



**Selectmen's Meeting with the Fish Committee  
March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2018  
MINUTES**

Selectmen Present: *Chad Hanna, Paul Yates*

Also Present: *Chris Hall (Town Administrator); Jay Crooker, Slade Moore, Karl McLetchie (Fish Committee)*

*This meeting was called at short notice at the request (on March 27<sup>th</sup>) of members of the Fish Committee, due to their inability to attend on March 21<sup>st</sup>. Notice was posted online; on the Town Hall door; and by telephone notice to the Lincoln County News.*

Members of the Fish Committee reviewed the minutes of the inquorate meeting on March 21<sup>st</sup>. Moore reported that the Committee had met informally on March 22, and had taken minutes, which will be forwarded to the Town Clerk.

The members had determined that Karl McLetchie will serve as Chair, and Jay Crooker as Vice Chair of the Committee for 2018-19.

It was noted that Members need to be reappointed for the year ending with the 2019 Town Meeting; the three members present wished to be reappointed and will be able to sign their papers with the Town Clerk beginning the following day. It was noted that Rick Poland had requested not to be reappointed. Selectmen regretted but respected his request.

Hanna reviewed the legal requirements on the Town for all Committees: (i) public notice of, and access to, all meetings at which work plans, procedures and purchases are discussed; (ii) minutes to be kept and posted on the Town's web site; (iii) purchases, in accordance with the Fish Committee's annual budget, to be handled by the Town office staff at the direction of the Committee. Staff may use preferred vendors to maximize savings but will normally procure material to the Committee's specification.

Upon reappointment, the Town Administrator will notify the MMA Property & Casualty Pool of the names of members, to qualify them for the Town's volunteer insurance. The Committee are requested to submit names in advance of people who have expressed an interest in volunteering. In the event of people showing up on a work day without prior notice, a waiver of liability should be signed; the Administrator will try to come up with wording for this to protect the Town.

The Committee will, at a future meeting, try to codify the procedures used for control of the water level at the Bristol Mills Dam, for the sake of continuity; they also plan to come up with directions for the work of the Committee. Hanna asked that the latter not be referred to as a 'charter' for the committee (a term that has specific legal implications) but as operating procedures or guidelines.

Fish Committee members requested the implementation of safety measures for the personnel removing the flash boards. They will likely need to be removed in the next month. They also requested to be notified ahead of time of all town meetings or impending decisions that would affect fish passage.

Moore stated that the Committee have already determined that they will operate on a consensus basis when it comes to work plans or other decisions; the committee is simply too small to operate with a more structured voting process.

Hanna offered the Committee a member of the Town staff for record-keeping and liaison, but this was tabled for the time being to see how alternative informal arrangements work.

There was a lengthy discussion of the next steps Selectmen will need to take with regard to a decision on the future of fish passage. Now that the Town Meeting is past, Selectmen will be studying the report of the Dam Committee and its options evaluated.

Next steps include a review of the 2015 fish passage design and work to reinforce the Varney Bridge for truck access to the site. It was stressed that additional engineering studies appear to be needed if the Town is to “do it right the first time:” the single 4-foot-wide Denil ladder design is not sufficient to pass the hoped-for volume of returning fish. Other options – more expensive but with more capacity – were set out in a memo by Moore in 2016 that included the double 4-foot Denil ladders foreseen by Wright-Pierce report as a stage 2 to Option A in their report; a linear pool-and-weir design; and a round pool and weir design such as that used at Damariscotta Mills.

The Town is now able to consider options such as these, which may be more expensive but are more effective, thanks to the generous donation of \$200,000 announced at the Town Meeting. Initially, Selectmen plan to meet for a discussion with local firms with appropriate expertise to get additional inputs before proceeding to any decision. Interfluve and Gartley & Dorsky have been invited for conversations which might or might not lead to contracts for work. Before making any decision, Selectmen felt it would be good to know the order of magnitude of the initial capital, and ongoing maintenance, costs of these higher-capacity options.

Moore requested opportunities for input from himself and others with experience in fish passage design, and Hanna assured him that public input will be sought at the appropriate time, but there will be no more Committees. Hanna foresaw referral of a recommendation from Selectmen to the voters either at a Special Town Meeting, or at the latest at the March 2019 Annual Town Meeting. He noted that discussion has been under way since 2011; to claim that there has not been time or opportunity to discuss this is disingenuous. The intense interest in the work of the Dam Committee has given a better sense of the Town’s wishes, and has brought forth offers to contribute to the cost of a fish passage solution. If there is a consensus on anything, it is on getting fish passage right (and right the first time); Selectmen will need to take decisions this year.

Following the departure of the Fish Committee members, the Selectmen voted 2 – 0 to appoint Moore, McLetchie and Crooker to the Fish Committee for 2018-19.

The meeting adjourned at 8.45 pm

Respectfully submitted,  
Chris Hall  
Town Administrator