



Department of Conservation and Recreation
Stewardship Council Meeting
June 15, 2017
Lawrence Heritage Park
1 Jackson Street, Lawrence, MA 01840

Meeting Minutes

Stewardship Councilors in Attendance: Elisa Campbell, Heather Clish, Whitney Hatch, Dennis Smith, Jim Van Dyke, Nate Walton

Stewardship Councilors Absent: Walter Bickford, Michele Hanss, Toni Pollak

DCR Staff in Attendance: Jim Comeau, Andy Backman, Nancy Mitchell, Karen Nober, Mike Mitchell, Joe Rotondo, Stefanie Williams, Tom LaRosa

Public Attendees: Carol Lloyd, JoAnne McConaughy, Susan Lawrence, Pat Keck, Liz Armstrong, Nancy Fenton, Nancy Merrill

Attachments: RMPs Currently Underway

Chairman Hatch called the meeting to order at 12:20 p.m.

- Chairman Hatch reviewed the agenda
- Chairman Hatch asked whether or not there were any questions or comments regarding the agenda.

Commissioner's Report – Priscilla Geigis, Deputy Commissioner

Priscilla Geigis informed the Council on/of the following matters:

- Governor Baker declared June Great Outdoors Month across the Commonwealth.
- We completed the majority of hiring needs for our seasonal Rangers, park staff and lifeguards with a select number of locations still working to finalize a summer staff.
- Sail Boston's Parade of Sail is this Saturday, June 17th.
 - DCR is working with state and federal authorities to coordinate the event, which is expected to draw tens of thousands of viewers to Castle Island and Fort Independence.
 - As part of the festival, the DCR is partnering with the National Park Service and Boston Harbor Now to host a special viewing event on Spectacle Island, offering guests one of Boston Harbor's most breathtaking views as the tall ships sail into the City's port.
- DCR collaborated with the Spaulding Rehabilitation Network in order to open the McGraw Adaptive Sports Center inside Cape Cod's Nickerson State Park.
- On Saturday, the facility will host a grand opening to provide persons with physical and cognitive challenges and their families the opportunity to learn more about resources available to them and experience innovative adaptive equipment that will further make the state parks system more accessible.

- Several weeks ago, the Neponset River Greenway along the Milton/Mattapan line unofficially opened for public use, connecting Pope John Paul II Park and Mattapan Square with a long-missing link. This 1.3 mile stretch includes some dramatic crossings which will allow walkers and bikers to take in views along the historic Mattapan high-speed trolley path.
- Closer to downtown Boston, the restored Lotta Fountain opens this week after a \$358,000 rehabilitation performed in partnership with The Esplanade Association. This historic fountain is a testament to philanthropist and entertainer Lotta Crabtree's love of dogs, as well as the DCR's ability to care for canines venturing through the Charles River Esplanade.
- Earlier in the month, DCR joined with the Bureau of Forestry to present 88 communities with Tree City USA Awards, which recognize municipalities for their dedication to urban forestry management. Massachusetts is proud to have the largest number of Tree Cities in the Northeast, and this year also awarded Tree Campus and Tree Line USA awards to four Massachusetts colleges and two utility companies for taking steps to maximize the Commonwealth's portfolio of urban and community canopies.
- At the beginning of June, DCR's Universal Access Program hosted hundreds of guests at Brighton's Artesani Park for the 13th annual Adaptive Recreation Fair, which offered family-friendly, accessible and inclusive activities like cycling, hiking, kite decorating, face painting, equipment demonstrations, games, music and more.
- Waterfronts across the state were opened to the public on Saturday, May 27th with lifeguard coverage starting on weekends and beginning seven-day-a-week coverage this Saturday, June 17th.
- Next month the agency will recognize Henry David Thoreau's 200th birthday by holding celebratory gatherings, readings, storywalks, and more at Walden Pond and various locations throughout the state where Thoreau once traveled. In addition, we anticipate the Walden Pond Visitor Center's interpretive exhibit to open to the public on August 2.

Committee Updates

Policy and Planning Committee, Chairwoman Elisa Campbell

Chairwoman Campbell informed the Council on/of the following matters:

- The Policy Committee did not meet today
- Habitat management plans are being developed for Blue Hills
- An invasive species management plan is being developed
- Councilor Campbell would like DCR to do more to inform the public about the health of our forests and threats to them, including but not limited to invasive pests.

Finance Committee, Councilor Heather Clish

Councilor Clish informed the Council on/of the following matters:

- The committee is encouraged by the Senate's budget
 - Especially by the earmark to pilot/implement an asset management system.

Special Business

- Scheller Property Acquisition and Vote
(Presented by James Comeau, DCR Land Protection Specialist)

- Motion by Councilor Klockner, seconded by Councilor Smith to approve the acquisition of the Scheller Property
- Article 97 Procedures
(Presented by Tom LaRosa, DCR Counsel)
 - Chairman Hatch would like an early warning system from the DCR.

Approval of Minutes

- Motion by Councilor Klockner, seconded by Councilor Clish to accept the May 2017 minutes. All in favor, motion carried.

Other Business

- Future agenda items
 - Scrum Update
 - Resource/operations update
- No August meeting.

Public Comment

The following constituents expressed their opinions/issues/matters to the Council:

- Liz Armstrong (*Appalachian Mountain Club*)
 - Expressed her concern that there is not enough money being spent on upkeep of trails and boardwalks
 - Would like transparency on DCR's priorities for how money is spent
- Nancy Merrill (*BTA & BCT*)
 - Discouraged by the amount of time it takes DCR to fulfill a request
 - Would like DCR to utilize the private sector & volunteers more
- Carol Lloyd (*Essex Trails Association*)
 - Would like to know how DCR can get more funding
- Susan Lawrence (*Essex Trails Association*)
 - What is the reality to get more funding
- Pat Kleck (*Friends of Harold Parker*)
 - Feels frustrated by the relationship between the friends group and DCR
 - Would like to see improved communication with DCR

**Deputy Commissioner Geigis directed those interested to utilize the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs new public/private partnerships website to get more involved in aiding DCR. The website is <http://www.mass.gov/eea/eea-partnership-initiative/>

Closing Comment

n/a

Meeting Schedule

Next meeting will be held on July 27th at Nantasket Beach (Bath House), located at Nantasket Ave, Hull, MA 02045.

Chairman Hatch adjourned the meeting at 1:47 p.m.