



Select Board

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Select Board Meeting Minutes

February 19, 2020

6:00 PM: Open Meeting

Quorum present: Select Board Members: Bernie Fallon, Chair; Doane Perry, Eric Shimelonis and Town Administrator Marie Ryan.

Review and act on previous meeting minutes.

Review and sign warrants (payroll and vendor)

Sign letter to Planning Board requesting Public Hearing for
Adopting Codification of Zoning Bylaws.

Agenda Items/Action/Discussion Items: Meeting Opened at 6:00 PM

Cultural Council – appointment of three new members

Bernie started the meeting and stated that the first item on the agenda, the appointment of new members to the Cultural Council. Cultural Council member Marge Powell asked the Board to appoint three new members; Rebecca Sheir, Huck Elling and Mary Roy. Eric abstained; his wife is one of the three. Bernie made the motion to appoint all three, Doane seconded, no discussion and both agreed. Marge thanked the Board.

Housatonic Valley Association Presentation – Michael Jastremski

Bernie introduced Michael Jastremski from the HVA. Michael gave a presentation and discussed what the HVA will be doing for the Town. They will be assessing all the stream, roads, culverts and bridges for wildlife barriers and flood risk. The HVA will create a document with all the information and present it to the Town Officials with recommendations for a project which the HVA could conduct with the Town. The Select Board and the HVA will make a list of priorities on which to concentrate on. This is to be incorporated alongside the Town's Hazardous Mitigation Plan.

Also, Michael introduced, Carrie Ann Pietric who discussed the MVP program that included action grants which can fund replacement projects around town. She will contact Marie and discuss the possibility of the Town becoming a partner and get involved with some grant funding.

Fire Department Update – Peter Skorput

Peter was not present when it was his turn to give his update at 6:10 PM.

Peter came to the meeting at 6:22 PM. He handed out his report update (see attached) and discussed it all for the Board.

Fire Chief Status

Bernie began to discuss the Fire Chief Status. He told the audience that this is a discussion between the Board and Peter and they will get their time to speak at Citizen Speak Time. Bernie explained that he has agonized over this continued issue going on with Peter. Bernie said that Peter has given a lot to the Town however, Bernie has spoken with several other local Fire Chiefs in regards to issues that have happened recently at the fire scenes. Bernie stated there has been some major concern with availability of water at the scenes due to non-working hydrants.

Peter explained all the issues that happened with each scene. He said that the issues were all due to the equipment; (1) gasket fell out on the ground creating no suction or pressure and (2) there was a hole in the hydrant and that now the hydrants have been fixed.

Bernie then said that most towns all have mutual aid automatically at every call as standard practice. He then asked Peter and Peter did not respond with an exact answer, he just told what happened at each fire. Bernie asked again, this time Peter said the other Towns should be responding. Eric then asked Peter what is the 2nd alarm. Peter stated that he was not sure but

he thought is was both engines from Stockbridge. Eric said that he spoke with Berkshire County Sheriff's Department and that they have no alarm cards for West Stockbridge. Peter said he did give them his alarm cards and that they should have them. He was not aware of them not having any alarm cards. Peter stated that no one told him this and that he thought they had his alarm cards for years. Eric asked that if he noted a failure to respond by other communities, he should have questioned that there may be an issue and Peter should have contacted the Sheriff's Department by now. Peter stated that he asked them and that they don't respond to him and that they have a high turnover there.

Bernie asked Peter if there was an issue with his radio not working at the scene on Stockbridge Road recently. Peter said he did have a problem and had to walk away from the scene to get it to work. Peter explained that he has issues sometimes with it but later that night it was fixed and working. Peter also said that there was an issue with a relief valve on one of the packs but that was fixed later in the night.

Bernie asked why we do not have a tanker to help with the water issue. Peter said he had one years ago but that he had to park it outside and it got rusted out so he got rid of it. He said he has no place to put one but that all the towns around us have a tanker and he always calls for them.

Bernie explained that he knows that Peter is hard working and frugal which is nice for the tax payers however, he pointed out that even though money doesn't solve all issues but it could certainly help with equipment and training. He noted the Fire Department budgets of surrounding towns which were all almost triple the budget that Peter submits each year. Bernie suggested that he needs to do a more complete budget with better resources for the Department. Peter said the other towns do have more equipment and more expensive stuff as well as a full-time person that is why their budgets are higher. Peter stated that he adds a little extra each year for maintenance. He also said that the Fire Association does help purchase some stuff for them but Peter hates to spend money.

Doane asked Peter what he would recommend that the Department needs. Peter responded "We are doing good". We have people training with other towns. He invited anyone who wants to see what they do to attend any Monday trainings and get involved.

Bernie suggested that the Department really needs to get more training accomplished and that safety is an issue for everyone. He stated that other towns have a training budget line item which Peter does not. Bernie understood that other towns have a fulltime person but that life is changing in the world and we need to have our members trained up to date. Peter said that each year the Academy comes out with a list of courses and we apply each year and that he has limited budget and space for new equipment. He said he is also trying to get up to date with

OSHA regulations as well currently. Doane asked if the small buildings in the lower area for the Highway have any room for storage for Peter. Peter said no they are all full.

Peter told the Board that he has two young men that are planning on attending the Fire academy in the spring and several people who want to do the EMT training. They are looking into all the options for this but that it is very expensive. Doane stated that this is a serious safety situation and asked Peter if he is looking for a solution and Peter responded they have some glitches but they are working it out.

Eric asked about why the Fire Department did not use the hydrant in front of the stone house for the Stockbridge Road fire. Peter responded that it fills up with silt and they used the water from Card Pond for that fire. Eric stated that there are other hydrants on Main Street and why didn't they use them, it would have been quicker. Eric felt that using a hydrant with endless water supply would make more sense then taking the time to get set up with hooking up to the water at the pond. Eric stated that the water issue is a big problem and that other Chiefs have contacted him about this issue. Peter said that if he laid the hose down to the hydrant down the street, then Richmond won't be able to get through to the scene, they would have been blocked access with their trucks. Then there was a discussion about West Stockbridge getting their own tanker truck which progressed into a discussion about a new Fire Station Building. Peter then went on about a design that Sefan Green did for him years ago for a new station. The audience also discussed this and all agreed that a new station should be in the future. The discussion got off topic for quite a while.

Earl Moffatt asked Peter why at the last two fires there were no hoses laid out. Earl said in the past they tried to get Peter to have a tanker and the Fire Department told the Board that they did not need it because they had two engines that could connect the hoses between the trucks. Peter said they did not need to do that because they had other tankers come. Earl suggested that Peter fix the issues with the hydrants, replace them or get them fixed. Peter asked "Replace them with what? The issue is that the silt gets into them and the water is limited but we do get some water out of it." A discussion continued on the hydrants with questions in regards to, if they do not use them because they don't work right, then why have them at all? Someone asked if the Board could have a study done on the hydrants and Bernie asked Marie to look into this.

Eric stated he believes that the top priority for the Fire Department should be training and medical care. He feels that if the Department has members that are willing to do EMT training that the Association should help pay for that and that the Board is also willing to give money for this important training. Peter stated that they are working on it. Eric believes that there is no planning being done. He said the Town wants to spend money on helping the Department but that Peter is not asking for it to get things accomplished. Peter said he doesn't want to spend all the Association's money at once in case they need it for something down the road.

A resident, stated he was very angry about a letter to the Editor in the Berkshire Record a few weeks ago in which it spoke badly about the West Stockbridge Fire Department. He had written his own letter and asked Bernie to read it out loud for him. Bernie said he would read it to himself later on.

John Whalen stated that he feels the Board clearly has some concerns about the Fire Department and that it appears that training is a major issue for safety. He suggested that the Board put money into a training line item in the budget for Peter.

Bernie said that he felt the meeting was going in the right direction. He said two major concerns were the hydrants and training. The Fire Department spoke up and said that they looking into two options for the training the EMTs. One is option would be to host the training and the members would get it for next to no cost and the other option they are looking into is a course with the best cost. Bernie asked for a time frame on this training. They responded early spring. Bernie said he wants there to be a concrete date for this the next time the Board meets with Peter.

Eric stated that he is working for the Department and the residents and that sometimes it is hard to make the difficult decisions. Sometimes the Board needs to push someone in the direction they need to be and that he does not want to hear somethings not getting done because of money, because the Board is clearly open to assisting in this manner. At this point, Peter got angry and left the room.

Marge Powell said that she thinks the main thing is that there is a frustration with moving forward and getting things accomplished. She thinks that every little thing completed is a move forward. Bernie agreed.

John Whalen said he wasn't sure at the beginning of the meeting what issues the Board was concerned about. He thinks the Board needs to be clear on what they want done by prioritizing the issues. Eric stated that this is not an attack but a conversation in regards to the functioning of the organization.

The Fire Department stated that now that they understand the Board is willing to help pay for the training, they will proceed in a quicker manner on getting things done.

Eric said there needs to be an operational plan to Peter's budget and he needs to have organizational priorities.

Bernie then made a motion to adjourn, Eric Seconded, all in favor.

The Select Board adjourned at 8:18 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Y. Ryan

Marie Y. Ryan

Town Administrator



Planning for Flood Resilient and Fish-Friendly Road-Stream Crossings

Project Fact Sheet 04/2019

Summary: The Housatonic River watershed spans 3 states, 83 towns, and 1,948 square miles. Within the watershed, there are thousands of points where roadways, driveways, and trails cross rivers and streams. In these locations the road is carried by structures collectively referred to as **road-stream crossings** (i.e., culverts and bridges).



Initial results of an ongoing study conducted by the Housatonic Valley Association (HVA) indicate that approximately 56% of the non-bridge road-stream crossings evaluated to date in the Housatonic watershed are considered moderate or worse **barriers to fish and wildlife movement** ($n = 976$). Furthermore, modeling by project partners at the University of Connecticut indicates that approximately 18% of non-bridge structures evaluated fail (i.e., water over the road) in a 25-year recurrence interval flood or less ($n=594$). Given the sheer number of problem structures, a strategic approach to **restoring habitat connectivity** and **reducing flood risk** at road-stream crossings is necessary.

Barrier Evaluation	Number of Culverts	Percentage
Severe barrier	225	23%
Significant barrier	97	10%
Moderate barrier	225	23%
Minor barrier	337	35%
Insignificant barrier	92	9%
No barrier (full passage)	0	0%

Recurrence of Interval Failure	Number of Culverts	Percentage
2-Year	14	2%
5-Year	10	2%
10-Year	23	4%
25-Year	61	10%
50-Year	45	8%
100-Year	50	8%
200-Year	57	10%
Passing	334	56%

In 2015, HVA began a pilot project to develop road-stream management plans in seven towns in Northwest CT (Canaan, Colebrook, Cornwall, Kent, Norfolk, Salisbury, and Sharon; see map). This process will be replicated in five additional watershed towns by January 2019 and five towns in the Berkshire region of Massachusetts by 2020. The primary objectives of this work are to help communities identify **highest priority replacement projects** based on conservation value, flood risk and maintenance need, encourage adoption of culvert design Best Management Practices, and create a new tool for securing financing for replacement projects.

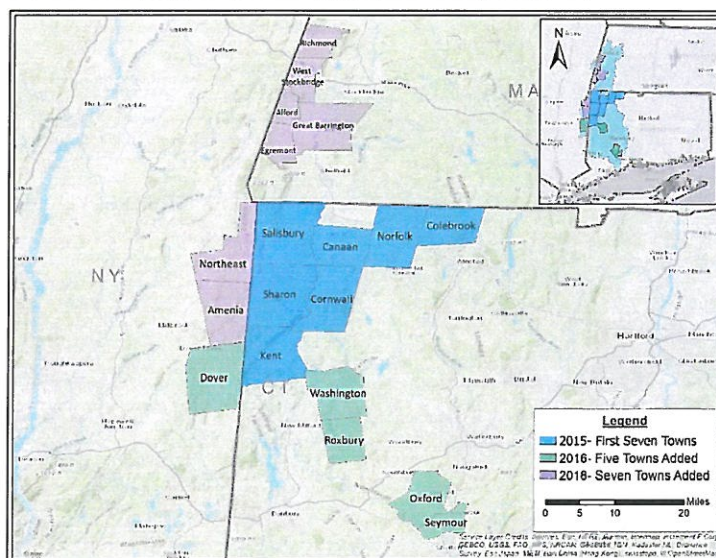


Figure 1 Current project area

After data collection and analysis, HVA works with the towns and a Project Engineer to develop preliminary designs and implementation strategies for high-priority replacements and to integrate assessment results into local highway infrastructure and hazard mitigation planning. Even more important than the construction of a flagship replacement project in each town is the opportunity to show local highway managers and decision makers that the same **best management practices** that restore fish and wildlife passage also reduce flood risk and long-term maintenance costs. The impacts of climate change (i.e., more frequent extreme precipitation events, rising temperatures) will increase the risk of culvert failures, as well as increase stressors to native fish and wildlife populations. Replacing problem culverts with structures that conserve natural stream processes is a single solution that can increase the climate resiliency of both the built and natural environment.

The HVA Road-Stream Crossing Management Planning Process:

- 1) **Assessments of all road-stream crossings within selected towns:** Assessments for fish and wildlife passage (stream habitat continuity) are conducted using the North Atlantic Aquatic Connectivity Collaborative (NAACC) protocol. Data collected in the field is uploaded to a regional online database which produces a “passability score” and barrier evaluation, ranking the site’s ability to pass fish and wildlife and ranging from 0 (complete/ severe barrier) to 1 (no barrier, full passage).
- 2) **Flood Risk Analysis:** All closed-bottom structures (culverts) within each town are assessed for flood resiliency, through a collaboration with UConn Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering (UConn), using a hydraulic capacity model that predicts failure (water overtopping the road) at various flood frequencies (2-, 10-, 25-, 50-, 100-, 200-year recurrence intervals). Flows for this analysis were derived from the Coupled Routing and Excess Storage (CREST) 3.0 hydrologic model developed by UConn.
- 3) **Road-Stream Crossing Inventory documents:** Town-wide inventory documents are developed for partner municipalities, containing maps, photos, all data collected in the field, and barrier status for each crossing, as well as the results of UConn’s flood-risk analysis.
- 4) **Collaborative prioritization:** Inventory documents are used to guide prioritization workshops for each town, with representatives from the Board of Selectmen, Public Works and Emergency Services as well as other key stakeholders. These meetings allow for a better understanding of distinct flood-risk issues at specific sites in each town, such as frequent flooding or sediment/debris accumulation. Replacement projects that will reduce flood risk, restore habitat connectivity in cold-water streams, and address town maintenance needs are ranked the highest.
- 5) **Preliminary designs (where funding is available):** Conceptual designs and implementation strategies for the highest priority replacement project in each town are developed in collaboration with Project Engineer, Princeton Hydro LLC. Replacement projects are designed using the Stream Simulation method, which not only preserves safe roadways and minimizes expenses associated with more frequent repair and replacement, but also serve to reconnect critical wildlife corridors for ecologically and economically important native species like Eastern Brook Trout.

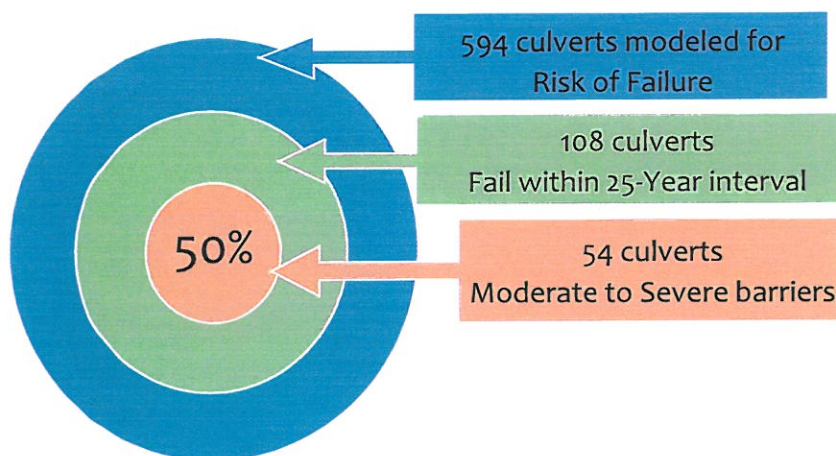
6) **Road-Stream Crossing Management Plans:** All of the above information, along with conclusions and management recommendations, is assembled as a Road-Stream Crossing Management Plan document for each partner town. These documents are suitable for official municipal adoption as an annex to local Natural Hazard Mitigation plans.

Benefits of the Town-Scale Approach:

- Encourages adoption of BMPs like Stream Simulation Design
 - Provides opportunities to show that BMPs lead to more resilient, less expensive structures as well as restore habitat
 - Given the large number of problem structures, a fundamental change in management philosophy is necessary
- Provides the Management Plan as a resource that can help Towns take advantage of every opportunity to replace problem structures:
 - Grant-seeking
 - Proposals for structures prioritized as part of a planning process will be more competitive
 - Capital planning
 - Plan can help make the case to elected officials and the public that priority structures should be included
 - Wake of the flood
 - Plan can help make the case to FEMA and other relief agencies that structures should be upsized and designed to conserve stream process
- Allows for the incorporation of local knowledge:
 - Town Highway, EMS and other staff and officials generally understand where their flooding issues are
 - This can reinforce and/or inform modeling results

Project Status and Results to Date:

As of March 2019, HVA is finalizing the Road-Stream Management Plans for the first twelve towns. Initial project results indicate an overlap in local knowledge and UCONN's flood risk model results. Of all the crossings that were both ranked by town officials (as problem culverts) and modeled for flood risk by UCONN, 49% failed within a 50-year flood interval or less ($n = 70$). Furthermore, results on the intersection of culvert barrier status and flood risk indicate that 50%



of all culverts that fail at the 25-year flood interval or less are also considered moderate or worse barriers to fish and wildlife movement (see figure). Based on these results, HVA is making a concerted effort to show highway managers that there is significant overlap between flood risk and habitat issues, and that the same Best Management Practices can

address both issues. Ultimately, these Road-Stream Management Plans will be tools the Town can use take advantage of every opportunity to reduce flood risk and improve stream habitat connectivity at road-stream crossings, including capital planning and regular maintenance, grant programs, and recovery operations in the wake of the next flood.

Partner Towns:

Phase I: Canaan, Colebrook, Cornwall, Kent, Norfolk, Salisbury, Sharon

Phase II: Dover (NY), Oxford, Roxbury, Seymour, Washington

Phase III (MA, NY): Alford, Amenia (NY), Egremont, Great Barrington, Northeast (NY), Richmond, West Stockbridge

Project Partners:

Towns, UConn Civil and Environmental Engineering Department, Princeton Hydro LLC, CTDEEP-Inland Fisheries, Trout Unlimited, Northwest Hills COG, Naugatuck Valley COG, NYDEC- HEP, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Aton Forest, North Atlantic Aquatic Connectivity Collaborative, Farmington River Watershed Association

Funders:

Housatonic River Natural Resource Damages Fund; National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's New England Forests and Rivers Fund; Patagonia World Trout Initiative; Farmington River Coordinating Committee; Connecticut Institute for Resilience and Climate Adaptation; Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation; Connecticut Community Foundation; New York State Climate Smart Communities Grant Program

For More Information:

Call or e-mail Watershed Conservation Director Mike Jastremski (mj.hva@outlook.com) or Conservation Projects Manager Lindsay Keener-Eck (lkeenereck.hva@gmail.com) at HVA:

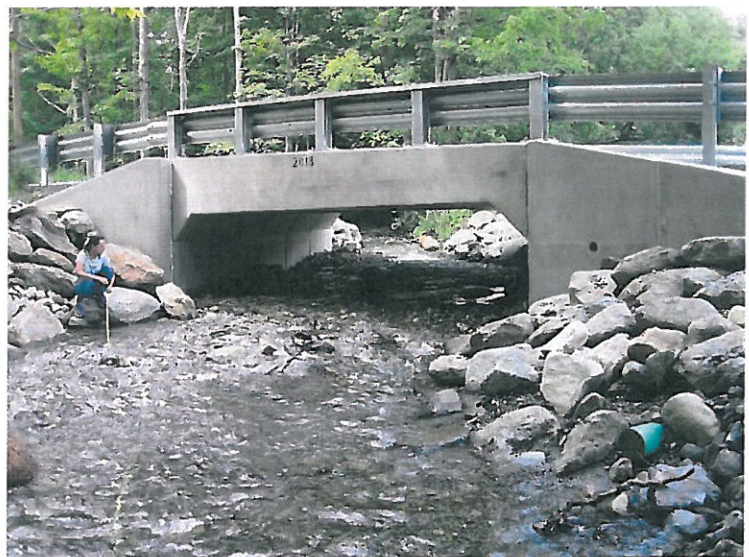


Figure 2 Before (top) and after (bottom) photo of a culvert replacement project on Churchill Brook in Pittsfield, MA. The bottom structures is an-bottomed culvert that was designed with the natural stream channel in mind.



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February 19, 2020

West Stockbridge Select Board
21 State Line Road
West Stockbridge, MA 01266

Re: WS Cultural Council appointments

The West Stockbridge Cultural Council would like to appoint three new members to our committee. We feel they will be an excellent addition to our committee bringing their insights, expertise and talents with them.

We are pleased to put forth the names of Rebecca Sheir, Huck Elling and Mary Roy for appointments.

Thank You,


Marjorie Powell
Chair
West Stockbridge Cultural Council



West Stockbridge Fire Department

24 Albany Road

West Stockbridge, MA 01266

Serving our Neighbors, our Community, and our County

Peter Skorput
Fire Chief
413-232-7853 (home)
413-232-4490 (office)

February 17, 2020

Monthly Report of The West Stockbridge Fire Department Calls

Medical 2

Structure Fires 2

CO Alarms 1

Training

2/3 Station Maintenance

2/10 Scba Drills

2/17 Tanker shuttle with Richmond

2/24 EMS Training (Scheduled)

Equipment

No new equipment this month

Membership

We have gained a new member bring us up to twenty one