

Danvers River Committee
Thursday, February 17, 2022
Meeting Minutes

The Danvers River Committee held a public meeting on Thursday, February 17, 2022, at the Endicott Park Visitors Center (Conference Room) at 6:00pm.

Member(s) present: Matthew Byrne
Bill Fouhey
Louie George
Robert Hemeon
Tom Perry

Member(s) absent: Gardner Trask, Selectman Liaison
Dan DeLorenzo, Chair
Bob Moore
Michael McCarthy

Staff Present: Christopher Sanborn, Director of Natural Resources
Carolann Powers, Secretary

Media Present: None

Other:

Matt Byrne called meeting called to order at 6:10 pm.

Secretary's Report:

The committee was asked to accept the minutes of the meeting January 20, 2022.

Motion: Made by Bill Fouhey, seconded by Bob Hemeon to accept the minutes of the January 20, 2022; All in favor: 5:0.

New Business:

Chris S. shared with the committee the 2021 Calls for Service statistics. He noted, based on the what is shown, they are service-oriented and enforcement secondary to that. His office responded to 556 calls for service last season with the majority of them being pump out requests. He stated overall pump out service was down last boating season due to issues staffing the job positions.

Matt B. asked difference between types of service call, for instance the difference between dewatering a vessel and a vessel that is taking on water. Chris Sanborn explained the differences.

Louie G. asked what the reference to boat maintenance meant. Was it referring to Harbormaster boat maintenance and repair and does it include marina maintenance as well as Popes Landing upkeep? Chris said his office documents whenever a patrol boat is taken out of service for repairs. This is documented as an incident. The same goes for marina maintenance.

Louie G. asked if there are any dramatic changes in the nature of the service for calls from year to year. Chris S. said the motorboat stops differed. He felt this was due to the difference in the nature of the stop; stopping a boat without navigation lights or for speeding may warrant an incident report whereas someone who's making a slight wake may just get a wave to slow down a little and this wouldn't be documented.

Louie asked if enforcement stops can sometimes count as two categories? Chris said yes, and if so, those stops are counted in the department's overall number.

It was noted that weather has an impact on these reports as the need for service calls on inclement weather days is not generally needed as boating activity is greatly reduced on those days.

Chris S. said he would like to regularly share a more detailed monthly Call for Service logs and distribute at each River Committee meeting. He thought it would be a good idea to give the committee detailed information monthly as opposed to an overall annual report.

Chris said in 2019 there was 6 motorboat stops, in 2020 was 28 stops and in 2021 there was 14 stops.

The committee thanked Chris for sharing the report and agreed they like the idea of receiving this report monthly during the boating season.

Chris spoke in regard to the 2023 Budget and noted two warrant articles were submitted for consideration at annual Town Meeting in May. One for Maintenance Dredging for the annual request which this year was increased from a requested \$20k to a requested \$25k. This was increased as we are getting very close to starting next dredging process. The second arrant article or capital expense requested is for \$45k for new docks for the Crane River Marina to replace B Dock. It was noted that the last dock to be replaced in 2017 was at a cost of \$28k but is now estimated at \$45K.

Tom Perry asked how many years of usage you get out of a dock, Chris S. said approximately 20 years. He said the poly-resin floats may last forever but wood framing and decking deteriorates over time.

Matt B. asked what the price would be for composite material docks. Chris S. said he has not priced the out but understands they would cost significantly more. Chris mentioned the town marina generates \$90K annually in revenue for the town which offsets the cost of dock replacements.

Louie G. asked if we need to review what we are charging for slip fees. Chris said the town phased-in an increase last over the last two years and he feels the rates are at a comfortable level this year.

Matt B. asked if anyone has performed an overall analysis of Harbormaster Department finances to see if revenue can cover all Harbormaster related expenses. Chris S. explained that Harbormaster funds are deposited into multiple town funds, so it is hard to say specifically. The General Fund accounts for approximately just over \$100K, the Operating Budget is \$12k not including salaries. It is complicated process, but Chris said he'd be happy to break it down at a future meeting.

Matt asked if instead of the department giving to the General Fund can the funds be kept in in the Harbormaster fund. Chris S. said he would have concerns if there was not enough money in the Enterprise Fund to cover necessary projects, he was not sure it would be beneficial. With Enterprise Accounts vs. General Funds there a good and bad with both.

Bill F. asked the estimated date of next dredging the next dredging project, is it still on track for 2028? Chris said he is hopeful, but it is dependent upon several factors leading up to the process. Bill asked when that process should be started. Chris said if the town is still aiming for dredging in 2028 then the planning process should start now.

Bill asked if there is a possibility of adding more boat slips at the Crane River Marina. Chris said it has been discussed but they are very limited to the dredge footprint, so it is unlikely. Tom P. wondered if it would be possible with a regular dredge footprint. Chris said no, they have looked into this, and it unfortunately was still not an option.

Bill F. asked if the John George Park Bank Stabilization project was still in hold. Chris said yes, as far as he knows Town Engineers are working with the state regarding issues with the project at this time.

Bob H. asked if the cameras recently installed as part of a Homeland Security Grant have helped with patrolling the river and the surrounding areas. Chris said yes, they have helped, they have found the cameras to be super helpful

Matt B. asked if Marblehead and Salem have hooked up to the Homeland Security camera system yet. Chris was unsure of where the status and participation in the network of cameras stands.

Chris informed the committee that at a recent Selectboard Meeting a concern came up that the River Committee was not transparent in its process for membership. Chris said it

was explained that to the board that members of the River Committee are recommended by the Town Manager, not elected, and are voted on for approval at annual Town Meeting held each year in May. Chris asked the committee for input on a maximum size of membership for the committee that would allow for productive and effective meetings. The committee agreed that 10 or 12 would be a maximum membership number to function effectively.

Bob H. asked if there were term limits on membership on the River Committee. Chris said there were no term limits, all who choose to continue to serve on the committee are reappointed at annual town meeting.

Old Business:

Chris noted that one member of his staff, Josh Barrett had started his Bridge Academy, Police/Harbormaster training.

Motion: Motion made by Louie George, seconded by Bill Fouhey, to adjourn the meeting of February 17, 2022. All in favor: 5:0

cc: Steve Bartha, Town Manager
David Mountain, Recreation Director