

River Advisory Committee Meeting
Thursday, March 17, 2022, 3 PM
Nowak Room, Town Offices
Draft Minutes

1. Call Meeting to Order

Members present: Richard Huber (Chair), Lionel Ingram, Dan Jones, Rod Bourdon, Select Board Rep Niko Papakonstantis, and Town Engineer Paul Vlasich.

Members Absent: Carl Wikstrom, Terrie Harman, Conservation Commission Rep. Trevor Mattera, and PEA Rep Warren Biggins.

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

1. Approval of Minutes

a. January 20, 2022

Corrections: Mr. Huber asked that all acronyms be spelled out in the minutes, both in these minutes and going forward.

MOTION: Mr. Bourdon made a motion to accept the minutes of January 20, 2022 as amended. Mr. Ingram seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

2. Update on River Issues

a. Pickpocket Dam

Mr. Vlasich said we have two grants in the works, the Clean Water SRF [State Revolving Fund] grant of \$100,000, and the Coastal Resilience Grant of \$40,000. Since the last River Advisory meeting, we've revised and resubmitted the Coastal Resilience Grant. The scope of the project is greater than what we have money for, and we're working to condense or eliminate some tasks that will make it workable within our budget. For the Clean Water SRF, we need to specify what it would be paying for; the advice is to target anything that affects water quality. Mr. Huber asked about the timeframe for getting an engineering study done. Mr. Vlasich said 13 months to a year and a half. The deadline is a little further out, so it seems doable.

b. Great Bay Total Nitrogen General Permit

Mr. Vlasich said the town is voluntarily following the conditions of the general permit. In our Capital Projects, we had \$100,000 for specific tasks to address nitrogen going into Great Bay. We are likely also going to get a Watershed Assistance grant for \$45,000 for some of that work; we're waiting for comments back on our submission. It would address advanced septic system usage, BMP [Best Management Practices] which can include system fixes, and fertilizer usage.

c. Winter Street BMP [Best Management Practices]

Mr. Vlasich said that the installation of a water quality unit in Kids Park on Winter Street is waiting for Governor and Council approval of grant money. The cost

would be \$168,000, and the grant would cover \$118,900. The rest would be from the town ARPA [American Rescue Plan Act] funds. This work would remove 68 pounds of nitrogen from our system annually. There won't be any disruption to existing structures in the playground.

Don Clement of Thelma Drive asked for more details about the Winter Street BMP installation. Mr. Vlasich said there's a trunk line that runs down Winter Street that we'll tap into. We want to collect the initial runoff from a storm event, which has a lot of nutrients. There would be a weir-type structure put into the main drain line, which would direct the initial flows into a chambered septic system which would allow that water to percolate into the ground.

Mr. Clement asked about the BMP at Lincoln Street to manage nitrogen. Mr. Vlasich said Waterstone Engineering did a study on Lincoln Street, which is part of the subcatchment area for our biggest watershed. In response to their work, we installed three box filters where water goes through a filter that cleans runoff before going back into the system. Following that work, there were other areas in that watershed considered for BMPs, but the area around Kids Park was the best candidate.

d. Annual Total Nitrogen report

Mr. Vlasich said this report has been submitted.

e. Sewer Siphons project

Mr. Vlasich said we're short \$1.2M for the Sewer Siphons project, but can make that up through Congressionally Directed spending and ARPA money. We have the plans at about 90%, but we are still waiting for the final determination from the Army Corps of Engineers. We should be able to go out to bid by the end of May.

Mr. Jones asked if there had been action from the town of Brentwood on Pickpocket Dam. Mr. Vlasich said no, there has been zero contact. He's trying to get the grants done. Mr. Jones said he has a good contact on their Board of Selectmen. Mr. Huber said we should invite Brentwood to review the feasibility study once it's ready.

3. Other Business

a. Mr. Huber said volunteers are needed to staff a table at the Alewife Festival.

4. Public Comment

a. There was no public comment at this time.

5. Review Committee Calendar

a. Mr. Huber asked if the Committee should meet in April or May. Mr. Vlasich said there would likely be little advancement by April. The Board agreed to meet May 19.

6. Adjournment

MOTION: Mr. Ingram moved to adjourn. Mr. Bourdon seconded. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 3:27 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joanna Bartell
Recording Secretary