

Town of Exeter, N.H.  
River Advisory Committee  
Virtual Meeting via Zoom  
May 21, 2020  
Draft Minutes

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8       1. Convene the Meeting

9 Chairman Huber convened the Meeting at 3:00 pm. Chairman Huber invoked the  
10 provisions of RSA 91-A:2, IIB, that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a state of  
11 emergency existed and as such would be conducted remotely (via Zoom) and may be  
12 without a quorum. Those present included Richard Huber, Rod Bourdon, Virginia Raub,  
13 Lionel Ingram, Carl Wikstrom, Warren Biggins, Dan Jones and Niko Papakonstantis.  
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15       2. Minutes of the April 16, 2020 RAC Meeting

16 Following a brief discussion, Chairman Huber moved to Approve the Minutes of the  
17 April meeting as discussed and corrected. Those in favor included Dick Huber, Lionel  
18 Ingram, Carl Wikstrom, Dan Jones, Warren Biggins, and Niko Papakonstantis. Those  
19 abstained included Rod Bourdon and Virginia Raub. The Motion passed.  
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21       3. Update River Issues (Paul Vlasich)

22 Mr. Vlasich first addressed two monitoring requirements for the Great Dam project. The  
23 Aquatics Resource Mitigation Fund Grant (ARM) required five years to monitor the river  
24 bottom and the Wetlands Permit required three years. A request was made to waive the  
25 balance of the terms. A report indicating the health and maintenance of the vegetation  
26 was prepared by Vanasse, Hangen, Brustin, Inc. (VHB) and sent to the NHDES  
27 Wetlands Bureau ARM Fund for their consideration. The report, titled "Great Dam  
28 Removal ARM Fund Monitoring 5/7/2020," may be viewed at the RAC webpage:  
29 [exeternh.gov/bcc-rsc](http://exeternh.gov/bcc-rsc).  
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31 Mr. Vlasich addressed the Great Bay Draft Total Nitrogen General Permit. He noted  
32 Jennifer Perry's presentation on the ramifications of the General Permit and reported  
33 that comments dated May 8 were submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection  
34 Agency in collaboration with the Town of Newmarket as they are under a similar  
35 administrative order for wastewater treatment plants. The lengthy document is titled  
36 "Final Exeter & Newmarket Comments Draft Great Bay Total Nitrogen General Permit,"  
37 and may be viewed at the RAC webpage: [exeternh.gov/bcc-rsc](http://exeternh.gov/bcc-rsc).  
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39 Chairman Huber mentioned that the Comments raised the question of fairness of 12  
40 communities owning financial responsibility for monitoring the bay when there exists 40-  
41 50 towns (who empty into this ecosphere) that also impact its overall health. Discussion  
42 surrounded the thoroughness and validity of the arguments contained in the report. It  
43 was noted that the document presented a strong case showing financial difficulty of

44 moving forward with the requirements as outlined by the EPA and anticipated that the  
45 EPA would consider their arguments.

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47 Mr. Vlasich next addressed several items relevant to Pickpocket Dam:

- 48 a. An Emergency Action Plan was prepared and submitted by VHB, distributed to  
49 emergency personnel and posted at the RAC webpage. The document is titled  
50 Pickpocket Dam Emergency Action Plan and can be found at [exeternh.gov/bcc-](http://exeternh.gov/bcc-rsc)  
51 [rsc](http://exeternh.gov/bcc-rsc). Mr. Vlasich noted that this document serves to inform emergency personnel  
52 and that the Breach Analysis serves as a document that better explains the  
53 difficulties with the dam.
- 54 b. The VHB contract resultant from a warrant article voted by the Town in the  
55 amount of \$110,000: the scope of work and contract were amended to reflect a  
56 cost of \$99,000. Due to budget uncertainty, Russell Dean, Town Manager,  
57 desired to delay this and other projects until a later date.
- 58 c. The Town is required to answer DES with a proposal to fix the Pickpocket Dam  
59 situation in a 2 ½ times-a-hundred-year-storm-event by June 2022. Because of  
60 the FEMA Flood Analysis, it is known that the dam is unlikely to pass a 100-year-  
61 storm-event within the appropriate parameters. A study to fix the dam is not  
62 funded. A request to fund a Capital Improvement Project (feasibility study) in the  
63 amount of \$300,000 will be made by Public Works for the year 2021 to better  
64 understand the possible repairs for the year 2022.

65 Discussion involved the future study costs, structural repairs and how to inform the  
66 public and neighboring towns. Mr. Vlasich clarified that the 2 ½-year-storm-event was  
67 not the same as the completed breach analysis (a breach of the dam would cause a  
68 greater effect downstream than would a storm event.) There is no current way to reduce  
69 the risks but would learn more from DES about acceptable actions as they moved  
70 forward.

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#### 72 4. Other Business

73 There being no other business for discussion, Chairman Huber addressed the next  
74 Agenda item.

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#### 76 5. Public Comment

77 Don Clement opened discussion of the timeline and budget for the work at Pickpocket  
78 Dam citing the pandemic as the reason for decreased revenues in the town. Mr. Vlasich  
79 responded that VHB agreed to complete the work under next year's CIP and before the  
80 June 2022 deadline. Mr. Papakonstantis reported that because of decreased revenues,  
81 a number of delayed projects were discussed at the Select Board Meeting. He relayed  
82 in a couple of months a better picture of the budget will be made clear. Further, this  
83 project may move forward and voted upon and approved by the public; however, the  
84 general feeling was that DES would understand the delay.

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86 Discussion next surrounded a summary of the Pickpocket Dam on hold and the  
87 Nitrogen General Permit. In other consideration, a permit for a fish cage or basket to  
88 monitor the success of alewives (recovery) in the river was introduced by Mr. Clement.  
89 It was said that fish counts were better assigned to the Fish & Game Department due, in  
90 part, to the expense.

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92 The date for the next RAC Meeting was set for 3:00 pm on Thursday, September 17,  
93 2020.

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95 6. Adjourn the Meeting

96 Chairman Huber requested to adjourn at 3:51 pm. Lionel Ingram moved to adjourn,  
97 seconded by Terrie Harman. All were in favor.

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100 Respectfully submitted,

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104 *Celeste M. Camire*  
105 Recording Secretary  
106 Town of Exeter, NH

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