



Warners Pond Management Committee (WPMC)

Meeting Minutes - March 5, 2026

1<sup>st</sup> Floor Meeting Room, 141 Keyes Road

Attendees: Chris Denaro (Chair); Phil Brewer; Bill Kemeza; Dan Stapleton; Nick Pappas, Elissa Brown (Clerk, pro tem); Carlene Hempel (on Zoom); Rose Kaforski (NRD Staff)

Audience: Paul Boehm (Select Board Liaison), Zoom attendees

Meeting Called to Order at 3:00 p.m.

**Minutes of WPMC February 5, 2026, Meeting** – Chris had prepared and distributed the draft. A motion was made to accept as prepared. All approved this.

**Discussion on Clerk**

Carlene offered to serve as Clerk for the Committee, however requested a substitute for this meeting as she was not able to attend in person. The Committee voted unanimously to accept Carlene's offer. Elissa volunteered to draft minutes for this meeting.

**Discussion of Town Procurement Policy with Ryan Ferrara, Assistant CFO and Amanda Moore, Procurement Manager (Town Finance Department Staff)**

Approximately \$197k has been set aside for restoration of Warner's Pond (WP). This could be used to pay for a consultant, development of an Adaptive Management Plan, pond manager, operational activities, and/or other related activities to be determined later. Since this is likely to cost more than \$50k, there are two options available under municipal procurement requirements under MGL Ch. 30B. The WPMC could pursue an invitation for bids for a narrowly defined scope of work, in which case they would be required to enter into a contract with the lowest responsive bidder. Alternatively, the WPMC could prepare a Request for Proposals (RFP). The RFP process is a two-"envelope" one, i.e., applications would submit a first envelope containing a response to the criteria that the WPMC develops and a second envelope with a price proposal. The WPMC would develop a Scope of Work with quantifiable criteria for responsiveness for the RFP. The Town would assist with the procurement process including posting of the notice of availability of the RFP and other boilerplate. The availability of the RFP would be posted on COMMBUYS and on the Town's website. It would be available to all, however, the WPMC could reach out to qualified consultants to notify them of the availability of the RFP. The WPMC would not be required to select the lowest bidder; unqualified respondents could be excluded. Contracts for work such as

contemplated are typically restricted to three years, with the possibility of a one-year extension. Funds authorized under the Community Preservation Act can be used over a multi-year period, they do not expire at the end of the fiscal year. If the Committee wishes, separate RFPs could be prepared for a pond consultant and a pond monitor. If existing funds are not sufficient, the WPMC could request additional funding in the future.

Use of Town staff, such as GIS, is possible within existing budget and time constraints, and with permission from the Town Manager. If existing funds are not sufficient, additional funds would need to be budgeted.

The minimum time required for posting the RFP is two weeks. Two to three months are typically required from the time of the development of the RFP to a signed contract.

### **Discussion on Operating Protocol**

Chris developed an Operating Protocol like what was developed for the Warner's Pond Task Force. A discussion ensued regarding clarification of what constitutes a conflict of interest and the need for the protocol. Some members saw the protocol as a way to ensure productive and well-mannered discussion; others saw it as superfluous.

Further discussion of the need for a protocol was tabled until the draft could be re-sent to all members.

### **Presentation of the Warner's Pond Task Force Findings**

Bill presented a PowerPoint of lessons learned including the challenge of controlling nutrients and invasive species from upstream sources, the rapid flushing rate within the pond as a whole, the four distinct ecological communities (shallow marsh, scrub/shrub emergent marsh, open water, and upland), the broad wildlife diversity that exists, the aggressive expansion of aquatic and emergent plants, and the future limits on open water habitats. The Task Force recommended that the WPMC be established to prepare and implement an Adaptive Management Plan (AMP) that significantly reduces the invasive vegetation and, if possible, sediment accumulation; enhances the environment for wildlife; enhances the recreational potential for the community; and gathers wide community involvement. A brief discussion of the location and source of sediment in the pond ensued. Methods discovered by the Task Force for reduction of invasive and nuisance species are hand pulling, herbicide application, diver assisted suction harvesting (DASH), drawdown, dredging, benthic barrier, and biological controls. The goal should be significant reduction of aquatic invasive and nuisance species, which would benefit wildlife and increase recreational opportunities, but would require more engagement from the community. A process for moving forward was outlined for the WPMC. Paul Boehm pointed out that none of the previous methods for controlling

invasive and nuisance species have been applied consistently over time. Bill also mentioned that the pond was found to be well suited for creation of a fish passage.

### **Discussion on the Path Forward**

Chris recommended members review of the Adaptive Management DOI Technical Guide (2009) that was posted to our website, with an eye as to whether the WPMC wants to pursue development of an AMP. This would require agreement on baseline information and goals, which is inherent in the AMP process.

Dan shared his PowerPoint on the Adaptive Management of Warner's Pond, a well-known process supported by the Draft MA Guide to Lake Management. It was noted that this document has a different title ("Draft Massachusetts Guide to Algae and Aquatic Plant Management") when opened online, but it is the same document. A brief discussion ensued on whether dredging, wholesale or targeted, would be included in the ADM. Adaptive management is a structured, transparent decision-making process that is iterative and learning-based that to be successful requires functional goals and measured metrics. The six-step process involves defining the management problem, developing a conceptual model, defining management objectives and metrics, developing management alternatives after, designing a monitoring plan, and implementing a plan – on an iterative basis. The path forward will require development of a Pond Management Plan followed by Pond Treatment and Monitoring over the course of the next five years. Committee members agreed that this six-step adaptive management process was a good approach for Warner's Pond.

Chris raised the possibility of more frequent meetings, possibly every two weeks, although this could also be done as subgroup meetings. Rose stated that up to three members of the Committee (less than a quorum) can work collaboratively on a SharePoint document but if a subgroup meets, regardless of the size of the subgroup, it must be posted as a public meeting. Dan also presented a draft GANTT chart for the Committee's consideration to help inform scheduling and assignment of tasks.

A discussion ensued on the tasks for the subgroup and Committee as a whole, and whether a statement of problem or scope of work should be initiated simultaneously. A decision was made for a subgroup to meet (Dan, Elissa, and whoever else may wish to join) to dive into existing reports and data and come up with a Conceptual Model as part of the adaptive management process. The subgroup would then inform the Chair when it was near completion so that the next WPMC meeting could be scheduled if it could/would be prior to the next scheduled meeting of April 2. The subgroup findings would be presented at the next meeting. The whole group could then solidify how they want to define the management problem and move forward.

In the meantime, Dan will share a draft of the GANTT chart with the rest of the Committee for review. Rose also mentioned that some sample procurement documents have been saved to the SharePoint site.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:07 pm.