



## SuAsCo RSC Minutes for October 28, 2025

**RSC Representatives present:** Marlies Henderson, Chair (Billerica), Elissa Brown (Lead River Ambassador), Matt Brown (OARS), Ron Chick (Framingham), Dan Cook (Carlisle), Jonathan DeKock (Carlisle-Alt), Christine Dugan (Lincoln-Alt), Bill Fadden (Framingham-Alt), Carlene Hempel (Concord), Brian Murphy (Bedford), Tom Sciacca (Wayland), Ellie Sablek, Angela Taveira-Dick (Bedford-Alt), Ross Tucker (Lincoln)

**RSC Representatives absent:** John Drobinski (Sudbury), Stephanie Koch (USFWS), Laura Mattei (SVT), Andrew Petit de Mange (NPS), Eric Simms (Wayland-Alt)

### Welcome and September Meeting Minutes

7:03 pm Ms. Henderson opened the meeting. She introduced Ross Tucker as the new Lincoln representative. Council members introduced themselves.

7:16 pm Ms. Hempel motioned to accept the September Minutes as amended, Mr. Cook seconded. The motion passed 8-0 with one abstention.

### River Ambassador Report

7:17 pm Ms. Brown gave an update on Warner's Pond. The Concord Natural Resources Commission is drafting their charge for the new **Warner's Pond Subcommittee**. The Commission decided on a Five-Year Plan. They will prepare an Adaptive Management Plan to provide recommendations for improving the ecological health and recreational capacity of the pond, including winter drawn down and strategies for herbicide treatment of fanwort and milfoil. Ms. Brown believes that removing the Warner's Pond dam will not be discussed in Concord again for the next five years.

7:19 pm Ms. Brown said that the Concord DPW is looking at acquiring the former **wastewater treatment plant at MCI-Concord**. The plant is operational but has been severely neglected. It will require an estimated \$25 million investment for refurbishment. One idea is to renovate its existing sand beds for groundwater discharge rather than discharging directly into the river, which would require a DEP groundwater discharge permit.

7:22 pm Ms. Brown was recently at the Bedford boat ramp and met people there from the New England Healing Sports Association. She learned that they come from the Sunapee, NH area nearly every week during the summer. They offer kayaking and paddleboarding events for disabled vets and other disabled people.

7:23 pm Ms. Brown and Mr. Sciacca attended Sudbury's **Visioning Workshop on Sherman's Bridge**. She shared a slide of the conceptual design for the new bridge from the Sudbury-Wayland plan. It does not fit in with the RSC's values for historic and scenic resources. Several neighbors spoke about the bridge being a neighborhood resource for pedestrians, bicyclists, photographers, paddlers, and others. She and Mr. Brown attended the **Mass Rivers Alliance Lobby Day** at the State House. They were concerned with the drought bill, the Nature for All bill, and a plan to codify the Mass Dept. of

Environmental Restoration. She, Ms. Hempel and Julia Khorana met with Concord Academy's Sustainability Director to talk about a potential collaboration. They spoke about water withdrawal from one school field and turning a different, often wet field into a pollinator meadow. The school has some interest in a water resources seminar series and possibly doing some programmatic work with their students, such as invasive species removal. Mr. Brown said that OARS has also been thinking about ways they could work with Concord Academy. Ms. Brown suggested they create a joint email to further their discussions with the school.

7:26 pm Ms. Brown and Ms. Henderson spoke by phone with project managers from the **Stop Private Jet Expansion effort at Hanscom**. They discussed the noise planes make while flying over the Wild & Scenic River and to a lesser degree the fuel residue from jets and prop planes flying over the river. Ms. Brown said there isn't really any ground water or surface water flow into the SuAsCo, it flows into the Shawsheen. Ms. Brown recently visited the Carol Getchel Trail in Framingham with Mr. Chick. They had hoped to attend the ribbon cutting ceremony but that had been postponed. She shared multiple slides of completed ADA walkways, a stone dust pathway, and a platform under construction. She said the entrance and other areas are very attractive, that there will be some pedestrian bridges and three overlooks.

7:28 pm Ms. Brown said the Memorandum of Understanding for our **Partner Grants** was sent out. Our **Community Grants** have been posted and advertised with a deadline of November 5th. She tried to learn why the Bedford-Carlisle **Route 225 bridge** over the Concord River is now one lane but she could find no documentation. She thinks that it might be a one lane bridge indefinitely. Ms. Brown said she made select slides from the Concord DPW's Winter Road Maintenance Program and circulated them by email to RSC members. She said Concord's plan shows what can be done if you have the resources and the will to really determine the best treatment given any particular winter condition.

7:34 pm Mr. Sciacca spoke about the **Sherman Bridge Visioning Meeting** he and Ms. Brown attended. He was encouraged by the number of residents who expressed what they value about the bridge and the surrounding area. He explained that from the bridge you have a view of Great Meadows Refuge from up and down the river, there is a winding, rural road and the bridge looks as if it is from the 19th century, even though it was rebuilt about 35 years ago. He noted that these qualities support the site's historic, scenic, and recreational ORVs and called the area an "incredibly precious resource." Many meeting attendees favored preserving the bridge's historic look and opposed paving it with asphalt. Later in the month, he and Ms. Henderson attended a Wayland meeting where a DPW representative said both Sudbury and Wayland had heard the community's message about keeping the historic look and were revising the design accordingly. The new plan is expected soon.

7:49 pm Ms. Henderson said that she had acted on Andrew Petit de Mange's advice that the RSC reach out to other Partnership Wild and Scenic River Councils to see if they could work together to find a **state representative to attend the monthly meetings** for each of their groups. Ms. Henderson is trying to find a contact person for the Taunton, Nashua, and Westfield Rivers. When she has made those contacts she will contact Beth Lambert from DER, whom Mr. Petitt demange had previously spoken with. She will see if Ms. Lambert remembers a discussion she had with a NPS representative from Taunton about this topic.

### **Road Salting Protocol Discussion**

7:51 pm Ms. Henderson is keeping a spread sheet on the member towns that use **brine on winter roads**. She and Ms. Brown discussed sharing the Concord or Lincoln winter road clearing plans with other towns. Ms. Brown agreed that what we have collected is useful for the Council but noted that individual towns have to do their own analysis for salting their roads as they weigh their conflicting goals of environmental maintenance, public safety on the roads, and taxpayer costs. She said town DPWs are responsible for salting the roads and also know that chloride levels are a concern for their water supply. Mr. Cook asked Mr. Brown if OARS monitored chloride levels during the winter. Mr. Brown said that OARS does have one fall and one spring monitoring date. OARS would need more funding to develop a more comprehensive study. A discussion followed on the possibility of inviting Kim Kastens from Green Acton to a future RSC meeting for a short Q&A session about this topic.

8:04 pm Ms. Henderson said the **Turf Statement** and **Land Acknowledgement** discussed at the September meeting were circulated by email earlier in the month so they could be voted on at this meeting. Mr. Brown moved to accept the statements and add them to our website. Multiple edits for each statement were discussed and agreed upon by the Council. Ms. Henderson said that we needed a motion to accept the changes as amended in the conversation and to add them to our website. She asked if anyone was opposed, no one was and the motion passed unanimously.

### **Community Updates**

8:27 pm Mr. Chick said he wrote a Community Preservation grant for \$105,000 for design and permitting of the **Carol Getchell Trail** which was approved. He recently wrote a **Mass Trails grant** for Framingham for \$100,000 for construction and that was awarded. Framingham will still need another \$100,000 for construction of the middle section of the Carol Getchell Trail. That section will complete 4,500 feet of accessibility to Forest Service Trail Accessibility Guidelines along nearly all of the Framingham section of the WSR.

8:30 pm Mr. Brown gave an **OARS update**. OARS is hosting a “Clean Up Your Assabet” event on December 2<sup>nd</sup> at Nashoba Brook Bakery. It will be a kick-off event for OARS’ 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2026. He said that OARS is creating an intense slate of activities for 2026. Many of those events are similar to RiverFest events. At a future RSC meeting he would like to discuss possibly working with the RSC to revive RiverFest next year. He gave an **update on the Talbot Mill Dam removal**. Billerica’s Conservation Commission had some questions on the peer review and is awaiting the engineer’s response. The NMCOG appeal has been moved to December 1<sup>st</sup>. OARS received a Dam and Seawall Grant to support the permitting design phase of the Talbot Mills project. The team was low on their DER Priority Projects funding so the Dam and Seawall money is particularly good news. It should take the project through whatever the appeal process entails. He hopes the appeal will not take long and that the new grant money can go toward mitigation.

8:35 pm Ms. Henderson said that she was leading a paddle to Fairhaven Bay on November 2<sup>nd</sup> to see if the Lincoln dock has been taken out for the season. She invited anyone who was interested to join the paddle.

8:38 pm Mr. Chick motioned to adjourn, Mr. Brown seconded and the vote passed 9-0.