



Matthew A. Beaton, Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Frederick A. Laskey, Executive Director, MWRA

William Meehan, North Worcester County Quabbin Anglers, Quabbin Fishermen's Association

Louis Taverna, Chairman, MWRA Advisory Board

Fred Heyes, Swift River Valley Historical Society

Water Supply Protection Trust

September 5, 2018

MWRA Southborough Facility

Trustees

Trustees Lou Taverna, MWRA Advisory Board

Frederick A. Laskey, Executive Director, MWRA

Vandana Rao, Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Brigadier General William J. Meehan, North Worcester County Anglers and the Quabbin Fishermen's Association

Fred Heyes, Swift River Historical Society

MWRA

Kathy Soni, Budget Director

Chris Lam, Assistant Finance Manager

Bethany Card, Director of Environmental and Regulatory Affairs

Mike Altieri, Associate General Counsel

Katie Ronan, Public Affairs

Dave Coppes, Chief Operating Officer

Tom Durkin, Director of Finance

Paul Whelan, Risk Management Manager

DCR

John Scannell, Director, Division of Water Supply Protection

Ken MacKenzie, Acting Director, Natural Resources Section

Dan Clark, Director, Quabbin/Ware Region

Lisa Gustavsen, Assistant Regional Director, Quabbin/Ware Region

Patricia Austin, Environmental Engineer

Joel Zimmerman, Regional Planner

Trish McNally, Budget Manager

MWRA Advisory Board

Joseph Favaloro, Executive Director

WSCAC

Lexi Dewey, Executive Director

The meeting convened at 10:01am.

1. FY18 Year End Report – John Scannell

John Scannell reviewed FY2018 Watershed Management highlights including the following.

- Land Acquisition using MWRA and Federal funds
- Successful Gull Harassment
- Public Access Management
- Fire at the New Salem Facility
- Completion of the new Water Quality Database
- Strong Watershed Forestry program
- Comprehensive Land Management Plan adopted January 2018
- Continuing Vehicle Replacement

Trustees Taverna asked if the Clinton Crew Headquarters Project work was in-house or outside. John replied that originally the Clinton Crew HQ was supposed to be a combination of both; however, the addition of one subcontractor required it to be completely outside due to bidding laws.

- Land Acquisition - John explained that in FY18, 412 acres were acquired with \$2,364,000 of MWRA funding and that 645 acres were acquired using \$1,282,500 federal Forest Legacy funding.
 - John mentioned that DWSP is reexamining how they purchase land and GIS staff are working to update the model used to determine which parcels to focus on. John added that 13 criteria are used to determine parcels to be purchased using ratepayer funds. He also mentioned that the acquisition of the Tower Hill parcel this year was a big accomplishment.
- Land Stewardship Program – John explained that the goal is to monitor Restrictions once every other year and that DWSP is working to retool the program to achieve this goal. Trustee Laskey asked if DWSP uses drones and John replied that they currently do not, but that drones would be beneficial for monitoring larger parcels and that DWSP is currently working with EEA to develop a policy. John also noted that encroachments are typically addressed promptly and although legal issues can occasionally slow the process, overall DWSP tends to resolve encroachment issues successfully.
- Wildlife Management – John outlined a variety of wildlife management highlights.
 - Treated goose nests to limit population
 - Successfully completed Quabbin Deer Hunt
 - Monitored breeding loons
 - Reduced number of Gulls on reservoir
 - Burrowing animal control on Dams and Dikes
 - Moose Research
 - Developed expanded hunting program at Wachusett
 - Bat research in Watersheds
- The 10-year Land Management Plan and Quabbin Public Access Plan were adopted this year.
- Forest Management – 27 new forestry proposals were reviewed and approved. John also noted that the impacts of Gypsy Moths at Quabbin/Ware and a proposed Oak Salvage would be discussed later.
- Water Quality Database – DWSP developed 2 new Water Quality databases.
- Phragmites Removal – DWSP staff used vinegar to treat the stalks of this invasive species at the Cosgrove Boat Cove. John noted that although it was fairly successful they need to be more aggressive moving forward.

- Major Projects at Quabbin
 - Turf Repairs and Restoration Program at Windsor Dam
 - Quabbin facility repairs totaled \$125,390 and included oil boiler repairs, asbestos abatement, carpentry shop improvement and other general maintenance.
 - Internal watershed road and drainage repairs, specifically at Gate 39
- Major Projects at Wachusett
 - Boat Launch Repairs
 - The Clinton Crew Headquarters design was complete and will likely be constructed this year.
 - Wachusett Dike Turf Improvements
 - Building Demolition
- Watershed Ranger Data – Trustee Laskey asked about the success rate of citations and John answered that citations are typically successful and that they are paid. He noted that only one or two have been dismissed over the years. Trustee Meehan asked about the difference between Ranger forces at Quabbin and Wachusett and John said there were none. Trustee Meehan noted the difference in the number of citations issued in the two watersheds and that there were nearly double at Wachusett. John speculated on a variety of possibilities including that Rangers have been using citations longer at Wachusett and that it is more urban, there are more points of contact, and swimming is more likely to occur.
- WSPT Expenditures and Revenue Report – John noted that construction at of the crew headquarters at Wachusett did not move forward, which, coupled with vacancies led to a significant underspending.

Trustee Heyes asked about mountain biking compliance in the Ware Watershed and John replied that compliance has been much better. He noted that there has been a very good Ranger presence and they have not observed cutting of new trails.

Trustee Taverna asked if the Quabbin Facility Repairs are “band-aids”. John said they were and that there are more than normal diminishing returns.

2. Quabbin Forestry – John Scannell and Dan Clark

John Scannell explained that there were two Forestry issues at Quabbin to address, Gypsy Moth Oak Mortality and a logging issue at a New Salem Lot.

Dan Clark gave a presentation on significant Oak mortality in the watersheds caused by Gypsy Moths. Dan explained that although Gypsy Moth outbreaks have been observed in Massachusetts since the 1870’s, there is rising concern among the expert community, including Joe Elkington at UMass Amherst, about the severity and length of the current outbreak.

- Dan explained that since the drought in 2016 there have been two significant Gypsy Moth years. Gypsy Moth larva hatch in the spring, lay eggs in the summer, and prefer Oak and Aspen trees. Although many outbreaks have occurred in the past, typically a natural fungus or virus kicks in to stop it. However, this outbreak does not appear to be slowing down and Joe Elkington warns that next year may be even worse.
- Trustee Rao asked what percentage of the trees in the watershed are Oak and Dan replied that they make up a significant portion of the forest overstory. Dan estimated that there are several thousand acres of dead or dying Oak.
- Dan explained that DWSP is now trying to figure out the short and long term options for addressing this issue and noted that at this scale the options become more limited. He described DCR’s plan to engage in

the targeted salvage of oak trees killed as a result of Gypsy Moth. He noted that despite the unfortunate situation, this plan allows for timber salvage value to be recovered from the dead trees.

- Dan showed a GIF illustrating significant defoliation in the watershed and a Story Map summarizing Oak mortality and illustrating areas designated for salvage which include portions in Prescott Peninsula and Petersham. He also noted that logging in the watershed has been limited to Oak trees that are dead.
- Dan explained that the hope is that the natural virus or fungus will kick in to end the outbreak, but that does not appear to be happening and there is speculation that something has changed. In response to a question from Trustee Rao, Dan noted that the Gypsy Moth causes defoliation which after a few years weakens the tree to the point where other factors kill it.
- Trustee Meehan asked if there is an overarching DCR plan in place to address Gypsy Moths and Dan explained that DWSP had met with Ken Guiod at DCR. He also noted that spraying with biologics is the only effective way to treat for Gypsy Moths. Trustee Rao asked if other watersheds for water supply sources, like New York, are experiencing this problem. Dan replied that Ken Guiod said that no other agencies or organization have sprayed since the 1970's, except one in Pennsylvania.
- Dave Coppes asked about the size of the parcels for targeted salvage and wondered if it would look like clear cutting. Dan said he had presented the proposal to the Quabbin Advisory Committee. He also noted that up to 5 acres could be removed in some areas and that the Commissioner is aware of this issue.
- Trustee Laskey stressed that scientists should inform the course of action on this matter and that the primary goal of the policy should be to mitigate and lessen the impacts of Gypsy Moths, not to derive revenue. There was also some discussion about the value of having technical experts review the plan to ensure that the proposed approach does not result in any unintended consequences. John Scannell noted that DWSP will look into alternatives and assess their viability.

A motion was made that the targeted salvage of Oak trees killed as a result of Gypsy Moths in the watersheds should be guided by best available science, best forestry practices, should be consistent with any overarching Commonwealth/DCR policy, and not driven by revenue considerations. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously by the Trust.

Dan Clark and John Scannell gave an overview and update on a logging issue that occurred on a New Salem Lot at Quabbin. Dan explained that the skids roads to the lot got too wet but the logger did not stop, therefore damaging the roads. John reported that there was a good deal of damage on the skid roads and that although it was not a water quality issue, it was an aesthetic issue. The Logger was directed to make improvements, but did not adequately do so and was consequently removed from the lot. DWSP staff are now working to repair and make improvements to the skid roads.

- Trustee Heyes mentioned that he was involved in this issue and noted some confusion that he observed – the Foresters think it is the Loggers responsibility, while the Loggers think that it is the Foresters responsibility. He also noted that this issue was bad for public perception. Trustee Heyes suggested that the current contract does not have adequate language to allow DWSP to enter and clear up the site if an issue like this occurs. He suggested improvements that could be made to the insurance language, suggested that DCR should be an additional insurer, and noted that there should be limitations on the grounds. Trustee Heyes also noted the risk that the pictures could cause the public to feel that the asset is not protected. Trustee Heyes made more contract recommendations regarding mechanized equipment versus hand felling. John noted that they value the input from Trustee Heyes.

- Trustee Taverna asked about the plan moving forward and John explained that DWSP has discussed the need for someone to be responsible for the lot, especially in summer. John noted that someone should have had the forethought that this was not a normal summer in terms of the amount of rainfall and many high intensity events.
- Trustee Laskey asked if the person who was overseeing was licensed and John replied that the Forester who was overseeing does not have a license but is currently working to get it and is working under a licensed forester. He also noted that the job description does not require a license.
- Trustee Laskey asked if the Logger would be eligible to re-bid in the future and Dan explained that DWSP will evaluate the Logger and document the issues in their file. John mentioned that there has also been talk about adding language to the contract that would allow DCR to preapprove subcontractors.

3. Work Plan Tracking – Dan Clark

Dan Clark presented on a new tool that DWSP is using called Smartsheets. John Scannell mentioned that the application is a great way to make sure what staff are aware and involved in the Work Plan.

- Dan explained that Smartsheets is an interactive, cloud-based application, similar to Excel, which allows users to design forms. DWSP has been using Smartsheets at Quabbin as well as other remote locations since the spring and is currently working to transition the Annual Work Plan into the application.
- Smartsheets allows users to assign specific tasks to individuals, delineate subtasks, and set relative priorities which can be adjusted as necessary. Due dates and reminders can also be set up to help visually track the progress of projects. Attachments and comments can be added, substituting for email. The application is self-contained and does not require any additional software.
- Dan explained that Smartsheets is helping to keep employees on the same page and increase both transparency and accountability. He suggested that it also helps to keep employees on track by showing progress with priorities and providing an update on tasks.

Dan explained that the goal is eventually to recreate the annual work plan in Smartsheets. This will be the first trial, but they are optimistic that it will go well and that people seem to like it. There is also a smartphone version of the application. John noted that DWSP will continue to provide the written quarterly report but will provide more detail using Smartsheets.

4. Update on FY19 Capitol Budget and Projects – John Scannell

John explained that the FY19 Work Plan was finalized and that work on projects has already started.

- Bidding has begun on the Clinton HQ project, but is still subject to MWRA staff discussions regarding insurance.
- Hazardous trees in Quabbin Cemetery have been removed.
- Quabbin and Ware Dike Restoration work continues.
- Routine Maintenance at Quabbin and Wachusett is ongoing.
- Rental Boats Purchase – John explained that DWSP is working to purchase new rental boats and will be going out to bid soon. The boats will be the same kind that are currently used. Meehan asked how requiring renters to sign for boats has affected damage to boats. John replied that there recently have been fewer problems with rental boats, likely because of the change in the form and requiring renters to sign. John also mentioned that the loon harassing individual went to court and has been banned forever from the reservoir. He reiterated that there is no commercial activity allowed on the reservoir.

5. Miscellaneous

Joe Favaloro asked about MWRA and DCR protecting investments of ratepayer dollars in the Capital budget. He noted that although MWRA facilities are insured, ratepayer funds that go to DCR facilities are not protected because the Commonwealth is not insured.

- Trustee Laskey mentioned that MWRA is working to find a way to move forward on this issue. Paul Whelan presented a plan to the Trustees that MWRA has developed to address this issue. Paul explained that the New Salem Facility that burnt down was not insured because it is a state-owned building and by law the Commonwealth cannot purchase insurance.
 - There are currently four buildings that MWRA will be investing capitol assets in and MWRA has come up with a plan to insure them.
 - During construction there will be Builders Risk insurance requirements in the Contracts which will protect the building during construction. The cost will be absorbed by the contractor.
 - After construction is complete the Clinton, New Salem, and Quabbin Maintenance buildings will be rolled into MWRA's existing facility insurance program. Paul noted that up to \$20 million worth of buildings can be rolled into MWRA facility insurance for a cost of about \$5,000. It is also possible to reduce the deductible although the premium might go up.
 - Trustee Rao asked if other entities are allowed to insure Commonwealth-owned buildings and Paul answered that MWRA is not prohibited from purchasing insurance on these buildings, as MWRA is not restricted and would have an insurable interest.
 - Paul explained that the Quabbin Headquarters is slightly different as the \$15 million worth of construction will be spread over 5 years and will only be on a portion of the building. This building will be rolled directly into MWRA existing insurance program with FM Global Insurance.
 - Paul mentioned that this insurance is a blanket type program and that there is no limit on loss, regardless of the established valuation.

New Salem – John Scannell explained that after the New Salem Facility burned down, contaminated soil was found under the foundation of the building. He explained that the existing gas tank will be removed, that there is currently a trailer on site functioning as the office. He also explained that DWSP is going to absorb the unanticipated costs and will therefore likely come to the next WSPT meeting with a budget transfer request, probably from personnel. John explained that Dan Clarke is working on a replacement for building and that there is room for office replacement in the FY19 budget. Trustee Heyes asked if they have thought about moving away from stream to be outside Watershed Protection Act buffer zones, Dan explained that they are looking in to this but that the site is wedged in between septic and wetland zones.

Ware River Public Access Plan – John Scannell

John gave an update on the Ware River Public Access Plan explaining that DWSP feels they need to start over. A trained mediator assisted at a spring public meeting and is now going to take the lead. The process is expected to take until the end of CY19. DWSP is working to develop a plan that is clear and a new document that outlines watershed guiding principles and policies for public access that can be referenced. John also mentioned that there will be a more fortified zone close to the intake in Barre.

Quabbin Deer Hunt – Ken McKenzie

Ken explained that the application period for the Quabbin Deer Hunt just ended and that this year the hunt is limited to areas of Hardwick and Petersham. He noted that there were 1,100 applications for 250 spots and the next steps are to have the drawing and schedule orientation. At Wachusett, each hunter is required to attend orientation in person. At Quabbin, new participants must attend orientation in person but can subsequently renew online for three years. DWSP had a meeting with Environmental Police to which State and Local Police were also invited. Dan mentioned that application was online using Smartsheets and were very simple. He also mentioned that there will be interactive maps available with the buffer zones.

- Joel Zimmerman mentioned that there is a 5-year access permit for everything at Wachusett including the 4,200 acres outside of the reservoir zone and that hunters must have both state and DCR access permits.
- Trustee Meehan mentioned that the Environmental Police Lieutenant asked to do increased patrolling and policing with the hunt. Trustee Meehan also asked if the Trustees could have an email about how the hunt goes after the first day.
- Trustee Laskey asked what the deer density in that area is and Ken answered that there are 35, 60, 80 deer per square mile and that the goal of the hunt is to promote tree regeneration.

Trustee Taverna expressed concern regarding DWSP staffing vacancies. John Scannell replied that there are currently 17 vacancies. He also mentioned that there is no hiring freeze and that they are currently interviewing for Wachusett Regional Director position, noting that Ken McKenzie is currently playing double duty. Trustee Taverna asked if these vacancies would affect the Work Plan and John answered that everything may not get done. He noted that this makes Smartsheets and priorities even more important.

Trustee Meehan requested an update on research permits and AIS at the next meeting. He also asked about the Quabbin Public Access Plan and if there is an executive summary of the adopted plan. John Scannell noted that most of the changes and new ideas were not adopted and that the final plan is very close to the original. Changes to Geocaching policy were made but others were not.

Joe Favaloro asked about DWSP staffing vacancies and mentioned that the Trust was created to avoid these issues. He suggested that there should be a letter from the Communities or others in December supporting hiring. John Scannell noted that the Commissioner and others are aware of this concern.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:10pm.

The Trustees and Budget Managers from DCR and DWSP also signed a certification letter for the Comptroller. In accordance with the MGL C10, § 75(f), the Board of Trustees for the Water Supply Protection Trust certify that expenditures for Fiscal Year 2018 did not exceed related assessments and receipts to the trust for the Division of Water Supply Protection. DCR and MWRA staffs certify that total expenditures for FY2018 did not exceed the total receipts to the trust account.