

PUBLIC WATER ACCESS ADVISORY BOARD

MEETING MINUTES

May 2, 2016

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

Members Present: Thomas Quarles, Esq., Chairman (general public); Glenn Normandeau, NHFG; B. David Bryan (coastal interests); Gary Clark (general public); Timothy Dunleavy, DOS; Jim Gallagher, DES; Ken Gallagher, OEP; Bill Gegas, DRED; Joseph Goodnough, NHLA; Garret Graaskamp, NHFG; Rebecca Martin, NHDOT; Gene Porter (power boat interests); Dick Smith (fishing interests); Michele Tremblay (river interests); Chuck Saia, on behalf of GCD

Members Absent: Rep. Chris Christensen; Sen. Jeannie Forrester; Sen. Jerry Little; R. Andrew Robertson (non-motorized boating interests); Rep. James Webb; Hunting Interests (position vacant)

Audience Members:

MEETING CONVENED

Chairman Tom Quarles called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

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

1. Approval of PWAAB minutes – March 7, 2016

A motion was made by Michele Tremblay to approve the minutes of the March 7, 2016 meeting with minor edits requested by Ken Gallagher, seconded by Jim Gallagher. The Board approved unanimously.

2. Governor’s Commission on Disability

Chuck Saia attended the meeting on behalf of this all volunteer commission and will work with the Governor’s office to get a representative appointed to the Board, whether it be a staff person or a member of the commission.

3. State Agencies Legislative Tracking

Dick Smith noted that the “Clean, Drain, Dry” bill, HB1589, had been amended to just “clean and drain,” had been passed in the House and Senate, and was awaiting signature by the Governor. This bill now includes an expanded definition of invasive plants and animals as well as expanded enforcement language with a three tier violation system.

Chairman Quarles requested that Michele Tremblay give an update on this topic, on a regional level, at a future PWAAB meeting.

NHDES had been following two bills related to in-stream flow, both of which were likely to be voted as Inexpedient to Legislate (ITL).

NH Department of Safety, Marine Patrol was following HB 1517, relative to reducing the side setback for seasonal docks, which has been sent for interim study.

NHFG had been tracking several bills that were looking to eliminate the ability of state agencies and the federal government to acquire property without approval of the legislature. This is apparently due to worries about the impact to the tax base in certain towns. Disposition of these bills is unknown at this time. **NHFG's Legal Coordinator will continue to watch these bills for report at the next meeting.**

The Governor's Commission on Disability was following SB 471, relative to changing placards for accessible parking and van accessible spots. This would be more restrictive than the current federal requirement.

Michele Tremblay voiced concern regarding the lack of attendance by House and Senate Board members. Chairman Quarles noted that anyone on this Board should feel free to solicit attendance by current members of the House and Senate, or to recruit new members provided they are members of the appropriate legislative committees.

4. Clean, Drain, Dry Programs – Tom Quarles

Chairman Quarles provided photos taken while on vacation in Utah relating to the issue of invasive aquatic hitchhikers. Their approach is to mandate certification of decontamination before launching your watercraft. Because Utah has a limited number of lakes, it is far easier for them to manage the issue as compared to New Hampshire with hundreds of lakes, ponds, and rivers easily accessible.

5. Update on Nashua Area Access: Gene Porter

Gene Porter presented updates on several access issues.

- Wasserman Park, Lake Naticook, Merrimack: The town is almost ready to upgrade the boat ramp and access road. This is a resident's only site. On the same lake is Veteran's Park. **Gene will follow up with the town regarding whether the Veteran's Park site is open to all or is also limited to residents only.**
- Beazer East, Merrimack River, Nashua: This mitigation site will be "remediation only" according to the city. The zoning board decided not to pursue the Lower Merrimack LAC's recommendation of making a shore-side trail easement a contingency for approval.
- Greeley Park Ramp, Merrimack River, Nashua: Improvements are needed. The city is working to confirm a previous determination that the access road railroad grade crossing remains public.
- Millyard ramp, Nashua River, Nashua: The city is working on the sign off process to protect the private landowner from liability in regards to boaters using the ramp.

- The Fire Department would love to have a more southern access ramp for their purposes as well as public access. The City's Water Manager is currently working on possibilities.

6. Crotched Mountain's Adaptive Program: Tom Quarles

Chairman Quarles spoke briefly about Crotched Mountain Rehabilitation Center's adaptive program to provide swimming and boating access to Sunset Lake for the developmentally disabled.

7. NHFG Project Matrix Update – Garret Graaskamp

Garret briefly reviewed highlighted projects from the NHFG boating access matrix provided to attendees.

- Umbagog Lake, Cambridge: FHWA asked for cost effectiveness analysis, which was provided via NHDOT. Still waiting for response from FHWA.
- Lake Winnepesaukee, Downing's Landing, Alton Bay: Buildings on site have been abated for asbestos and demolished. NHFG is pursuing permits to complete interim repairs to the courtesy dock and ramp to address damage related to power loading, boat impacts, and ice forces.
- Connecticut River, Ashley Ferry, Claremont: Dredging permit approved. Dredging will be scheduled once the town repairs the culvert at site entrance.
- Ossipee Lake via Pine River, Ossipee: Construction is proceeding.
- Newfound Lake, Bristol: Contract approved to repair/replace dock piles damaged last winter. Seasonal pilings will be installed in May/June as scheduling allows.

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

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

Ken Gallager presented many updates and edits he had done on our rivers maps:

Ammonoosuc river: Language was added to show informal access via roadside, inactive rail lines, pedestrian bridges, and recreational trails. Sites were added to several maps after receiving input from the LACs. Access deemed adequate.

Androscoggin river: Language was added to show informal access via roadside, inactive rail lines, pedestrian bridges, and recreational trails. Access deemed adequate.

Ashuelot river: Four sites were added after the last meeting. Access deemed adequate.

Contoocook river: **The LAC would like the site along Route 127, below Hopkinton dam, to be added, even though ownership is currently private. They believe this**

should be considered a priority for public access for Map 2. The LAC also suggested the bridge to West Deering should be developed as a take-out point and added to Map 4. Warnings on the applicable maps regarding "white water" will be added.

Isinglass river: There were several changes requested by the LAC, however, much of this river is not navigable by boat. **Changes will be reviewed at the next regular meeting.**

Oyster river: The LAC had nothing to add to this set of maps and noted that much of this river is not navigable by boat.

Souhegan river: The LAC had nothing to add, other than information which should be included in the database regarding varied uses of listed sites. **There are several sites which should be noted as "white water access" for the sake of public safety.** Access deemed adequate.

Swift river: All sites are part of the White Mountain National Forest. **The Board determined that it would be prudent to include a warning about high water and the possibility of drowning for the entire river.** Access deemed adequate.

Chairman Quarles will work on a comprehensive list of recommendations for river access.

Ken Gallagher reported about how the use of a free smartphone app called "Street View" from Google maps can be handy in getting a 360 degree view of access sites by taking a series of photos and uploading them. If you're planning a visit to one of our sites, check out the app and let us know how it goes.

Rebecca Martin will provide Ken and Tom with a complete list of NHDOT owned access sites so we can ensure all are accounted for on our maps.

9. DES Beach Inventory and OEP Database – Tom Quarles

Discussion was postponed once again due to time constraints.

Old Business

None at this time.

New Business

None at this time.

Public Comment

None at this time.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 11:31 a.m. Motion to adjourn was made by Gene Porter, seconded by Gary Clark. The Board unanimously approved.

Next Meeting

Next meeting is tentatively set for **Monday, September 12, 2016** and will be the **Annual Field Trip**. Plan to meet at NHFG Headquarters, 11 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH 03301 at **8:15 a.m.** for an 8:30 a.m. departure.