

River Advisory Committee Meeting
Thursday, May 20, 2021
3 PM
Remotely via Zoom
Final Minutes

1. Call Meeting to Order

Members present: Richard Huber (Chair), Lionel Ingram, Carl Wikstrom, Terrie Harman, Don Clement, Warren Biggins, PEA Rep., and Paul Vlasich, the Town Engineer.

Members Absent: Rod Bourdon, Dan Jones, Niko Papakonstantis, Select Board Rep, and Ginny Raub, Conservation Commission Rep.

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Huber at 3 PM.

Mr. Huber read a statement:

As Chair of the River Advisory Committee, I find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #12 this public body is authorized to meet electronically.

Public notice of this meeting was posted on the town website and on the bulletin board of the town offices at 10 Front Street. As provided in that public notice, the public may access the meeting online and via phone. The usual rules of conduct and decorum will apply.

Please note that all votes taken during this meeting shall be done by roll call vote. Let's start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance. When each member states their presence, please also state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting and who that person is (son, daughter, spouse, etc...), which is required under the Right-to-Know law.

Mr. Huber started the meeting by taking a roll call attendance.

1. Officers

a. Mr. Huber asked if Mr. Ingram would take the role of Vice Chair, and he agreed.

2. Approval of Minutes

a. Minutes of April 22, 2021

Mr. Huber asked if Mr. Vlasich could review the minutes from a technical standpoint. Mr. Ingram suggested attaching the presentation to the minutes instead. Mr. Vlasich said the slides from the presentation are linked on the River Advisory Committee page of the website.

Mr. Ingram moved to accept the minutes as amended. Ms. Harman seconded. Mr. Wikstrom abstained as he was not present at that meeting. The minutes were approved 4-0-1.

3. Mr. Huber mentioned that the Coastal Adaptation Workgroup is having a Zoom meeting on Wednesday May 26 and 27.

4. Update on River Issues

Mr. Vlasich said he and Jake San Antonio of VHB met with the NH DES Dam Bureau and talked through the possibility of a potential reclassification of Pickpocket Dam. It was rated as a high hazard dam because there is one house and four manufactured homes that are of concern. Regarding the house, the breach elevation of the flood during a 100-year storm event is at least a foot higher than the first floor of the house. For the manufactured homes, the breach elevation is above the ground elevation, which is a concern due to the instability of the ground during a flooding event. There are other structures that don't qualify the dam as high hazard, but they're pretty close to that classification. It may be possible to change the classification of the dam by purchasing the parcels, raising the elevations of the structures, or installing a foundation under the manufactured homes. Even then, the modification would only be down to a "substantial" hazard, and they would still have to do some modifications to the dam. There was a cautionary note from the dam bureau about other structures that do not quite meet the criteria, but due to climate change and higher intensity storm events could qualify in the future.

Mr. Wikstrom asked what they would gain by having it reclassified. Mr. Vlasich said if they are at high hazard, the dam would have to be at the height of 2 ½ times the 100-year storm event. With a substantial hazard, it would only need to be at the height of the 100-year storm event, so there would be less modification required. Ms. Harman asked if there were other classifications, and Mr. Vlasich said there's also low hazard, which the Great Dam was. Substantial vs high hazard really comes into play when they're looking at whether to do something with the structures.

Mr. Huber asked Mr. Vlasich if they need to hold the next RAC meeting in one month. Mr. Vlasich said not for this issue. The Department needs to move forward with more analysis and devise CIP items for next year's consideration. They also need to get back to the Dam Bureau and let them know the town won't have a preferred alternative chosen by June of next year, as required by the letter of deficiency, and to ask for an extension.

5. Other Business

Mr. Wikstrom said in the Water/Sewer Advisory Committee, they've been discussing a siphon replacement under the river. This decision might be made by the time they meet in July, so they should hear from Public Works what the plan is at the July meeting. Mr. Vlasich said there are two 8" siphons that go underneath the river to Swasey Parkway where the main pump station is. On the Mill/Jady Hill side, the siphons are at capacity, and there are overflows. They discussed adding an additional siphon barrel and/or cleaning the existing siphons. However, when a contractor went into the existing siphon, it was corroded. They looked at lining it, but it was probably too risky to do so. With the help of the Water/Sewer Committee, they decided not to rehabilitate the existing siphons, but to remove the existing two and add three new siphons. They are

moving forward with that design. This will cost a million dollars more than what they had accounted for the project. If they do the one barrel and wait for additional money, that will cost \$1.5M more. The economies of scale and the urgency of replacing the siphons have moved this project along. They're looking at whether Senator Pappas's money could help with the project, and that is in progress.

6. Public Comment
 - a. There was no public comment at this meeting.
7. Review Committee Calendar
 - a. The next meeting will be July 15th.

8. Adjournment

Mr. Ingram moved to adjourn. Ms. Harman seconded. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 3:38 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joanna Bartell
Recording Secretary