



Meeting Minutes
Weir River Estuary Park
Committee
Wednesday January 15, 2020
Cohasset Senior Center (91 Sohier St)

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, the purpose of the WREPComm is to advocate for and support each town's Master Plan and/or Open Space Plan in the Weir River estuary through: 1) Land protection, 2) Conservation and restoration of wildlife habitat, 3) Stewardship education, and 4) Recreation which supports habitat protection.

- 1. Call to Order:** Patti Coyle announced that Hull's Board of Selectmen (BoS) will be inviting Judeth Van Hamm to appear at one of their meetings in February where they will discuss the reinstatement of Hull's membership on this Committee. Members present – Sharon Allen (Hingham), Dick Avery (Cohasset), Tom Bell (Cohasset), Patti Coyle (Hingham). Guests: Hull resident / Hingham Land Conservation Trust (LCT) member Don Kidston, who has expressed interest in joining WREPComm, along with Scott Plympton and Judeth Van Hamm. The meeting began at 4:05pm. The minutes from the previous meeting in Hingham Town Hall were approved for posting. No other votes were taken. Patti Coyle chaired the meeting and agreed to produce the minutes.
- 2. Brief updates on activities since last meeting** (November 6th, 2019 in Hingham Town Hall): Cohasset: Dick Avery reported that the Seawall Reconstruction project at Crescent Beach in Hull has started again [it had been held-up in court since January 2018]. Hingham: Patti Coyle shared that Conservation Agent Loni Fournier arranged MA Fish & Wildlife permitting for a group of fishermen to do some clearing – hip-deep, in December – in the Weir River. Tom Bell noted that the work was done near Triphammer Pond; Don Kidston added that this was spearheaded by HinghamLCT member Daniel Wells. Hull: Judeth Van Ham reported that the application to help purchase an End of Richards Road Conservation Area with a trail was on the agenda at the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) meeting on Monday January 13th. Public discussion was recorded by Hull TV (<http://hulltv.net/shows/?ShowID=2068> ; start at ~ 45:55-min. of 56:57-min. meeting).
- 3. Discussion:** The topic of Hull's reconsideration of its involvement on this tri-town Committee did touch on the original purpose, functions, achievements and relevance as we approach our 20th Anniversary. Most of the meeting revolved around current and future status. There is no WREPComm in Hull at this time. Until Hull's BoS announces their decision sometime in February, applications for membership cannot be considered. Without a member from Hull, we don't have a quorum for voting. In 2017, this group was losing energy, and some were distracted by other commitments. We got back on track starting in July 2019, and now have a much better understanding of the importance of meeting minutes and Annual Reports as communication tools. While much has been accomplished since 2002, some things have changed. Sea-level rise, weather extremes, and plastics-trash are higher-priority issues than in past years. Ms. Coyle stated that she could see no reason that Hull would not re-establish membership. WREPComm is a rare occurrence – the only "regional" municipal committee in our three towns and one of few, if any, on the South Shore and in Massachusetts. The Weir River Estuary has State-protection as an area of critical environmental concern (ACEC). The group seemed to agree that: a) both the estuary and the towns benefit from joint advocacy; b) we didn't want to disband or dissolve WREPComm; c) it would be best that WREPComm be reconfirmed as a Town Committee, with no assumption that all will want to continue to serve.
- 4. Priorities for FY2020/2021 (January-December, 2020):** 2019 Annual Town Reports due mid-late February; Fish Count at Foundry Pond (April 15th-May 30th); Spring Clean-up Day (April 25th); World Fish Migration Day (May 15th-16th, Plymouth 400); Hingham 4th of July parade; National Estuaries Week (September 19th-26th)
- 5. Next meeting:** Tentatively scheduled for 4:00pm Wednesday March 18, 2020 at Hingham or Hull Town Hall.