

Bristol Dam Advisory Committee
Town Hall
Wednesday, December 7, 2016

Committee members present: Jim Albright, Pam Allen, Phil Averill, Bill Benner, Claire Enterline, Chuck Farrell, John Freburger, James Hatch, Abigail Ingraham.

Also present: Paul Anderson, Chad Hanna, Joe Hatch, Joe McLean, Bob McKinley, Slade Moore, Steve O'Brien, Ann Pinkham, Kristine Poland, Rick Poland, Maia Zewert

Each member introduced themselves and shared their local affiliations and interest in the Dam project.

Enterline was unanimously elected Chairperson.
Benner was unanimously elected Vice-Chairperson.
Farrell was unanimously elected Secretary.

Enterline gave a brief history/overview of project:

- River has been dammed since late 1800s.
- Fish/alewives stewardship has existed since then.
- Current fishway was designed and built by DMR in the 1970s. All fishways built in this period have reached the end of their lifespan.
- Current fishway is Denil style. Concrete sides with wooden baffles.
- In 2013 modifications were made to existing fish ladder and a volunteer effort was started to count alewives.
- It's estimated that upstream waters can support 600,000 alewives.
- Applied for grant money for fishway repairs but did not get funding.

McLean recommended the following:

- A monthly meeting to cover each topic in depth.
- Compile all data into a written study and have a public informational meeting.
- A draft agreement between the Town and Wright-Pierce was distributed.

Per McLean, the following options are on the table:

- No changes, keep the dam and fishway as is.
- Keep dam as is and improve current fishway.
- Partial removal of dam and implement a nature-like fishway, built with stone and other natural materials.
- Complete removal of dam.

Scope of project/considerations:

- Water level/quality
- Fish/alewives
- Social activities (swimming hole)
- Other species (fauna and flora)
- Water availability to Bristol Fire & Rescue. (discussion with fire chief and department coordination, other water supplies available, insurance rating)
- Property values

Water level discussion.

It was suggested that lake water level is a 'hot button' issue. Mclean said if the dam was partially or completely removed a structure would be placed upstream to make up water levels.

McLean spoke of a lake level assessment. He thought the water level probably would not be affected above the Benner Road Bridge (Partridge Bridge). There currently is no official study of water level effect on lakes from the dam being there.

Lakes have naturally fluctuating water levels but a dam in place can stabilize lake water level. Beaver dams can also play a part in water levels.

Enterline shared that protecting lake levels are under high consideration.

McLean reviewed Scope of Services provided by Wright-Pierce. (Exhibit B.)

- When impoundment was drawn down for maintenance bathymetric and water level readings were taken as well as photo documentation.
- Agency file info review: talking to state and federal agencies and other organizations to get information that has already been collected.
- Impoundment survey: photo document and walk entire impoundment
- GIS mapping: creating a series of maps overlaying information.
- Hydrologic assessment: estimation of the amount of water flowing in river
- Hydraulic assessment: how flow impacts specific structures

Questions/Concerns from committee:

- Suggestion for a representative from the Damariscotta Mills Fish Ladder Restoration project to speak with committee.
- Suggestion to factor in data from NOAA.
- How long will existing dam and fishway last as is? Current Dam repairs added decades to life of dam. Basically, the fishway is the issue.
- Suggestion to look at just the fishway. Maybe the project doesn't need to be so big.
- What will happen to wetlands/swimming hole? Dependent on partial removal or complete removal.

Benner called for adjournment and to meet again with an agenda, Farrell seconded, all agreed. Mclean suggested using Exhibit B found in the agreement between the Town and Wright-Pierce as an agenda. Enterline will email a suggested agenda before the next meeting.

The estimated cost of Phase 1 (data collection) is \$4,000. Enterline made a motion to approve phase 1, Freburger seconded. Discussion ensued whether to do more review before spending any money. The motion was passed with 6 for, 1 against.

Meeting adjourned at 7:23
The next meeting TBD

Respectfully submitted,
Rachel Bizarro
Staff liaison