play structure at the center.

### **Hall Spray Deck and Playground**

- The Stoneham community also saw a welcome addition to the Hall Memorial Pool Complex in July as DCR continues to enhance its outdoor recreation opportunities for Massachusetts.
- The complex includes a deep water pool that offers affordable swimming lessons in collaboration with the Stoneham Boys & Girls club, a playground which DCR has made improvements to, and now a brand new spray deck to be enjoyed by children of all ages.

### **Massasoit Campground Reopening**

- The Massasoit Campground Project made significant progress throughout the summer and the Campground officially opened its doors to the public on August 24 after years of being closed.
- DCR invested more than \$5 million to reinvigorate the property's facilities and make them operational.
- Included in the project is a state-of-the-art, fully accessible playground to provide children with additional outdoor recreational opportunities.
- The new campground includes 94 rehabilitated campsites, and upgraded electric and water hookups.
- Additionally, 16 miles of trail maintenance was completed.
- To assist in the operations of the park, the agency has hired seasonal staff members, who will maintain the park and oversee its campground operations.
- Other details include:
  - The renovation of the park contact station;
  - The installation of new signage;
  - The restoration of running water and power to the park and campground;
  - The repair and re-paving of park roadways;
  - The renovation of the entrance station;
  - The installation of lighting along the path to the campground and playground;
  - The restoration of Campers Beach;

- The management of water vegetation overgrowth; and,
- The restoration of four campground comfort stations.
- The Baker–Polito Administration offered free camping on opening weekend to celebrate the great accomplishment.
- Interest was so high that campsite reservations for the campground were all booked in less than one hour for Friday and Saturday night.
- Massasoit Campground will be open through the first week in October.

### **The End of Beach Services**

- Lastly, I just want to mention that with the passing of Labor Day Weekend, the agency’s beaches services have come to an end.
- Every year we have hundreds of thousands of visitors seeking a respite from the summer’s heat, and every year we deliver to them low cost, swimming opportunities in some of the most beautiful locations New England has to offer.
- I just want to say thank you to the DCR staff to work incredibly hard to make sure the public receives a great experience within our state parks.

### **Article 97 Update**

Chairman Hatch asked Deputy Commissioner Gove if there are any lingering Article 97 issues and Nick reported that there were none that he was aware of.

Councilor Hanss asked Deputy Commissioner Gove if there were any other DCR roads being considered for a “road diet” – he reported that Hammond Pond Parkway is a possibility.

Councilor Pollak asked Deputy Commissioner Gove how the agency was able to staff the newly re-opened Massasoit State Park. Deputy Commissioner Gove and Regional Director Karl Pastore, who was in attendance at the Council meeting, reported that one FTE had been assigned there for a while in anticipation of the opening and another employee has since been transferred to Massasoit, as well. Deputy Commissioner Gove and Karl also reported that no new FTEs were hired to staff Massasoit.

Chairman Hatch asked how demand was thus far for Massasoit. Karl Pastore reported that demand was substantial due to the amazing restoration of the camping facilities and accessible playground facilities. Karl said that Massasoit is beautiful. Deputy Commissioner Gove echoed these comments and recommended Massasoit as a day-trip destination, as well.

Chairman Hatch would like to see the Massasoit re-opening replicated where possible across the DCR system. “We should bottle this,” he said.

Councilor Murphy asked Deputy Commissioner Gove if water quality is tested across the DCR system. Nick reported that DCR monitors at all waterfronts. Nick also mentioned that DCR is working with the City of Quincy to improve water quality issues at Wollaston Beach.

Councilor Smith wanted to publicly commend DCR for the work they do in and around Waquoit – including at the primitive-type campsites at the nearby island. He recently enjoyed the area on a weekend with family – he found the facilities to be well-kept and clean and said staff does a terrific job.

Chairman Hatch addressed his fellow councilors and expressed his appreciation for their support when he suggested writing a letter to the Legislature expressing the Council’s opposition to the expansion of a landfill near Leominster State Forest. He said he decided not to send the letter. Said the bill was not voted out of Ways & Means during the last session. He believes we stopped it, but believes the issue will come back.

### **Policy Committee Update**

Councilor Campbell said there was no Resource Management Plan update. She noted that the difficulty of the RMP process is exacerbated by boundaries that were not clearly delineated in the past.

### **Budget Committee Update**

Chairman Hatch said he had nothing to report on the budget and neither did Councilor Clish.

Chairman Hatch recognized Chuck Anastas in the audience and announced that Chuck is chair of the organization called Massachusetts Conservation Voters, which recently added to its mission a focus on advocacy. The Chairman said he appreciates another group speaking-out on behalf of DCR and important environmental causes.

Chairman Hatch introduced Faye Boardman for a follow up to her presentation last year.

### **Special Business I – Presentation by Faye Boardman, Chief Operating Officer Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs**

Faye Boardman said the goal of the Asset Management Project is to find out what the DCR has/owns and how much will it cost to get it in good shape.

[The complete presentation by Faye Boardman is available on the DCR website and is not stated herein.]

Councilor Campbell asked if there was a way to integrate RMPs into the Asset Management project. Faye answered that when the Asset Management project is complete it could have a positive bearing on the compilation of RMPs. Information in existing RMPs has been used in the Asset Management project.

Councilor Harper asked about the scope of the asset management project. Faye reported the project had to be started on a smaller scale due to budget and manpower constraints. But the objective is to keep the project growing/expanding.

Councilor Campbell commented that it’s easy to forget how big and encompassing DCR is from a building/infrastructure standpoint – she said it’s “mind-boggling.” Nick Gove said that DCR has over 2,100 separate structures.

Councilor Walton commended the DCR for its timely completion of the Fanny Appleton Bridge on the Esplanade.

Councilor Hanss asked if the Asset Management project will be integrated into the constituent service program. Nick Gove explained that the last year DCR implemented a new system for tracking constituent calls and dispatching service; he said it's possible that in the future the two systems will talk to each other.

Chairman Hatch said that when the pilot Asset Management project is complete, he would be happy to participate in a "show and tell" session with the Commissioner and legislators. Councilor Campbell cautioned that it would be important to make clear to the legislators the sample size of the project so they don't mistake the pilot for a system-wide study.

Councillor Pollak said while we focus on structures that need fixes, we can't lose sight of invasives, and impacts of climate change, underscoring our assets are not just structures.

Chairman Hatch introduced Chief Celino.

### **Special Business II – Presentation by David Celino, Chief Fire Warden, DCR**

David Celino discussed lessons learned from what we do at Myles Standish where there is constant brush fire, the support we give in emergency situations all over the country and coming home with more knowledge to apply locally, stressed importance of good relations with municipalities because we do not have jurisdiction over them, even to protect our own state land/parks in a fire situation, ways in which DCR supports cities and towns and the culture of burning on the Vineyard.

[The complete presentation by David Celino is available on the DCR website and is not stated herein.]

Councilor Hanss asked why there was not more fires during the drought year of 2016, Chief Celino said it was due to non-stop public messaging about the hazardous conditions; he also commented that campground networks were very helpful in spreading the word.

Councilor Hanss asked Chief Celino about fire plans on Nantucket. The Chief said plans are in the works and he discussed a 35 acre fire on the island from a couple years ago. Plans for Freetown State Forest and Quabbin also are on the docket.

Councilor Smith asked if DCR Fire professionals get involved with town forests. The Chief answered that they typically do not unless there is an agreement of some sort in place. The Chief also noted DCR is always available to lend technical expertise; DCR is currently collaborating with the City of Gloucester.

Councilor Walton asked if there are MOUs in place between DCR Fire Control and private parties. The Chief stated we stay within the state boundary - no burning on private property.

The Chief mentioned that in Redding, CA they recently lost 500 houses in one night. However, homeowners that strictly followed recommended/preventative fire prevention protocols were spared loss of property.

Chairman Hatch discussed the upcoming Saturday, November 10, Stewardship Council meeting that will be held in conjunction with the Friends Group's annual meeting. The meeting location [likely] will be DCR West Boylston Water Supply Headquarters. He requested key DCR managers who interact with Friends Groups to please attend if possible (Priscilla Geigis and Jenny Norwood) - also an attorney who can discuss volunteer MOU/policy.

Following-up on his summer "homework request" of council members, Chairman Hatch took suggested agenda items for future Stewardship Council meetings. Toni Pollak said she would like to hear more about how DCR plans to move ahead technologically.

Chairman Hatch would like to hear about how DCR/EEA plans implementation of the Environmental Bond Bill at it relates to climate change.

Councilor Hanss would like to hear about the condition of DCR forests, forest management plans, climate change, invasives and pests.

Councilor Pollak would like to know, "how did our summer go, what went right and what went wrong?" The number of unmanned facilities, staffing levels, ratio of seasonals compared to full-time employees.

Councilor Smith suggested it might be helpful to build out agendas six months in advance.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Chairman Hatch motioned to approve the July minutes. The motion was seconded; the eight members attending unanimously voted in favor, the motion carried.

### **Public Comment**

Bill Boles of the New England Mountain Bike Association said while he is usually very complimentary of DCR, he was upset by the cost of a special use permit (\$1,200) to cover police detail costs for a Merrimack Valley charity ride in which the proceeds would have been entirely dedicated to the state forests. He said it is one of the organization's most popular events and it had to be cancelled. Lisa Barstow offered to collect details and look into the matter.

Richard Stafursky of Species Forest in Brattleboro, VT requested the Council consider a future agenda item in which he would do a presentation on being an ethical vegan – and argue why DCR concessionaires should offer vegan menus, saying he has reports and data on the subject. He praised Councilor Hanss for her concern for forests and would like to hear more about speaking for the forests and nature. Mr. Stafursky handed Chairman Hatch written material and Chairman Hatch said he would



look at the material and consider whether to include it for consideration and discussion at a future council meeting.

Chairman Hatch motioned to adjourn at 2:11 p.m. The motion was seconded; the eight members attending unanimously voted in favor, the motion carried.

---

### **Documents and Exhibits**

- Agenda
- Asset Management Modernization Project Presentation (10/6/17)
- Draft Agenda – Joint Meeting DCR Stewardship Council and the Massachusetts Forest Park Friends Network
- Draft July 2018 Meeting Minutes
- RMP Schedule
- Asset Management Modernization Project Status Report
- DCR Bureau of Forest Fire Control Presentation