

Danvers River Committee
Thursday, May 18, 2023
Meeting Minutes

The Danvers River Committee held a public meeting on Thursday, May 18, 2023, at the Endicott Park Visitors Center (Conference Room) at 6:00pm.

Member(s) present: Matthew Byrne, Chair
Dan DeLorenzo
William Ciesinski
Louie George
Robert Hemeon
Tom Perry
Gardner Trask, Selectman Liaison

Member(s) absent: Andrea Daley
Bill Fouhey
Michael McCarthy
Brian Atherton

Staff Present: Christopher Sanborn, Director of Natural Resources
Carolann Powers, Secretary

Media Present: None

Matt Byrne the called meeting called to order at 6:01 pm.

Secretary's Report:

The committee was asked to accept the minutes of the April 20, 2023, meeting.

Motion: Made by Louie George, seconded by Bill Ciesinski to accept the minutes of April 20, 2023, meeting; All in favor: 6:0.

New Business:

Chris informed the group the Pump Out Boat will be operational as of May 15th. Two of their pumpout boat operators, Jackson Reid and Ryan Overberg are returning this year. The Harbormaster's Office will continue with on-call services rather than the online registration that they've done in years past. Boaters can hail the pumpout on channel 9 vhf and the boat will come to any slip and provide services. Bill C. asked where the discharge goes. Chris S. said the town partners with Danversport marina who also participate in the Clean Vessel Act grant program using their shore-based facility to offload the sewage which makes its way into the town's system. This partnership between the Danversport Yacht Club and Town of Danvers is of great benefit to the boaters and the community.

Town Meeting voted all on committee membership at the most recent May meeting.

Chris noted that he recently had an opportunity to speak with Bob Moore. Although Bob expressed interest in remaining on the committee, it still sounds like his availability will still be limited. Chris spoke with the Town Manager's Office and Matt Byrne, and there are a few concerns. 1) We prefer to limit committee membership to 10 as was discussed and voted on at a meeting last year. 2) There are two residents that have expressed interest in committee membership this year. 3) Bob has not attended a River Committee Meeting in over a year. (It is understood that he has not received emails or phone calls because those changed over a year ago without notice to us, but the meeting dates and times have not. 4) Town Meeting was this week. The appointment/re-appointment list was submitted a few weeks prior with a recommendation for Brian Atherton to be appointed. Brian submitted a letter of interest to the town and in addition was recommended by Dan D. and Mike C. The consensus was that we invite Bob M. to continue to attend meetings but offer his committee seat to Brian. Brian was appointed to the committee at the annual Town Meeting.

Last year the committee agreed to revisit chair and vice chair nominations each year until after the Annual Town Meeting.

There was discussion regarding nomination of a chair. Louie G. nominated Matt B. for another term. Ultimately, the committee tabled the conversation to the June meeting as to include members who were not in attendance. The committee entered the nomination and tabled the vote to the next month's meeting and tabled the nomination of Vice Chair to next month's meeting as well.

Chris told the committee that four his staff participated in an oil spill training drill with Mass DEP and noted that other area Harbormaster and Fire Departments also participated in the drill as well. It was a good training drill, a successful drill. Bob Hemeon asked who would be notified of a gasoline spill. Chris S. said an oil spill is different than a fuel spill, but they would immediately notify DEP, the Coast Guard and notify local Fire Dept. Utilizing all three resources help to contain and mitigate spill quickly.

Chris informed the group of the recent USCG (United States Coast Guard) Regional SAR Meeting. This is a regional round table discussion regarding public safety and identifying issues and concerns in the region. Local and state authorities will be stepping up enforcement such as boating under the influence and disorderly conduct. Louie G. asked if there will being any sort of public awareness to make known that enforcement will be ramping up. Chris S. noted overall there has been several incidents on the North Shore that have led to more enforcement being necessary. Bill C. mentioned that Danversport Yacht Club offers a boat safety course through the US Auxiliary Coast Guard to its members. Chris S. noted US Auxiliary Coast Guard also does this at the town marina for any local boaters, free of charge.

Old Business:

Chris updated the committee regarding the parking problem at Popes Landing. The town has been working with the MA Office of Fishing and Boating Access to address the parking issues at

Popes Landing. Many of the businesses in the area have been using the parking lot for employee or visitor parking, limiting the spaces available for boat trailer parking (it's intended purpose). All the Pope's Landing parking lot is considered a "Boating Access Facility" under the Land Management Agreement (LMA) with the State Office of Fishing and Boating Access. As such the town is bound by the LMA related to use of the facility. The Office of Fishing and Boating Access has been asking the town to enforce the parking restrictions set forth in the LMA or the town will risk losing future funding. The town has posted signage in the lot that has helped to mitigate some of the parking issues, but the issue still exists. It was noted that although the lot's intended use is for boat trailer parking, they currently will not prohibit short term visitors to the park area from using the lot.

Chris informed the group that since the last River Committee meeting the town has noted there has been a remarkable improvement to the parking issue since communication directly with neighboring businesses. He also noted that Elliott Health the biggest offender of the parking regulations is moving out of the area at the end of June, this will hopefully eliminate a big part of the problem.

Louie G. asked if he would need assistance from Parking Clerk regarding issuing tickets. Chris said no at this time. With Elliot Health relocating, he is hopeful it will ease the issue even further. Aaron Henry in Planning said there may be some allowances for health care businesses regarding parking in public areas and Chris will work on learning those details

Dan DeLorenzo asked what parking parameters the new tenants will be held to. Gardner Trask said if the next tenant is a health-based business, he would want to confirm what, if any, exceptions regarding parking they receive. The committee was wondering if it would be possible to make the owner and new tenant aware of the parking regulations in the Popes Landing.

Motion: Motion made by Louie George, seconded by Bob Hemeon, to adjourn the meeting of May 18, 2023. All in favor: 6:0

cc: Steve Bartha, Town Manager
David Mountain, Recreation Director