



**Warner's Pond Task Force**  
Thursday, June 12, 2025 at 6:00 pm  
Keyes Road

**Meeting Minutes**

**Task Force members:**

- Vickie Alani
- (Paul Boehm\*)
- Malcolm Bryant
- Ann Clifford
- Jeff Collins
- Bruce Curliss
- Christine Denaro
- Keith Hannon
- Mark Howell
- Delia Kaye
- Bill Kemeza
- Liz Morrison Howe
- David Owen
- Samiksha Poudel
- Jeff Quick
- Sven Weber

The Warner's Pond Task Force held its 20th meeting on June 12, 2025 beginning at 6:02 pm online via Zoom. Task Force members and members of the public were in attendance.

**Welcome and Updates**

Christine Denaro, Task Force co-chair, opened the meeting at 6:01 p.m. and took a roll call of members. The following members were present: Vickie Alani, Malcolm Bryant, Jeff Collins, Christine Denaro, Mark Howell, Delia Kaye, Bill Kemeza, Liz Morrison-Howe, Samiksha Poudel, and Sven Weber. Ann Clifford, Bruce Curliss, Keith Hannon, and Jeff Quick were absent. Paul Boehm resigned last month from the Task Force due to his new position as an elected member of the Select Board. Chris identified the main goals for the meeting: to achieve as much alignment as possible on the overall framework for the final Task Force recommendations. She then briefly reviewed the agenda items for the evening.

Toby welcomed the group to the final meeting of the Task Force. He began by re-introducing the ground rules that the group has agreed to in the past and to remind everyone about the kinds of conversations we want to have. He noted that a lot of good progress came out of the last meeting but there were some moments where he encouraged the group to do better.

Toby then summarized the actions that have occurred since the last meeting. At the end of the last meeting, the Task Force made a decision that CBI would draft a recommendation for the Adaptive Management Plan proposal on behalf of the Task Force. All Task Force members had made comments on the draft recommendations and those perspectives were addressed by revisions in the document. The revisions were shown in red-line and were shared again with the group. Additional suggestions were made by the co-chairs and Toby said those will be shared at tonight's meeting. He explained that the group would go through the draft recommendation and start by focusing on the bigger issues and try to get clarity and resolve them, and then turn to any other issues that Task Force members want to raise. Toby and Rachel explained the rationale behind their suggested approach and then Toby asked if the Task Force was agreeable to that approach. Task Force members indicated that they agreed.

Before moving into the discussion of the outstanding issues, Toby turned to Sven, who had asked for an opportunity to say something to the group. Sven explained that after reading the draft he felt that he wanted to make a statement. He read a short statement.

Toby then showed the red-line draft and highlighted the first section that he had flagged for discussion. The section pertains to confusion about the roles and responsibilities of the management committee versus the role of the NRC. Toby explained how the revised language attempted to clarify the roles. Vickie said that she liked that it was clearer about the respective roles. Bill described how he thought the Warner's Pond Committee and the NRC would coordinate to hire and oversee a pond management consultant. Jeff said that he felt there was value in having another oversight entity to evaluate the work of the pond management consultant. Toby asked if anyone had any comments on the revision for this section. Mark raised a concern about recognizing the larger goal described in the original proposal, which goes beyond just the pond and includes the broader pond system. Toby made wording changes in response to these comments and Task Force members agreed with the revisions in this section.

Malcolm asked to make some comments to the group. He felt that the Task Force did not follow its mandate to make a decision. He also felt that the issue of cost was not recognized and that the costs of adaptive management will only increase the costs of addressing the issues facing the pond in the future. He felt that the Task Force has taken the path of the least resistance between the two groups that have opposing perspectives. He also noted that he has made two more comments about the process of providing feedback into the draft document, saying he saw a significant change in how Task Force members have been behaving. Up to this point, he was very impressed with how respectful and collegial everyone remained even when they disagreed. But in this particular part of the process he felt that people became much less collaborative. He concluded by saying that he felt the document represented the viewpoint of the Friends of Warner Pond and not the wider community, and that he would not participate in the rest of the process of wordsmithing.

Returning to the topic of the management committee, Sven said that as long as engineering isn't needed for the dam, the Public Works Department does not need a designated seat on the proposed management committee. He said that the Engineering Dept/Public Works would be available for consultation as needed.

Jeff commented that he was a little worried that the metrics about adjacent use could be misleading because they might obscure the actual changes to the pond. He didn't have a suggested wording change and said that he just hoped it would be captured in the spirit of the recommendation. Other Task Force members said they felt his concern was in keeping with the spirit of the recommendation.

Vickie raised a concern about whether the metrics should include the diversity of fisheries and birds, and whether that was necessary. Bill & David both responded to Vickie that the diversity of species was valuable, and she accepted their explanation. David asked that comments be focused on actual wording changes. Sven agreed.

The next issue Toby raised was the use of a qualified independent evaluator to assess the adaptive management actions that were taken. Bill elaborated that there would be 2 consultants, one to establish the approach and the other to carry out the process. Toby revised the language based on Task Force members' suggestions, and the Task Force agreed with the revisions. Mark suggested a revision related to the timeline of the five-year implementation period. Task Force members offered different suggestions about how to resolve this, in order to make it clear when the 5-year period starts. A revision was made to include an end-date.

The next part of the document Toby focused on was the final section about Task Force member perspectives. After a lively discussion, the suggestion was made that member perspectives be moved into an Appendix and that a high-level summary explaining the two main opinions of Task Force members remain in the body of the report, with a reference to the appendix for more detail. Members also noted that the information in the interim report should be preserved for future reference.

Toby then proceeded to review the smaller issues for resolution. Regarding the name of the committee to be established, the group discussed the term "watershed" and decided that it should be removed because it could be misleading. The group agreed that the name of the committee will be the Warner's Pond Management Committee.

Regarding representation of entities involved in implementation of the plan, wording was revised to indicate that town departments did not have to be included by charter. Vickie suggested that the committee should not have more than 5 members to keep it from becoming unwieldy. Bill suggested that the recommendation should be that the NRC convene a management committee of 5 - 7 members. Mark suggested changing the structure so that the management committee would have the responsibility to liaison with other groups with interests or expertise. David said that he so appreciated the work of the facilitation team for the Task Force and suggested that the management committee might have a facilitator. Other task force members felt that committees in town are responsible for their own management.

Concerns were raised about making sure that all the information and data that has been collected and generated by the Task Force be preserved. Meeting minutes, public comments, reports, etc are available on the website and there was a discussion about where these materials would be kept in the future. It was agreed that the Warner's Pond Management Committee, when formed, should be the keeper of this documentation.

Toby completed the review of the document and asked the group if they were ready for a vote. Mark made a motion that the report be adopted as written. David seconded. Chris polled the members for a vote.

Vickie: endorse

Malcolm: can't live with

Jeff: can't live with

Chris: endorse

Mark: endorse

Bill: endorse

Liz: can live with

David: endorse

Sven: can live with, but commented that he still felt the TF failed to live up to its mandate.

Keith: endorse

#### TOTALS

6 endorsements

2 can live with

2 can't live with

1 not able to vote (Paul)

#### **Public Comment**

Bill Kemeza opened the public comment period with the standard rules.

Denise Gilbert, Concord Green

Expressed gratitude to the Task Force for all its work. She has been to the meetings several times and has tremendous respect for everyone in the group. There are many lenses in the room and people are seeing it from different vantage points. She loves Warner's Pond and said that there will be a view of water from Gerow Park and she thinks it is worth the investment to save Warner's Pond, for now. She thanked the Task Force for their work.

#### **Adjournment**

There being no further business before the Task Force, Co-chair Christine Denaro adjourned the meeting at 9:21 p.m..