

Ware River Watershed Advisory Committee Meeting
Thursday, March 10th, 2022
7:00 PM

Location: online via Zoom and YouTube

Members: (Members in **BOLD** were present)

Massachusetts Council of Sportsmen: Laurie Pray

Alternate: Mike Moss

Worcester County League of Sportsmen's Clubs: **John Root**

Alternate: Dave Papale

Trout Unlimited: **Jeffrey Schaaf (chairperson)**

Alternate:

A Rod and Gun Club:

Alternate: Bryan Waterman

Barre Selectboard: **Mike Wood**

Alternate:

Hubbardston Selectboard: **Cindy Schlener**

Alternate: **Dave Marsh**

Oakham Selectboard: **Thomas Hughes**

Alternate: **Phillip Warbasse**

Rutland Selectboard: **Charles R. Williams**

Alternate:

Barre Historical Society: **Dave Flick**

Alternate:

Hubbardston Historical Society: Robin Langer

Alternate:

Oakham Historical Society: Bill Mucha

Alternate: Lee Dougan

Rutland Historical Society:

Alternate:

Massachusetts Wildlife Federation: (group disbanded)

Alternate:

Massachusetts Audubon Society: Martha Gach

Alternate:

Sierra Club: Matt Hopkinson

Alternate:

Upper Ware River Watershed Association: (group disbanded)

Alternate:

General Public: Mark DuBois

Alternate: **Brett Russ**

DCR Staff Present:

Dan Clark, Jenna Perschka

Members of the Public Present:

Bob Kane, Mike Perkins, Rusty Savignac, Jeff Stillings, Matt Urban, Marianne Wojcicki

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Start Time: 7:01 PM

Approval of minutes from meeting on Thursday, January 20th, 2022

Dick Williams made a motion to accept the minutes from the Ware River Watershed Advisory Committee (WRWAC) meeting on January 20th, 2022. John Root seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Trails subcommittee update and discussion

Brett Russ updated the committee on the subcommittee's activities since the last meeting.

The trails subcommittee formation was approved at the last meeting. Organizing members of the subcommittee are as follows: Lynne Goodnow, Bob Hatch, Dave Marsh, Brett Russ, Cindy Schlener, Marianne Wojcicki.

In collaboration with Jeff Schaaf, seats were added to the subcommittee. Seats were added for the Oakham, Barre, Rutland, and Hubbardston open space committees, a primary and alternate member. Those seats are as follows:

Oakham: Sean Blood (primary); Brian Trimby (alternate)

Barre: Bob Kane (primary); Jamie Foucher (alternate)

Rutland: Joe Kane (primary); Peter Richards (alternate)

Hubbardston: Bob Hatch (primary); Christopher Munroe (alternate)

A seat was added for historic interests: Dave Flick (primary); Jamie Gilman (alternate). A seat was added to represent hiking organizations: Ed Foren (primary); Gary Brigham (alternate). A seat was added for mountain biking

interests: Lydia Barter (primary); Bill Dobson (alternate). A seat was added for equine interests: Jane Linds (primary); Margo Petracone (alternate). A seat was

added for snowmobile interests: Dean Zuppio (primary); alternate to be named.

This is a total of 14 voting seats on the subcommittee. Brett Russ will assume the

chairperson role, Lynne Goodnow will be the vice chair, and Dave Marsh will be the secretary.

The subcommittee plans to meet monthly. It will be a combination of working sessions and public meetings. This will help gather feedback and distill trail interests down to a single voice to DCR. A goal is to enter into volunteer stewardship agreements with DCR to help maintain trails in the watershed.

Status of the WRWAC membership legislation

Jeff Schaaf passed on an update from Anne Gobi regarding the membership legislation.

The update has been in a holding pattern. The legislation is still making its way through committee. There is no set timeline yet.

Member Issues

Jeff Stillings updated the committee on the prison camp area and structures. A general kiosk/map is set to be built at the parking area near the root cellar. The kiosk will show an overview of what was once there. Smaller signs are also set to be purchased and placed throughout the site. These signs will feature historic photos and informative text, being written by the Rutland Historical Society. Protective fencing is also ready to be purchased. The next phase is for the representative of the historical commission to meet with DCR to discuss specifics and get their blessing before materials are purchased. The hard deadline to purchase everything is the end of the fiscal year. Everything did come in under budget as well. They are also collaborating with DCR for ongoing general cleanup around the site.

Cindy Schlener asked about the specific plans for blocking off the prison block. She was concerned about the roof being unstable. Jeff Stillings answered that contingent on DCR's approval, the plan is to use wrought iron grating to block off access to climb on the structure. Regarding the stability of the structure, DCR is also conducting an engineering assessment of the structure as well. The goals are to preserve the history and what is currently there, but no plans to add to existing structures.

Dick Williams proposed a meeting/visit as a committee to the prison camp at some point in the future to see the work that has been done there in person.

Dave Flick asked about who updates the state's advisory committee web page. The WRWAC member list is outdated and needs to be updated. The website is update by DCR staff in Boston. Justin will send it a request with the updated member list and see that it gets done.

The Barre selectboard representation on the committee was discussed. Mike Wood is currently the primary representative, Martha Varnot was recently taken off the committee. The alternate position is currently open. Margo Petracone had previously been on the committee representing the Barre selectboard as well but was incorrectly replaced. It seems to have been an error made by the selectboard. Mike Wood will reach out to the select board and town administrator in Barre to get the situation clarified. Barre Historical Society also has an alternate position open on the committee.

Rusty Savignac asked if there was interest from the committee to form a subcommittee focused on boating access at Long Pond in Rutland. It would be like the trail's subcommittee. Jeff Schaaf, Thomas Hughes, Dick Williams, and Mike Wood expressed interest. Dave Flick suggested broadening the scope of the subcommittee to all boating access in the watershed. The focus on Long Pond was detailed. Permits are issued annually for boats with motors larger than 25hp with a 4-stroke engine or 20hp with a 2-stroke engine. The permit allows boats with larger motors on Long Pond from Memorial Day through September 30. DCR-DWSP manages Long Pond. Rusty will take the lead on the subcommittee. The group will try and come to a consensus on recommendations to pass on to the larger WRWAC group.

Meeting End Time: 8:06 PM

Upcoming WRWAC Meetings

- Thursday, May 19th, 2022, at 7 PM – Barre Town Hall, 2 Exchange Street, Barre, MA 01005