

Meeting Minutes
Weir River Estuary Park Committee
Tuesday May 10, 2022, 4:30pm
Remote - Call in Meeting

This is a Tri-Town Committee, appointed by the Boards of Selectmen for Cohasset, Hingham and Hull, not a non-profit Watershed Association. Formed in 2002 approved in 2005, the goals of the WREP Committee are; to **Preserve** the rare and idyllic setting, **Expand** public access and low impact recreational opportunities, **Protect** the historical and geological integrity, **Protect** and restore natural resources and biological diversity, **Conserve** a contiguous corridor of open space and healthy habitats, **Develop** educational opportunities and foster stewardship, **Establish** Community support for land and estuarine habitat protection and maintain working relationships with Town Selectmen, Conservation Commissions, Planning Boards and Advisory, Open Space and Harbor Development committees, local Land Trusts, Land preservation organizations, and related regional state and federal agencies.

1. **Call to Order** by chair Sharon Allen (Hin), Dick Avery (Coh) Tom Bell (Coh), Judeth Van Hamm (Hul), Scott Plympton (Hul), Mark Bounagurio (Hin) present. Patti Coyle (Hin) absent. Meeting called to order with quorum at 4:40.
2. **Minutes** from the meeting 03/15/22 were approved for posting.
3. **Opening:** Sharon informs members of Remote Meeting Law details.
 - a. Tom introduces our guest participant, Charlotte Pechtl, the Cohasset Conservation Agent.
 - b. Charlotte has her master's in marine science. She was formerly performing Everglades wetlands protection. She and Tom have recently been working together on vernal pool identification.
 - i. We had a short discussion on the Foundry Pond and vernal pools and identification of egg masses of salamanders.
 - ii. The proposed housing development on Rattlesnake Run has wetlands all over the property; 3 vernal pools and a DEP approved wetland crossings. The project will have access issues.
 - iii. If a vernal pool is certified, it is an acknowledged wetland with additional State level protection with 100' no disturb buffer.
 - c. Charlotte is looking for suggestions on education opportunities with local groups. Mark asks if she is working with other Eco-groups (Wild Cohasset)? Yes, she is very receptive to volunteers, events, education outreach, etc.
 - d. We shared contact information. She and Tom will share a map of vernal pools (Mass Mapper).
4. **Updates by Town:**

Cohasset: Tom Bell: reports the following:

 - i. Tom is working to reduce the size of the Rattlesnake Run project.
 - ii. Reconstruction of the Atlantic Ave section of Hull with storm drains and sewers will have a positive effect on Straits Pond.
 - iii. Water appears to very clear in the pond.

Hingham: Mark Bounagurio:

- a. Mark has distributed a list of member contact's email and phone numbers.
- b. Mark recently visited Sidney's Pond and found significant trash on the site.

Hull:

- a. Scott provided a recap of the proposed Walking Path to the Island in Straits Pond via Eastman Road project. The project proposes approximately \$30K of Community Preservation funds to pay for permitting and surveying. Hull Town Meeting (May 1st) the voters approved funding.
 - a. The project passed with no opposition. We noted that no dogs will be allowed within this sensitive area.
- b. Judeth discusses the need for open space along George Washington Blvd. It is a danger to pedestrians. The highway needs bike lanes and walking lanes.
 - a. Judeth asks for a future discussion on Solar Personal Rapid Transportation
 - b. She notes that she is running for a membership on the Hull Light Board and is promoting clean energy

5. Tri Town-Annual Report:

- a. Sharon asks for a copy of each Town's report. Did our annual report make it in?

6. Estuary Clean Up Day

- a. Saturday, April 23 we conducted a cleanup of the estuary with a gathering and picnic hosted by the SPWA.
- b. We had a very good turnout and good time. Lots of trash collected, from a wrecked canoe to the kitchen sink. We should add Sidney's Pond to the cleanup route next time.
- c. Next year, we should coordinate with Mass. DPW as cleaned up along Rockland St. The DPW division is out of Hanover and have offered trash bags and cleanup help.

7. New Information

- a. Think about roles and responsibilities within our committee.

8. Next Meeting:

- a. A request to send the Zoom link as an email as opposed to imbedded in the agenda
- b. Motion to hold our next meeting on Tuesday, June 21, 2022 at 4:30. This will be a Zoom call. Approved.
- c. **Meeting Adjourns:** 6:07 PM