

Meeting Minutes
Weir River Estuary Park Committee
Tuesday June 16, 2023, 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 Buonagurio (Hin). Meeting called to order with quorum at 4:47.
2. **Minutes** from the meeting 04/11/23 were reviewed and approved for posting. We noted that 'Adopt a Highway' is not actionable and not in our interest.
3. **Opening:** Sharon informs members of revised Remote Meeting Law details.

4. Updates by Town

Cohasset:

- Dick notes that activities continue on Atlantic Ave. Storm sewers in sidewalks are in progress.
- Tom reports the new bird houses on Straits Pond are in. They are not yet occupied and may require some adjustments.
- A recent sediment core study for midge larva counting shows low numbers. We are predicting fewer midges this season.
- Hull and Cohasset are in collaboration with CZM for a grant to conduct nutrient studies at the mouth of the Weir River. We are hoping this action will be done by Woods Hole, as Jason Burtner is on the review board. This activity was started by the Cohasset Conservation agent, Charlotte Pecthl. The efforts will include water samples, bacterial counts, nutrients, salinity, PH, etc.
 - a) Automated periodic measurements and data collection will be performed by citizen scientists (Center for Students for Coastal Research).
- There was a discussion on forever chemicals in lawn fertilizers. Mark will send information to committee members.

Hingham:

- Mark asks when is Estuary Week? Mid-September. Are we doing anything to promote the estuary? Hull has an annual Woods Walk with the 5th graders.

- Clean up Day Summary: We consider our actions to be very successful. Thanks to everyone for their hard work. We discussed that our actions from our clean up did not impact a homeless man's property, this was done by other parties. Efforts to reach out and offer him our assistance have been rejected.

Hull:

- Judeth discussed how Geo. Washington Blvd. is a dangerous highway. A road diet was approved by Hingham. Judeth proposes that Personal Solar Transportation is the solution. The group discussed that this activity is beyond the scope of our committee.
- Scott discussed the recent activity by the Hull Redevelopment Authority and their proposal to build hotels, a convention center, and condos on the open space. The HRA property borders the Weir River estuary. A new group, SOS (Save Open Space) has reached out to us. They would like our assistance in the form of a letter of support. Open Space is part of our mission, and this committee offers our support.
 - Action: Scott will reach out to SOS for greater understanding.
- There was a discussion on clamming. Members were curious as to the safety or legality of clamming in the estuary. Clamming is legal for commercial clambers. All clams are taken to a filtration center for cleaning before consumption.

5. Role Changes:

- The WREP Committee roles will be changing. The following changes were seconded and approved:
 - a) Committee Chair will transition from Sharon Allen to Scott Plympton.
 - b) The secretary role will pass from Scott to Mark Buonagurio.
- Zoom meetings will transition from Hingham to Hull. Scott will reach out to Hull IT and Town Clerk for assistance. Scott will work with Sharon to make this happen.
- During this last meeting, we were zoom bombed by pranksters.

6. Next Meeting:

- Next meeting is on Tuesday, October 24, 2023, at 4:30. This will be a Zoom call.

7. Meeting Schedule Proposed:

- 11/14/23
- 1/9/24
- 2/13/224
- 6/11/24
- **Meeting Adjourns:** 6:14 PM
- We will ask that all public commentary be kept until the end of the business meeting.