

**New Hampshire Council on Resources and Development****APPROVED MINUTES – May 11, 2023**

Approved as amended on August 10, 2023.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Taylor Caswell, Chair, Commissioner, NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs.
John Martin, Designee, NH Department of Health and Human Services
Mark Doyle, Designee, Department of Safety
Jack Ruderman, Designee, NH Housing Finance Authority
Allen Wyman, on behalf of Shawn Jasper, Designee, Department of Agriculture
Jared Nylund, Designee, NH Department of Administrative Services (arrived at 3:10 PM)
Stephen Labonte, Designee, NH Department of Transportation
Betsey McNaughten, Designee, NH Fish & Game
Patrick Hackley, Designee, NH Department of Natural and Cultural Resources
Amy Clark, Designee, Department of Education
Rene Pelletier on behalf of Mark Sanborn, Department of Environmental Services

OTHER PARTICIPANTS

Stephanie Verdile, NH Office of Planning and Development (CORD Staff)
Alvina Snegach, NH Office of Planning and Development (CORD Staff)
Allen Brooks, CORD Attorney, NH Department of Justice
Steven Walker, NH Conservation Land Stewardship Program
Charlotte Harding, NH Conservation Land Stewardship Program
Ben Engel, Land and Community Heritage Investment Program
Patrick Bell, NH Department of Environmental Services
Corey Clark, NHDES Dam Bureau

ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting was opened at 3:01 P.M. by Chair Caswell. Council members and guests then introduced themselves.

MINUTES**A. Approval of March 9, 2023 draft minutes**

MOTION: *On a motion by Mr. Martin, seconded by Mr. Labonte, the March 9, 2023, minutes were approved as presented by a unanimous vote in favor.*

SURPLUS LAND REVIEW

A. 2023 SLR 002 (Continued from the January 12, 2023, meeting) Request from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) to transfer ownership of the Weeks Crossing Dam and associated property and easements to

the Town of Warren. The dam is a 113-foot long, 14-foot-high concrete structure with earth abutments. The associated property and easements total 0.42 acres. The dam and property are located on Black Brook off Gould Hill Road in Warren, NH.

Corey Clark from NHDES Dam Bureau was there present the details of the application which proposes to transfer ownership of the Weeks Crossing Dam and associated property and easements to the Town of Warren. The dam is owned by NH Fish & Game and had failed in 2017 in a flood event that was declared a major disaster, thus making the state eligible for federal assistance to reconstruct the dam, which will then be transferred to the Town of Warren. The dam has been reconstructed in 2021 and the transfer process has been ongoing since 2018. There was a warrant article approved by the Warren Town Meeting which only approved dam maintenance but not ownership. A new warrant article was approved by the Town Meeting in 2023 which approved ownership of the dam and future maintenance. The deed has already been recorded and the application to CORD will finalize the process.

Mr. Clark then answered questions from the members about maintenance standards, design criteria, etc. Mr. Clark said there are dam safety rules and special design criteria that have to be followed as this is a significant hazard dam and it will be inspected by the State every four years. He added the Town of Warren has to have an emergency management plan, which it agreed to, as part of the ownership transfer process.

MOTION made by Mr. Doyle, seconded by Mr. Labonte to recommend the proposed transfer of ownership of Weeks Crossing Dam with associated property and easements to the Town of Warren. Motion passed with a unanimous vote in favor.

CONSERVATION LAND STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM (CLSP)

A. Steve Walker, Director Conservation Land Stewardship Program (CLS) update. i. Draft Update to Conservation Land Stewardship Policy

Steve Walker said the Agency is almost through its first biennium, that CORD is in charge of its endowment, and he is trying to keep CORD up to date on what is going on. He said they are in the process of writing a Policies and Procedure Manual (a summary of which is in the packet) and invited all members to come visit at some point.

Jared Nyland joined the meeting at 3:10 PM.

OTHER BUSINESS

A. Board on Geographic Name (BGN)- Ken Gallagher, Principal Planner, Office of Planning and Development (OPD). BGN presentation and discussion regarding two name change requests for Mt. Washington and the Baker River.

Chair Caswell introduced Ken Gallagher from NH Office of Planning and Development who provided a brief overview of the process and the requests.

Mr. Gallagher spoke about his role as the designated state contact for the Federal Board on Geographic Names. He said that when there are any proposals for naming or renaming any geographic features, the Board will reach out to various state and local parties that may have any interest or may want to comment. Mr. Gallagher said that he has been doing this for over 15 years and his process was always to reach out to the members of CORD individually by email seeking their input or comments and this time the idea was to try to solicit comments from CORD members at a meeting.

Mr. Gallagher also explained that the comments for the proposals are only recommendations as there is no decision needed. The Federal Board will then make the decision having collected all the relevant stakeholders' feedback. He added that they have contacted other interested parties for both proposals, like the Towns affected by the Baker River name change. The Mt. Washington proposal does not affect any local governments; therefore, none were contacted. Then Mr. Gallagher went over the renaming proposals which were also contained in the meeting handout.

The first one is to rename Mt. Washington. The proposed name is Agiocochook and it is already used as an alternate name in the federal Geographic Names Information System. He said that he included a table of name changes that CORD weighed in on over the years and that there was a small summit there, above the timberline near the auto road, that was already named Agiocochook Crag about 10 years ago. Mr. Gallagher said that he was able to find the name used in some signage there, although it was not widespread. Agiocochook was the original name, and it means a "place of the great spirit."

The second proposal is to rename the Baker River. The proposed name is Asquamchumauke River. The name is also already used as an alternate name in the federal Geographic Names Information system. The name translates as "salmon spawning place." There is information in the renaming proposal about the proposed name and who Lt. Baker was.

Mr. Gallagher concluded that the intent was to either get comments from CORD members at this meeting or give them the opportunity to go through their individual agency process and submit written comments to Mr. Gallagher until May 26, 2023.

Mr. Gallagher answered how he became the contact for the Federal Board on Geographic Names and that there it is not set in any statute. He also answered a question about the process, which he said is up to the CORD members, whether they would like to discuss and comment at the meeting or follow up with written comments to Mr. Gallagher once they have discussed it internally in their respective agencies.

Chair Caswell spoke about the federal process having a pretty public component and this is a facilitation of the state agencies and the public to have a part in that process and be able to comment. He said individual agencies may have their own process to go through before commenting and in that case, they should do so, and then submit comments in writing. Mr. Caswell said Mr. Gallagher provided the background information on both proposals at this meeting and CORD does not have any statutory authority to comment as a public body, therefore, it is up to CORD members as representatives of their individual agencies.

There were more questions to Mr. Gallagher about whether he received any other comments, which he said he did not, as it was too early in the process. He explained he is also trying to reach out to the Native American communities in NH, as this is usually done on the federal level as well, but NH does not have any federally recognized Native American Tribes. Therefore, Mr. Gallagher reached out to the NH Commission on Native American Affairs, and they voted unanimously to write letters of support for both applications, although they have not yet submitted them. Another question was about the process itself and how the public may be able to find out about things like that, which Mr. Gallagher said there were no really controversial proposals apart from Mt. Clay one, but that was a bit of a different process and CORD was not involved there.

There was a short discussion of the process to follow, and whether it would make sense to submit the written comments directly to Mr. Gallagher from each agency involved. Mr. Caswell noted he is not aware of any time when CORD had taken a vote and reiterated his suggestion to have the members go through their respective agency process and submit written comments. Ms. McNaughten spoke about the fact that NH Fish & Game had already discussed this issue and there were concerns with the law enforcement component as the location is usually the most crucial part when it comes to matters related to 911. Fish & Game had decided to provide

no comment on either proposal as they did not feel like either warranted a comment within the agency's mission.

Mr. Doyle agreed with Ms. McNaughten on her statement about 911 and, as he is the Director of 911, he said that when it comes to the provision of emergency services, location is the most critical thing that they are looking for from anyone who makes a 911 call, especially in a remote location with poor cell service. Having to rely on voice only provided data in this situation is crucial, and with a familiar name it is always more helpful to discerning the information from such a call. It is for this reason, Mr. Doyle said, the Department of Safety would most likely not recommend the name changes. He added he will also be providing a written position on this as well. Mr. Doyle also mentioned he spoke with the Governor's Office today as well and noted there is also a tourism aspect of Mt. Washington, its world-renowned fame and tourist draw, which may be lost because of that, and that will be economically problematic.

Mr. Gallagher was also asked if the comments should be submitted separately for each proposal, and he concurred. He also said that all comments should be emailed to kenneth.r.gallagher@livefree.nh.gov.

There was a short discussion about long names and how it could be problematic to remember them, although, it was noted that there are plenty of other long names that are successfully used throughout the country.

Mr. Hackley said the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources has not had a chance to discuss this and will be providing written comments.

There was discussion about these and other names from that era that are in use around the country and that it is a tough call to make, seeing as these names were given during a different era, with different norms, and they were chosen based on the accomplishments of these individuals at that time.

Mr. Gallagher also answered questions about the Agiocochook Crag he mentioned earlier and that it would come up on Open Street Maps as it is officially named that way. He clarified the alternative names do not get put on maps though. There was another question about reaching out to the Appalachian Mountain Club and Mr. Gallagher said he will check with the Federal Board.

Chair Caswell spoke about the Business and Economic Affairs Department which houses the Division of Travel and Tourism, and it would probably not be in favor of supporting the name changes as Mt. Washington is an internationally well-known landmark, which is heavily promoted by the Department. He said the recognition of Mt. Washington and its correlation to NH is pretty strong.

Discussion ensued about the other prominent features associated with Mt. Washington, like the cog railway, the observatory, etc. Mr. Gallagher explained the change will mostly affect the maps. He also noted one of the cog railway locomotives already bears the name Agiocochook.

Mr. Gallagher then explained the Federal Board decision making process once they receive comments. He also explained how the Board is related to USGS.

Discussion ensued about how easy it is to name of rename geographic features.

Mr. Gallagher also said there was a historic marker for the Baker River which listed Lt. Baker's activities related to destroying a Native American village, which was retired in 2022.

Attorney Brooks noted CORD does not have any statutory authority in this process therefore, there cannot be an official vote. He explained Mr. Gallagher used the CORD meeting as a conduit to provide the information on both names change proposals to all the agencies at the same time. He said it is now up to individual CORD members as representatives of their agencies to provide comments.

There was another discussion about the fact that this process should involve the general public more besides the agencies and other stakeholders, although it is unknown what the vehicle would be to facilitate such a large discussion.

Mr. Gallagher reiterated the state, county, and local governments located in the vicinity of the areas get to comment on such applications if the geographic feature is in their jurisdiction. He said that the deadline is May 26th, 2023, and that comments or the fact of lack thereof should be sent to kenneth.r.gallager@livefree.nh.gov.

B. Next Meeting: August 10, 2023, from 3:00 to 4:00 P.M.

Ms. Verdile said the next meeting will take place on August 10, 2023 and reminded CORD members the SLR submission deadline for that meeting is on June 30, 2023, with the administrative materials submission deadline on August 1, 2023.

MOTION: *After a motion by Mr. Hackley the meeting was adjourned at 3:44 PM.*