



WATER RESOURCES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes
May 15, 2025
7:00 PM
Virtual Meeting

Present: Barry Rosen, Ron Parenti, Matt Mostoller, Mike Geis, and Joe Robb

Chairperson: Joe Robb

Clerk: Ron Parenti

Others in Attendance: Alissa Nicol (Select Board Liaison), YuTao Wang, Corey Godfrey, and John Petersen

1. **Opening**

WRAC chair Joe Robb opened the meeting at 7:05 PM.

2. **Regular Business**

- A. Public Remarks/Comments – None.
- B. Review of WRAC Meeting Minutes from 17 April 2025 – A motion to approve the minutes for 17 April 2025 was made by Ron Parenti and seconded by Mike Geis. The motion to accept the minutes was approved unanimously by roll call vote.
- C. Review of WRAC Meeting Minutes from 24 April 2025 – A motion to approve the minutes for 24 April 2025 was made by Barry Rosen and seconded by Mike Geis. The motion to accept the minutes was approved by Barry Rosen, Ron Parenti, Mike Geis, and Joe Robb; Matt Mostoller was not present at that meeting and abstained.
- D. Final Review of Stormwater Outreach Presentation – Joe Robb reviewed his most recent version of the stormwater outreach presentation and discussed the feedback that he received from the dry run of his briefing to the Finance Committee on 13 May. The comments from the FinCom members varied widely. Some members strongly favored a mechanism to ensure that money collected for stormwater improvements would be used for that purpose and supported the use of a revolving fund or a separate fee. Others strongly opposed a stormwater fee and argued that money for improvements should be appropriated from the general fund. Most agreed that the time had come to increase funding for the Town's stormwater system, and supported the funding schedule recommended by Woodard & Curran. Their advice regarding the presentation was to keep the charts simple so that they would be understood by the general public, and emphasize the impact of neglecting to replace failing stormwater components. Culvert failures are particularly problematic, in that they can cause expensive damage to local roads. The Committee agreed that the damage that could be caused by a culvert failure should be emphasized at the beginning of the presentation.

A discussion followed in which WRAC members attempted to establish the relative cost of a culvert repair following a failure versus a preventative replacement. Alissa Nicol



noted that a recent culvert upgrade performed by Maynard cost approximately \$88k. While a relative cost factor for proactive and reactive repairs proved to be difficult to quantify, Matt Mostoller noted that unscheduled repairs performed by the Water District were always more disruptive, and required more time and manpower than scheduled replacements.

With regard to the 10-year spending recommendation made by the Town's Capital Improvement Plan FY2026-FY2035, John Petersen suggested that rather than attempt to renovate the entire stormwater system it would be wiser to address the most serious problems over a shorter period and delay spending for the lower priority upgrades.

Since most of the FinCom had indicated a strong objection to a separate stormwater fee, it was noted that the use of the general fund to finance stormwater upgrades would require funds to be moved from other Town projects. Therefore, it would be useful to obtain opinions from the public about which projects should be assigned a lower funding priority. It was suggested that the options should be confined to DPW projects, such as the construction of new sidewalks.

Alissa Nicol asked for verification of the financial data included in two of the presentation charts. Earlier versions of the presentation had shown a large expenditure from the stormwater revolving fund in 2016, but Parenti confirmed that the financial data that the WRAC received for that year did not match the numbers in the 2015 Town Meeting warrant and was a typo. Nicol also questioned the 10-year spending plan shown on another chart, but Joe Robb verified that these numbers appear in the Town's Capital Improvement Plan FY2026-FY2035. Regarding the chart showing debt service payments Nicol made the point that while the debt service payments for stormwater spending are predicted to peak at about 2038, payments for other project loans would decrease during that period.

Robb's presentation includes two charts that summarize the funding choices made by neighboring towns. It was noted that Concord has recently proposed a somewhat complicated impervious ground coverage rate structure.

The discussion then focused on the final presentation chart, which lists funding options that include financing from the general fund that would be limited by Proposition 2 ½, a revolving fund that would be limited by Proposition 2 ½, and an enterprise fund that would not be limited by Proposition 2 ½. It was agreed that the terminology included in the chart would need to be clearly defined.

- E. Feedback Posterboard Design Discussion – The poster boards will be one of the primary tools for obtaining feedback from the residents that attend the stormwater outreach meeting, and there have been frequent discussions about the content of these posters at prior meetings. The posters discussed at this meeting included one that is intended to gather demographic information about attendees, one that asks for a stormwater funding preference, and one that asks attendees to specify which aspects of the outreach discussion were found to be most confusing. It was suggested that two additional questions would be useful; one that would ask if the attendee had been convinced that increased spending for stormwater upgrades is important, and another that would ask



attendees to specify Town projects that should be defunded in order to finance stormwater improvements.

F. Feedback Questionnaire Discussion – The Committee agreed that none of the draft questionnaires developed by WRAC members are well aligned with the content of the outreach presentation or the poster boards. Parenti volunteered to generate a new survey with questions that matched those on the posters. The design of the new on-line survey and the method for posting will be discussed at the next meeting.

G. Any Other New Business – None.

3. **Adjournment**

Committee members will hold their next meeting on 22 May 2025 at 7pm to discuss preparations for the Stormwater Outreach Event to be held on 29 May. A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Barry Rosen and seconded by Matt Mostoller. This motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote 8:55 pm. All documents referenced during this meeting can be found on DocuShare at <https://doc.acton-ma.gov/dsweb/View/Collection-19191>.

Meeting Chat File

19:29:45 From Alissa Nicol to Host and panelists:

Matt - can you weigh in on water district costs for replacing mains on a schedule vs an emergency?

19:36:46 From John Petersen to Host and panelists:

Lowell Sun 2019LITTLETON — Route 119 reopened at 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, for the first time in more than three weeks.

On March 25, a major culvert that connects the Spectacle Pond and the other side of the road collapsed, flooding the area.

The state Department of Transportation installed new culverts 48 inches in diameter, in place of the single 5-foot-diameter culvert that collapsed.

The road was initially closed between Gilson Road in Littleton and Route 225 in Groton. The condition of the Gilson Road forced a detour change, however, forcing drivers to take Beaver Brook Road instead to drive through Westford to reach Groton.

DOT spokesperson Ann Dufresne said the crew worked around-the-clock to speed reconstruction work.

19:38:07 From Corey Godfrey to Host and panelists:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ltwdl79RcdM>

19:38:25 From Corey Godfrey to Host and panelists:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9TSNrlnXUrY>

19:38:40 From John Petersen to Host and panelists:



Town of Carlisle

19:38:43 From John Petersen to Host and panelists:

WESTFORD STREET CULVERT COLLAPSE UPDATE as of 6/3/2024:

Residents should expect delays and/or significant detours during the construction phase of this project, but more information will be provided when possible.

Visit <http://carlislema.gov> for more information.

19:53:53 From John Petersen to Host and panelists:

Boston Road Construction Update

Image of Excavator and Drain Pipe

MassDOT has started installing the new storm drainage system within Boston Road and will continue with this work over the next several months. Traffic will be reduced to a single lane of alternating traffic where necessary. Expect delays and please drive with caution and reduce speed in the construction zone to ensure the safety of workers and all road users.

Later this month the Boston Road detour will be in effect on weekdays between the hours of 9 AM and 3 PM. For additional information on the planned detour route and periodic construction updates, please visit our project webpage. Project photos and updates can be seen on our Facebook page.

We appreciate your patience as we work to improve our roadways!