

Mattapoissett River Valley  
Water Supply Protection Advisory Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
February 10, 2015

The Mattapoissett River Valley Water Supply Protection Advisory Committee met on Tuesday, February 10, 2015 at 3:30 p.m. at the Fairhaven Board of Public Works, 5 Arsene Street, Fairhaven, MA.

In attendance:

Town of Fairhaven	Jeffrey W. Osuch, Chairman Vinnie Furtado
Town of Marion	David Pierce, Treasurer Rob Zora
Town of Mattapoissett	Dan Chase Barry Denham William Nicholson
Town of Rochester	Laurell J. Farinon, Vice Chair Fred Underhill

Others in attendance were:

Patrick O'Neale, Tata & Howard  
Mark Rasmussen, Buzzards Bay Coalition  
Brendan Annett, Buzzards Bay Coalition  
Allen Decker, Buzzards Bay Coalition

1. Acceptance of minutes of January 13, 2015  
Mr. Pierce motioned to accept the minutes of the January 13, 2015 meeting, Mr. Nicholson seconded, and all in favor with Mr. Underhill and Mr. Zora abstaining.
2. Treasurer's Report  
Copies of the February 1, 2015 treasurer's report were distributed by Treasurer Pierce who explained that it was a quiet month with only two checks being issued to Tata & Howard (\$1,249.50) and Meagan McCarthy (\$162.50). The account balance as of February 1, 2015 is \$147,932.99, and total income for the period of July 1, 2014 through February 1, 2015 was \$84,879.12. Mr. Chase motioned to accept the February 1, 2015 treasurer's report as presented, Mr. Underhill seconded, all in favor.

Members that were present signed the following invoices:

- Tata & Howard                    \$1,977.24
- Elizabeth Leidhold                \$ 479.00

Mr. Pierce motioned payment of the above referenced invoices, Mr. Underhill seconded, all in favor.

3. Withdrawal of water from Mattapoissett River

Mr. Osuch reported that the subcommittee of he, Mr. Furtado, Mr. Nicholson, Ms. Farinon, and Ms. Leidhold met to discuss the problem of private companies withdrawing water from the Mattapoissett River. The group discussed that in Rochester, the Conservation Commission requires that a filing be made to withdraw water, however most times this does not happen. It was agreed that the subcommittee request a vote of the MRVWSPAC to have attorney Tom Crotty investigate options for regulation of water withdrawal. Mr. Denham motioned that the MRVWSPAC retain Attorney Crotty to investigate, Mr. Underhill seconded, all in favor.

4. Meeting with Buzzards Bay Coalition on Request for payment for purchase of 16-acre Mattapoissett riverfront parcel

Mr. Osuch introduced Buzzards Bay Coalition Executive Director Mark Rasmussen, who explained that together we have protected over 1,200 acres of land in the Mattapoissett River Valley totaling over 7,000,000. Only 9% of that total came from MRVWSPAC funding, the remainder was through grants and private donations. He explained that the 16.6-acre project was the last of the Mattapoissett River Valley original projects, and they hope to work with us on the next phase of critical lands to be protected in the Zone II aquifer. They have \$430,000 in hand from state and federal grants for the 16.6-acre acquisition, and they are down to the last \$50,000. Half of the Buzzards Bay Coalition's revolving fund is locked up in this parcel, which provides over 1,600 linear feet of frontage on Acushnet Road.

Mr. Rasmussen reported that he spoke to some of the committee members in advance of the meeting, and he knows that the group is concerned about the Buzzards Bay Coalition commenting negatively on the upcoming water permit renewals. He explained that the Coalition has no intention of getting involved with permit discussion and plans to stay out of it.

Mr. Furtado thanked the Coalition for attending, and stated that he raised concern because he was under the assumption that they would attend meetings when requesting money from the MRVWSPAC. Mr. Annett responded that he attended meetings regularly and provided updates during the active land acquisition period.

Mr. Underhill expressed concern about water withdrawal permits and any action that may or may not be taken. Mr. Pierce acknowledged that the Coalition had been faithful about attendance but we have not heard from them for a long while.

Mr. O’Neale stated that he understood that the Coalition was not officially part of the permit renewal process, but he believes it would be helpful if they came out in support of the withdrawal permits. The water suppliers are going to get a lot of pressure to reduce withdrawals. When consumption is reduced revenues are reduced. When revenues dry up, funding for land protection projects will be reduced. Mr. O’Neale stated that Coalition support for water withdrawal renewals would be most welcome. Land acquisitions could potentially be used for offset mitigation.

Mr. Rasmussen responded that the Coalition can certainly help the MRVWSPAC tell the story about land protection in the Mattapoisett River Valley.

Mr. Zora commented that the Coalition has “the ear” of high officials, and it would be helpful if they could make a positive comment.

Mr. Chase motioned payment of \$50,000 towards the purchase of the 16-acre Acushnet Road property, Mr. Nicholson seconded, all in favor.

5. MRVWSPAC 2014 Annual Report

Ms. Farinon sent draft copies of the 2014 MRVWSPAC annual report to members for review prior to the meeting. There were no additions revisions requested at the meeting. Each respective community will forward to their Boards of Selectmen for inclusion in their annual reports.

6. New Business

Ms. Farinon requested permission to purchase a laptop computer for MRVWSPAC use. Discussion ensued about operating systems and the best type of laptop to purchase. Ms. Farinon will gather cost estimates for review at the next meeting. Mr. Underhill recommended that we seek technical advice from his son, Matt Underhill, Director of Information Technology for the Town of Wareham

Mr. Denham motioned approval to explore laptop purchase, Mr. Zora seconded, all in favor.

Mr. Underhill motioned adjournment of the meeting at 4:37 p.m., Mr. Chase seconded, all in favor. The next meeting of the MRVWSPAC will be held on Tuesday, March 10, 2014.