

PUBLIC WATER ACCESS ADVISORY BOARD

MEETING MINUTES

January 4, 2016

9:00 a.m. – NH Fish and Game Headquarters

Members Present: Thomas Quarles, Esq., Chairman; Glenn Normandeau, NHFG; Rep. Chris Christensen; Gary Clark; Jim Gallagher, DES; Ken Gallagher, OEP; Bill Gegas, DRED; Joseph Goodnough, NHLA; Garret Graaskamp, NHFG; Rebecca Martin, NHDOT; Gene Porter; Dick Smith; Michele Tremblay

Members Absent: B. David Bryan; Timothy Dunleavy, DOS; Sen. Jeannie Forrester; Sen. Jerry Little; R. Andrew Robertson; Rep. James Webb; VACANT, GCD; VACANT, Hunting Interests

Audience Members: Madeleine Mineau, City of Nashua Waterways Manager, and Tom O'Brien, President of the NH Lakes Association (NHLA)

MEETING CONVENED

Chairman Tom Quarles called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS – [Note: Text in bold denotes action items or motions.]

1. Approval of PWAAB minutes – November 2, 2015

A motion was made by Tom Quarles to approve the minutes of the November 2, 2015 meeting with one minor change, seconded by Gene Porter. The Board approved unanimously.

2. Welcome Michele Tremblay (Rivers interests) – Tom Quarles

Michele is the current President of the New Hampshire Rivers Council, and the Chair of the Upper Merrimack River Local Advisory Committee and has been active in rivers conservation/protection for many years. She is an avid boater herself and is very happy to be part of the Board. Welcome Michele!

3. Winter Use of Boat Ramps – Garret Graaskamp

Garret reported that because there is no funding allocated for winter maintenance at boat access facilities, there is no official access to lakes and ponds via Fish and Game sites during the winter months. However, some sites are plowed directly by users who wish to have access for ice fishing and/or snowmobiling.

4. Exotic Aquatic Weeds and Species House Subcommittee Mtg -12/7/15

Many PWAAB members were present at this meeting. Dick Smith commented that John Magee of NHFG did a great job presenting on invasive species. The list of invasive plants and animals is quite extensive. He noted that 80 of over 900 N.H. lakes and ponds have vegetative invasive species present. Once established they are very difficult to eradicate. Prevention by education is definitely helpful in keeping our lakes and ponds clean. The

drafting of modifications to RSA 487 was part of this meeting.

Michele reported that she is a voting member of the study committee, and that early detection and rapid response is the key to keeping our waters clean and healthy. Michele noted that continued interaction between the committee and this Board is important as we move forward in this effort as it is clear that invasive species are spread by boating activities.

Garret noted that regional education and protection is important in ensuring a consistent message is given to avoid the spread of contamination. Michele noted that there is currently a regional effort through the Northeast Aquatic Nuisance Species Panel. Scott Decker of F&G's Fisheries Division is the Department's representative. The Panel is working on consistent messaging for the entire region.

Gene noted that he felt there was insufficient differentiation between those invasive species that we can live with and those that definitely need to be eradicated.

5. State Agencies' Legislative Tracking

Ken Gallager, OEP and Jim Gallager, DES noted that they are both following a few LSR's, at least until the language of the bills becomes available to determine what they actually entail. **Garret, NHFG and Rebecca, DOT both noted that they had not yet had a chance to look at the listing but would do so soon and will email Chairman Quarles regarding what they suggest needs to be followed.**

Regarding HB-1589-FN, prohibiting the transportation of exotic aquatic weeds; there was much discussion. **Representative Christensen will notify the Board when a hearing date is set.** Tom O'Brien, Chair of the NHLA provided a handout to the Board regarding the need to raise the level of responsibility of transient boaters to help stop the spread of aquatic invasive species.

6. Update on Nashua Area Access Gene Porter

Gene Porter presented regarding the lack of access in the Nashua area. The Merrimack River in Nashua is very lacking in access opportunities. The Beazer East cleanup of a creosote plant near the river is a very expensive project that will begin in the summer of 2016. Gene stated that he would like to see money from this remediation's mitigation fund go to Nashua to upgrade the boat ramp and build a continuation of the Heritage Trail through Greeley Park.

He would further like to see Thoreau's Landing put in a ramp on their easement property. Also, there is a Renaissance Project for revitalization at Bridge Street that he would like to see move forward.

The new City of Nashua Waterways Manager, Madeleine Mineau reported that she is available as a resource for all things water-related in Nashua. She noted that while the city wants to expand public boating access opportunities, funding is an issue.

7. NHFG Project Matrix Update – Garret Graaskamp

Garret reviewed highlighted projects from the Matrix provided to attendees.

- Connecticut River, Cornish: At the stakeholder meeting on November 20, 2015 it was determined that due to shallow water at the Cornish ramp, DOT will likely use a different access point to improve.
- Elbow Pond, Andover: Inquiry by current owners regarding NHFG interest in acquiring property for water access. NHFG Land's Team preliminarily supports funding for purchase with ASLPT taking the lead on finding more funding sources.
- Success Pond, Success: Evaluating possibility of purchasing property to maintain access. NHFG negotiating with land owners.
- Merrimack River, Allenstown: No movement by town to improve site.
- Lake Sunapee, Newbury: Updating NEPA for USFWS consideration.
- Umbagog Lake, Cambridge: Dock construction is planned for summer 2015, with installation in 2016.
- Connecticut River, Colebrook: Garret has been in contact with VT River Conservancy regarding the need for funding support from paddlers to refurbish this site. Site visit took place in October 2015. Conversations and outreach to paddler community just beginning.
- Lake Winnepesaukee, Downing's Landing, Alton Bay: Hazardous materials survey and abatement plan complete; scheduling abatement. Inquiring with DES to modify dock permit to include installing a retaining wall along shore abutting dock.
- Ashuelot River, Winchester: NHDOT is nearing completion on bridge work. Once complete, cartop access site will be turned over to NHFG for maintenance and supervision per MOU. Storm runoff damaged access trail, delaying transfer to NHFG while DOT makes repairs.
- Connecticut River, Ashley Ferry, Claremont: Wetland approval received under existing authorization to dredge and remove seasonal flooding silt deposits. Work to be completed in May, 2016 weather and flooding permitting.
- Connecticut River, Bedell Bridge, Orford: Recent site visit indicated that silt deposits were not significant this year and ramp is useable.
- Hot Hole Pond, Concord: Ramp refurbishment completed. Fishing pier repaired to ADA standards but full rehab is delayed pending funding.
- Meetinghouse Pond, Marlborough: Cartop low abrasion ramp, parking and drainage improvements completed in October 2015.
- Ossipee Lake via Pine River, Ossipee: Construction to begin Spring 2016 depending on funding priorities and allocations. Long-eared bat evaluation submitted to USFWS in advance of receiving federal funding. Review pending.
- Otter Lake, Greenfield: Refurbishment complete.
- Harilla's Landing, Lake Winnepesaukee, Moultonborough: Fish and Game development of this site will be after Downing's Landing and Wild Goose have been completed.

Chairman Quarles requested the NHFG provide an easier way for non-motorized boaters to make donations to the Department. Garret noted that educating the public and non-motorized boaters in particular, regarding the benefits they receive is key before asking for donations.

8. DES Beach Inventory and OEP Database – Tom Quarles

Chairman Quarles reported that he has a DES spreadsheet of beach sites where they conduct summer water quality sampling. He also has pictures of signage taken by DES monitoring staff. Ken Gallagher of OEP also has a beaches spreadsheet derived from OEPs Allsites database, and the two spreadsheets need to be reconciled in order to move forward with determining the adequacy of public swimming access. This will be the Board's next big project once the Rivers inventory is completed. Anyone willing to help with the review of this data should contact the chairman. Jim Gallagher volunteered to help. Joe Goodnough questioned if any incentive has ever been given, or can be given to municipalities in order to make a resident-only beach accessible to all.

9. Public Water Access Plan Review/Revision – Andy Robertson, et al.

Further rivers inventory mapping and prioritization review was done as follows:

The Bellamy River has been removed from the list of rivers to inventory and the Ashuelot has been added to the list.

Exeter river: Access deemed adequate.

Squamscott river: Access deemed adequate.

Isinglass river: This is a small river, with informal access along roadways, so access is deemed adequate.

Lamprey river: Access deemed adequate.

Oyster river: Access deemed adequate.

Piscataqua river: **Ken Gallagher will add Maine access points in Eliot and Kittery to the access map. He will also add the resident-only access site in Newington on Patterson Lane.** Access deemed adequate.

Salmon Falls river: **Ken Gallagher to add Maine sites along Maine Route 101 also.** This is a heavily dammed river. Access deemed adequate.

Next meeting we will discuss the following rivers: Ammonoosuc, Swift, Souhegan, Piscataquog, Contoocook, and Ashuelot. Please review the access maps for these rivers and be prepared to discuss whether access shown is complete and adequate.

Old Business

None at this time.

New Business

None at this time.

Public Comment

None at this time.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 12:04 p.m. Motion to adjourn was made by Tom Quarles, seconded by Jim Gallagher. The Board unanimously approved.

Next Meeting

Next meeting will be held on **Monday, March 7, 2016** at NHFG Headquarters, 11 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH 03301 at **9:00 a.m.**