REPRESENTATIVE POLICY BOARD

LAND USE COMMITTEE

MARCH 12, 2025

MEETING TRANSCRIPTION

Mark:

Okay, I'll call the meeting to order, it's 5:30. The first thing is our safety moment. Molds are part of a natural environment. Mold breaks down dead organic matter such as fallen leaves, dead trees but indoor mold spores can cause health problems such as allergic reactions, asthma attacks and irritate the eyes, nose, skin and lungs. It gives you all the ways to fix and repair water leaks. I believe bleach is probably the best indoors, but that's up to you guys. Wipe down the condensation that collects around windows and doors. Okay, so you got it all about mold. We can move on to the next item. I have approval of the minutes.

Mike:

I approve the minutes.

Mark:

That's Mike, right?

Mike:

Mike Horbal, right, from Seymour, yes.

Mark:

We have a second?

Greg:

Second.

Mark:

Okay, motion to approve the minutes and seconded. All those in favor of approving the minutes.

Committee members:

Aye.

Mark:

And against? Minutes have been approved unanimously. Okay, next thing is the Lake Whitney Dam update.

Mike:

I have a question on it. I, Mike Horbal, have a question on the brochure that was given to us about Lake Whitney Dam and Spillway Improvements Project on page thirteen. On the bottom, the potential cost savings to RWA that facilitate beneficial reuse plans and then in parentheses it has Peat Swamp and Peat

Swamp Reservoir is the one in Ansonia and so I don't understand that. Could you explain that to me? And if you're going to use the Peat Swamp, do you have to build a filter station? Because there is none.

Mark:

Do you want to wait until we get to that page, or do you want to answer that question now?

Mike:

I could wait. I got no problem waiting.

Mark:

Okay. Is that okay with you?

Cody:

That's sounds good.

Sunny:

Yes, I think Cody is going to walk through all the slides.

Mark:

That's right.

Sunny:

And he will give information on pretty much in all the bullet points and once he's done, if we still have questions, we can still take questions.

Mark:

Thank you. Okay, Cody, you can begin now.

Cody:

Okay. Good evening, everybody. I'm Cody Savoy. I'm a project engineer here at RWA. I think I presented to most of you guys in some form or the other. Right now, we can go to the next slide. Some information, some background information on RWA's dams. We own 33 dams ranging in heights and hazard classifications. Just some background on the hazard classification of dams. It's not a condition assessment. It's the consequence of a failure is how we rate dams. So just because you see something is a high hazard dam, it doesn't mean that it's in bad shape. It just means that there is a potential for significant implications, like loss of life or property damage. Our oldest dam is Lake Whitney Dam, and our newest dams are the Lake Chamberlain Dam and the Lake Hammonasset Dam. Lake Whitney Dam was built-

Mike:

Hold a minute. I have a question, Mike Horbal.

Cody:

Yes.

Mike:

You said the water company has how many dams?

Cody:

Over 30, it's like 33 off the top of my head.

Mike:

The information printed says 31 dams.

Cody:

Yes, I think it says over 31.

Mike:

Oh, okay.

Cody:

We added-

Mike:

You're correct.

Cody:

We added the one in Madison. Is that Madison? The one that [inaudible 00:06:35], that little one on the corner there.

Mike:

I know.

Cody:

Yes, it was recently registered since in the last five years.

Greg:

Which is the largest dam?

Cody:

Height wise? Gaillard.

Greg:

Gaillard.

Cody:

Yes, Gaillard's, I want to say, 90 feet and it's also probably our largest impoundment too.

John:

There's actually two at Gaillard.

Cody:

Yes, there's a dam and a bay. I'd say watershed-wise, probably Whitney, right?

John:

Yes, for a single.

Cody:

For a single, Yes, large watershed with a watershed over 40 square miles. So very, very big watershed, very urbanized watershed. I'll touch on that a little bit in this presentation, but it makes it for a challenging project. The dam was built in the 1860s before geotechnical engineering is how we perceive geotechnical engineering nowadays. There was no construction documents. There was no plans. It was a contractor sat down with the owner, Eli Whitney the second, third, second.

John:

Two.

Cody:

Second, number two. And they came up with a plan to build a dam to impound water for the inception of the Man Water Company and for hydro mechanical power. And you see, and John would be able to speak better to this when you go through historical documents, a lot of back and forth between the need for drinking water and the use of water for hydro mechanical energy and he needed this dam built pretty quick because he had a contract with the US government to provide guns for the Civil War. That's what they're manufacturing there. I believe it was Whitney Arms, Whitney Repeating Arms, something like that was the name of this company at the time. So the pressure was on to get this dam built and you'll see if you're ever on site, they raised it again a few years after they built it, but they never made it wider. They just raised it by two feet. You could see that the difference in the masonry work, there's a little bit of a different stone pattern. Must have been a different mason that day. Anyways-

John:

A quick question.

Mark:

Go ahead.

Bob:

You have, and you mentioned it quickly, there's 13 classified high hazards.

Cody:

Yes, sir.

Bob:

What makes something a high hazard?

Cody:

A high hazard dam is a regulatory definition by CTD and it would be if there's a potential for a loss of life. So if you look at the dam and if somebody lives downstream of it, it's considered a high hazard dam. Or if there's a major highway, like in Whitney's case, there's all this. There's I think, off the top of my head, I want to say there's 13,000 people that live in that inundation zone, maybe more. It's very large. That inundation zone goes from the dam all the way to Long Island Sound, if there was ever a failure. But it doesn't say that the dam itself is in bad condition. Like Lake Gaillard, we rehabbed that in the late 2000s. That's considered a high hazard dam, but it's perfectly safe. There's nothing wrong.

Bob:

Because of the number of homes below it?

Cody:

Yes, whatever's below it is what dictates what it's going to be classified as. It could be a highway. It could be a hospital, a school.

John:

Railroad tracks.

Cody:

Railroad tracks, critical infrastructure, major gas line or highway, something like that. This is a good segue into my next point. All dams leak. Everything leaks to some degree. I think we went up to Prospect Dam earlier this year and that project, the inception of that project was a leak. We want leaks to be stable. We want it to be controlled. We want it to be clear and in 2004 there was a leak here. Larry, who's the senior engineer on this project, that removed a piece of concrete from the dam and water started coming out so they had to drive wooden wedges in and stakes so it really brought light that the need of a monitoring program. So he installed an under drain system and a monitoring weir and we monitor it and it's relatively stable, but it's a lot more than we'd like to see as engineers. It's quite a bit of water. If you want to go to the next slide [inaudible 00:11:14]. So again, the dam was built in the 1860s. It was modified again in the 1860s and then it was modified in 1917.

They changed the spillway configuration a little bit and then it was modified again in the '60s. The dam itself wasn't modified, but the intake structures were modified a little and then it really hasn't been touched in a significant fashion since then. We haven't made a significant, significant capital investment to the dam since then. So since it is a high hazard dam, we have a standard of care we have to meet for the stability of the dam. And we do modeling and analysis with engineers to come up to see what we are currently and we don't meet the factors of safety that we would like to have for a structure like this so a big project goal here is to increase the structural stability. As I showed you, as we talked about before the seepage, we want to control the seepage through the dam and mitigate that. And we also want to

increase the dam's hydraulic capacity to safely pass the Probable Maximum Flood. The Probable Maximum Flood is a theoretically modeled storm.

Off the top of my head, it's like 33 or 34 inches in a 72-hour period. We call it the Noah Storm so it's massive amount of rain. There has been a few on record. I think Tropical Storm Agnes in the '70s was a big one and there was one that wasn't quite a PMF but was approaching a PMF in 2021 in New York State. There was a small town that had a cell park out over it and they got in the 20-inch range. The storm of record for this is the 1982 flood, I don't know if anybody was in the New Haven area in the '80s. They might remember that. That was 16 inches in a four-day period so that's only half of the PMF or less than half of the PMF. So if we go to the next slide, establish that there's a pretty significant need for the project and some of the challenges of a project like this, anytime you do dam work, it's inherent that there's water involved and we all know that that can be challenging for construction operations.

Also, to complicate matters a little further is we run Whitney Water Treatment Plant from this impoundment so we can't just drain it entirely and still keep the plant operational. This project is bounded on the east by East Rock Park and there's a large sewer tunnel that goes through East Rock Park. So we can't really go to the east and we have to be very careful on how we work along that rock face. And then it's also bounded on the west by a very large sewer main that there was, I think if in 2021, does that sound right, John?

John:

2020 [inaudible 00:14:26].

Cody:

2020, 2021, there was a big leak not just below the dam, actually along Whitney Avenue of that sewer main. They had a failure there and it's been in the news and in the local paper quite a bit to spend a, I think, a class action settlement on that. Anyways, there's that. There's telecom, there's a lot of power. There's a 12-inch gas line buried there so we're bounded. We have to be very careful, very, very surgical in this work. So to protect those existing utilities, we have to permit this with CT DEEP, with the Army Corps, with SHPO and THPO and all these permitting agencies and I'll talk about that in a little bit more detail on the next slide, if you don't mind. So how we kind of got to this point in the project was we looked at over 20 options. There's always more than one way to solve a problem and we looked at a lot of them. We analyzed things like construction risks, project costs, historic appearance, and the public impacts, environmental consequence and water supply impacts and we shortlisted five of those.

We shortlisted the five of those and then we reviewed those with a process value engineering process, which is not always a common process, right? They're a little bit not always in line with each other, right, the two words. And from those five we narrowed it down to two and we developed, we presented both of those to SHPO and that was an upstream and a downstream. And SHPO didn't like the downstream option and wouldn't have been really permittable through them because it would cover the downstream historic phase. So we also employed a thing called Early Contractor Involvement and we could go to, we'll talk about that in a few slides. This project is going with the upstream concrete. We're going to drain a portion of the lake and we're going to build basically a new dam right behind the existing dam and then glue the old dam to this new dam with pins and grout and concrete reinforcing and things like that, to make it robust enough and have enough mass there to resist this, the loads for the updated codes. We're also going to improve the spillway.

If you're familiar with the site, there's a notch in the spillway. We're going to lengthen that and deepen it. At a certain storm it's not deep enough, it becomes inundated so it'll be sized for larger storms and

then we're also going to armor downstream. Because of the, as I mentioned before, it has such a large watershed, you would never be able to have a spillway large enough to accommodate the flow. So we'll actually armor the downstream side with articulated concrete blocks, which are concrete blocks probably similar to the size of a table, maybe a little smaller, maybe half the size of a table and they have cables that go through them and lock them together. So if water does over top the dam, it won't scour out the tow and it'll protect it so it won't fail. It prevents a possible failure mechanism.

Greg:

You drain the lake, right?

Cody:

Yes.

Greg:

Where do you put the water?

Cody:

So I think actually if we go to the next slide, we're going to drain the lake from, if you're familiar with the area, from Davis Street to the dam. We're going to build a cofferdam, which is the picture on the right, and we'll slowly notch the existing spillway in phases to release it. So the river will always go through and we'll have a temporary dam at Davis Street holding that. So I'm holding it from Davis Street north at the normal pool elevation and then we'll have a channel that guides it to south of the existing dam. And we'll have a regular sheet piling like you saw at Prospect, just the metal sheets that we drive into the ground, just in the local work area to channelize that water away from where we have to do our work. So we have to build these big cells that are going to be over 30 feet tall and over probably close to 50 feet in diameter to be able to handle that water and to channelize it how we need to channelize it. Go to the next one. Other way, sorry.

Once we build the cofferdam that I showed you in the picture before, we're going to drain that lower impoundment and we're going to pour a new upstream concrete. We're going to do the buried over top in production and it's kind of if you looked at it in the section that's on the top, how I'm seeing it top right. You'll get a new concrete cap so it's a lot of concrete. Very, very significant concrete project. Pretty complicated technically to do this. And because it's a dam, we can go to the next slide, we have like I mentioned before, significant permitting process. There's NDDB which is a National Diversity Database. There's a Fish and Wildlife IPaC. There's DEEP Fisheries who we've been meeting with, CT DEEP Dam Safety. Stream flow release requirements, there's a lot of rules that we have to play by to do this, much more than most of the projects we're involved with. And one of the things that we found during our NDDB search was this Rumex maritimus golden dock plant, which is an endangered plant in our area.

And part of the project because we found it, we have to transplant it, nurture it in a greenhouse for a while and then plant it back at the end of the project on our site and then possibly other sites at the RWA owns in order to get our permits. Because it's-

Greg:

Endangered.

Cody:

... it's because it'd endangered. Even though to me it kind of looks like a weed, I wouldn't know. I'm just an engineer, but that's the plant there on the right. The-

Jamie:

Can I interrupt-

Cody:

... scientists.

Jamie:

... a minute?

Cody:

Sure.

Jamie:

[inaudible 00:21:25]. With a question regarding these federal entities. Given the federal climate right now and the disabling of most or many of these relevant federal agencies and I'm guessing either limited staff or no staffing to address this, will that hold up our permitting? Are we expecting that? Do we have a workaround or do you think they're going to wait, any idea?

Cody:

There is no workaround per se, but we have been actively engaged with these agencies for several years. They're aware of the project. They're familiar with the project. We've submitted a lot of these permits already. Depending on what agency determines when you can submit to them for their review. Some it's earlier than others in the design process, but we did anticipate they are typically long lead items. They're large schedule items so I don't know if that is an adequate answer.

Jamie:

I guess my question really goes to what happens if there's... I guess we don't know the answer and that is if there's no staffing to give the permits, if we haven't gotten anything proactively, I don't expect we do. I think it's a zoo right now, but how or whether the RWA or permit applicants will be notified proactively if staffing is gutted or agencies are wiped out, the bulk of the staff are gone, what's going to happen? And I guess nobody really knows and that's sort of happening across agencies, but I didn't know if there was any proactive messaging to active permittees, permit [inaudible 00:23:16].

Cody:

Yes, the Corps hasn't said anything, Yes.

Sunny:

Yes, I mean I would say elaborate a little bit more on what Cody said. Jaime, your point is right. Army Corps would be the significant, even earlier we figure in our risk matrix on the permitting side, the US

Army Corps has the longest duration of review time, almost going up to 18 months even prior to all these things. So it is quite likely that it might get impacted, but at this point of time we are not sure. We are hoping still that we will be able to address all these issues and DEEP Dam Safety also looks at the dam in terms of the technical review. So hopefully if they do it and they have all the other permits from SHPO and all that to go along with it, SHPO doesn't have to permit this. They would just have to give a letter saying that they're okay with it and then US Army Corps needs that to be part of the permitting process. But I think with the state we should be able to work on a much more closer basis.

I did take a few meetings with the state last week on a different topic as part of the Connecticut Water Works Association and they have the same kind of a fear that if some of these funding gets stopped, that even though they have staffed up in the recent past, they may have to let staff go. So that was somebody who told me from DPH and I think there is a real concern that staffing might come down. So if it does, then certainly all projects will get affected. Hopefully this one, we don't know. Even EPA has to give us some permits along with this because we do get WIFIA funding for this, so we have no idea, but it is something that we are looking into. But is there a magic panacea? I don't know whether there is one. But anyway, we'll keep track of it, but it is a good point.

Jamie:

Thank you.

Sunny:

Thank you.

Cody:

Just Yes, there was just some more information on permits. As I mentioned before, we utilize the Early Contractor Involvement method, which is ECI. We corresponded with Integrated Design Services. Mark Alpert, he's a leader and has significant experience in alternative delivery methods. He's on the Water Design-Build Council, over 30 years of design build type construction. Now for some of you guys that are probably not as familiar with contract delivery methods in the construction industry, ECI is an Early Contractor Involvement, and it differs from conventional projects. Normally you design a project and then you advertise it for bid, you bid it, you review the bids, and you award the project, then you build the project. This methodology, you qualify contractors, in this case three contractors, through a request for qualifications process like you're hiring a professional services firm. And they work with you on the design and then when you complete the design, they have the opportunity to bid the project, and the project is then awarded on a best value basis based on their approach and the overall cost.

This process helps us bring the contractors in early to find out if that our design. You see this a lot with contractors, engineers, they clash, and they butt heads. They're like, "Oh, you show this on paper, how am I supposed to build it?" This gives them a chance to come in early and stop any of those problems, that's that. So it's supposed to help mitigate risk and-

Greg:

Do we have to pay them?

Cody:

We do subsidize them for this, Yes. Yes, they provide reports and it's a-

John:

All three?

Cody:

All three, Yes, provide different reports to us. At each design milestone, they provide a technical review and provide their comments. They then review the comments with us here and there's a dialogue back and forth and we'll talk about some of the findings of that. I think you'll find it pretty interesting; I did. This process was vetted with WIFIA and SRF back to some of the funding how we're paying for this project. And because it was a public RFQ, it meets RWA state and federal requirements. So, if we want to go to the next slide, we can talk about some of the takeaways that the contractors, they had stronger feelings about that. There was a lot of stuff, but these are some of the bigger ones because we are doing a grouting program, and each contractor had a different approach to that. Some wanted to drill holes a certain way. Maybe we didn't like that way because we thought it would be too risky to the historic face or different hole spacing, different grout takes, different grout mixes and methodologies.

There's each one had a different way to build the cofferdam and build the notch that we discussed earlier and how they wanted to handle that. They all had, I don't want to say concerns, but opinions on how we do these mass concrete pours. When you're pouring concrete, you can't just pour it all at once and then just walk away from it. It has to be done systematically so you don't overheat it while it's curing. If it overheats, it'll crack and be basically useless because concrete is an exothermic reaction. So if you go and you pour a sidewalk, even on a cold day, you see they put the blankets on it. If you stick your hand under that blanket, it'll be hot to the touch and you could scald yourself. Each contractor had a different plan of attack, so they each had a different schedule. The shortest was a two and a half year project. The longest is a four-year project. And to Mike's question earlier, the potential cost savings and the beneficial reuse at Peat Swamp.

Peat Swamp is another dam that we own, another high hazard dam that is in need of some repairs and is in our capital program. And one of the alternatives that we're looking at to repair that dam is a downstream buttress where you take an embankment material, in this case like a sand, and you place it downstream and you make a slope in front of the concrete wall. And because we have an export from this site, we'd like to try to retain as much of that material as we can for our own use and try to save some money. It's still an expensive process, but potentially there's a savings. So the plan is to take material from Whitney out of the embankment that we have to dig up and handle and rather than pay to get rid of it, try to keep some of it for ourselves so that's what that's about, Mike.

Mike:

Thank you.

Cody:

Moving forward, we're at the 90% right now. We're going to finalize design and keep talking with the external stakeholders and conduct further engagement with our ECI contractors. We have a dialogue with them. We go back and forth on certain items and then once that's done and we wrap up to 100%, we're going to solicit bids and evaluate those bids based on price, the work plan, the methodology, their safety record, if there's a whole established criteria for that and for the project and get started with the actual construction. So I can take some questions now.

John:

The three contractors, are they out of state contractors?

Cody:

It's a mix. So there is an in-state contractor and then two out-of-state contractors and I would say they're also mixed in size. There's a 50-person contractor, then maybe a 500-person contractor and that multi, multi, multi 1,000s-person contractor so we have a good spread. They're all very well qualified to do this type of work in water. They're familiar with doing in water work with sheet pilings and cofferdams, complicated situations.

Brian:

If all things work out, when do we expect they start work?

Cody:

That's going to be contingent upon the schedule and the seasons, how the permit schedule lines up with the construction seasons.

Sunny:

Hey, Brian, it goes back to Jamie's question as well. We are anticipating sometime construction to start in calendar year '26 and fiscal year '26 as well. So if we do start anticipating US Army Corps to give us the final blessing, you could see at least 24 months, which is what Cody was saying. It could range from 24, 30 months to 40 months. But I think our feeling is we should be more on the lower side of the schedule, closer to the 30, 24 to 30 months because it makes it easier, faster. And one of the ECI contractors, as Cody said, has a very specialized skill set for building dams and marine structure. So if the contractor ends up getting chosen based on the technical as well as the price, we might save schedule as well. So we are hoping we'll be getting out of there start in '26. Get out there of say by calendar '28 or fiscal '28 or fiscal '29, we want to get out of there.

Mark:

Sunny, are we financing this all ourselves or are we looking for grants, which should probably dry up real soon? Or do we have any federal money for this or state money or are we doing the whole financial thing ourselves? And do we have a number of what this is going to be at?

Sunny:

The number we do, but I don't think we can actually go into that without an executive session. So what we can do, and at some point after time, maybe in the future we can do that in terms of what the numbers could look like. But during the capital budget, which we are going to present in the next few weeks, you will see our estimates of what's going to be in '26, '27, '28 so you will get an idea. Maybe for this meeting I'll skip it, but in terms of-

Mark:

Yes, [inaudible 00:33:38] answered it.

Sunny:

Yes, in terms of your other questions, Mark, yes, we do get the WIFIA funding, which is more lower interest because the federal government backs the WIFIA-funded loans. We do get DWS out of funds. Some of them would be some grant but not a significant amount of grants, but most of them will be low interest loans. Then we also got qualified for a grant from the state bonding, which had a floor, the ceiling about say $500,000 to $3 million and that we did a couple of years ago so there is at least three sources of money for funding this. Some of them are very not a significant portion as grants, but even still whatever grants we could get it helps and the rest of them are low interest loans actually from the feds in the state. And again, this goes back to Jamie's question, is there going to be priority changes and how it's going to affect the grants? And even a couple of days ago, we had this conversation to see whether it's going to affect the other grants.

Which if you remember, we got congressionally directed spending grants for some of the other projects related to the Gaillard clarifiers and Saltonstall electrical and all that. So we don't know yet how the administrative priorities are going to impact the grants and those grants are significant, Yes.

Mark:

We might not even have an Army Corps of Engineers, might get rid of that next.

Sunny:

Well, there is a silver lining so the permitting could go faster.

Mark:

Okay, anybody else have any questions? Hey, that was a great-

Naomi:

No, I have one.

Mark:

I'm sorry.

Naomi:

Cody, are you still on?

Cody:

Yes, I'm here.

Naomi:

When you said you were going to pin the old dam to the new one, how is that going to be done?

Cody:

So once we pour the concrete on the back, can we go back to the presentation quick? And slide number, slide has the pictures. Give me one moment, slide nine.

John:

Nine.

Cody:

So the orange it's a very high-level. In the top right picture, the orange peachish colored trapezoid, I guess that would be, triangle. That's the existing dam and we're going to pour the new dam upstream that and then we're going to grout the new dam up, so it'll be one cohesive mass, so it'll rely on the interaction of the grout with the new concrete.

Naomi:

Okay, so you're saying where that gray area is on that side?

Cody:

That's all new, Yes.

Naomi:

That's all the new one and the peach side is the existing which are going to be together, come together.

Cody:

Yes. We're going to grout it, which is like, it's just a glue. That's the best way to think of it.

Naomi:

Okay.

Mark:

Got to be some strong glue.

Naomi:

I was going to say, that's what I'm thinking.

Cody:

Very strong.

Mark:

Okay, any other questions? Thank you very much. Okay, next on our agenda, is that John?

John:

I'm here.

Mark:

John, updates on the RWA properties.

John:

Yes. So, at the end of February where the surface water supplies were at 81% full. Last year we were at 95. The historical average is 82, so we're just below the long-term average. We did get a good chunk of rain one week ago, so that has helped us but we're still hovering right around where the long-term average is. In the month of February, we had 3.08 inches of rain. Long-term average is 3.31, so we're just about there and for the fiscal year we're at 29.49. That's about four, I'm sorry, five inches lower than the historical average there. We all remember the dry fall that we had continues to influence those numbers. Then we need for the Water We Use Program, we corresponded with the property owner of 24 acres in Madison, the Bis property. We received a marked-up survey from DEEP and with the comments that we can go forward with the OSWLA Grant. The Moran/Ricci property in Cheshire, corresponded with DEEP staff about the OSWLA Grant there. The town is the fee simple owner. We are just the easement owners.

At 56 Squantuck Road, the RPB, you guys approved the disposition application last month and Jen noted that the public notice went into the newspapers on the third of this month. Hamden 233 Skiff Street, P&Z approved the re-subdivision application and corresponded with our surveyor about finding the map on the land records. Forestry update, we removed some trees from the agricultural experiment station plots where they were interfering with the growth of study trees. Sorry, Casey sent out the Firewood Program Renewal packets. We contacted US Forest Service grant administrator to inquire about the future of the LSR grant and requested a meeting to discuss said administrators and pending retirement. That was sort of related to what Jamie is saying. We learned from him in the middle of February that he was one of the federal employees who took the retirement package, and we had to learn about that through another person. So, our matter has been handed on to somebody else there, but we're still figuring it all out. We inspected the Menunkatuck timber harvest and the witch hazel harvest as well.

For Recreation, we compiled events for the next newsletter, which if you are a member of the Recreation program, you've already received or should have already received at this point. Passed along information permit holders about the causeway at the head of Lake Chamberlain, which we were just talking about for the meeting. We closed this to vehicular access, but we still have it open for horses and people on foot. We addressed several complaints about the lock at Lake Chamberlain parking lot. Ordered trout for stocking this year and applied for the DEEP for the DEEP Liberation Permit and we reviewed applications and started interviewing applicants for our Recreation staff in the 2025 season. So at the end of February, we're at 4,730 permittees. Compared to last year we were at 4,771 and almost exactly the same at the end of January 4,775. Special permits in the month of February, there are five that Linda sent out, nothing too extraordinary there. Encroachments and agreements and in Booth Terrace we signed a license agreement with a neighbor to allow extension of the lawn over the property line.

And Guilford Saw Mill Hill Road, we noticed a licensee has a car parked over the line so talked to him about pushing that back onto his property. At 45 Sackett Point Road, North Haven, we were informed by North Haven Wetland staff there was an encroachment from 366 Old Maple Road and they were issuing a cease and desist order for the owner to remove the items out of the floodplain so we're in contact with the town about that. At Great Hill Road field in North Branford we reviewed a herbicide application for the field with the tenant. This is the pages who use the field for hay, because it's all off the watershed we're okay with doing herbicide there. In North Branford the hayfield, we notified the tenant about spreading manure on the frozen ground, which was not allowed. Invasive plants, in the month of February we treated and documented invasive populations at North Branford, Killingworth and Guilford. Josh went to the CIPWG Plant Review Subcommittee to discuss language to be used for invasive bill.

And about sterile cultivars for barbarian winged euonymus, that's burning bush, to be allowed for sale at nurseries and he mapped 18 and a half acres in the month of February, but didn't treat anything. Beach Street Avenue in East Haven, we received the notice of insufficiency from DEEP and discussed the responses with our consultant so that is due back to DEEP within 30 days and I think that's sometime next week.

Brian:

Hey, John?

John:

Yes.

Speaker 6:

What does that mean?

John:

We don't normally do this because we don't usually do work in the coastal zone because this was in salt grass and marsh area, where we want to put the new watermain to serve these seven cottages. We had to go through DEEP and get this permit. When they review the permit, they would, DEEP staff says, "Okay, well, you're missing... Yes, I'd like to see more on this. I'd like to see more on that. I'd like to see more on that." And they hand that to us, which is a letter of notice of insufficiency asking us for more information about it so we have time to get back to them about their questions. That's what that is.

Brian:

Thank you.

John:

Mm-hmm. For St. James Street in New Haven, we sent the draft easement for Yale to review. That is a section of a section that the city discontinued, and so Yale owns the whole thing, but we didn't get an easement in it. I want to get an easement so that it's all recorded and no one forgets in 100 years. At 205 Skiff Street, we met with ACES staff and Murtha staff about the lease to the school. We believe that any amendment to the lease would require DPH and RWA approvals. We asked them to draft a lease amendment for us to review. When I say RWA approvals, it would have to come to you as well. The Olin Powder Ponds in Hamden, a question came through Larry Marcik about a sluice valve that's on Treadwell Street, but it's on the south side of the street so that's all Olin's property and we had no information about it. We responded to our staff and to the requesters that we don't own the valve.

We don't have any details on it since it was not on our property. For Laurel Road in Woodbridge is a town discontinuance the neighbors on either side. This is a small dead end and at the very end there's the town road keeps going until it hits our property and there's nothing really more to develop there. So the two neighbors on either side asked the town to discontinue the road, so they would own that piece of it and we said we would have no objection with that. Hamden Quinnipiac proposal will respond to an inquiry from the university about selling or leasing land on a part of an old tank property there. We are looking to have a meeting with him about that later this month. Orange, the Baldwin Road guy wire, it says UI is requesting to put a guy wire that goes farther into our property so we're looking to do a

license agreement for that. Still waiting for them to come up with a draft license agreement so we can review it.

In North Branford, the UI watermain easement this is over the old trolley line. We got a draft survey and made comments to it. He asked the surveyor to add a polygon for the easement area, which he's done and forwarded it to Murtha to get the title company's comments. At South Sleeping Giant wellfield in Hamden, we answered questions about the limits of our easement for the engineering staff. Land Use Plan, I sent out the introduction to various staff at the Water Authority for comment and the deadline for that is actually Friday, so I think everybody's got me stuff back already. Boundaries, we worked on marking boundaries in Madison, Guilford, Killingworth, North Branford and Hamden. Sea Hill Road in North Branford, we emailed and left a voicemail for the town engineer to find out about the status of Sea Hill Road. I have not heard back from him yet. Guilford, the Haggarty property, this is kind of interesting. The monastery actually bought the property from the Haggarty's. This is where our tunnel access and air relief valve is located. They are aware of the tunnel and the release valve and know of the easement.

The monastery is aware of all that, so no problem there and it's good to see that it won't be developed and have any future problems with neighbors. That's what the monastery wanted. They want it more quiet so why they bought it. North Haven easement for the Whitney Wintergreen Tank, I assisted GIS with finding the easement documents for accessing the tank. The tank's actually in Hamden, but we get there from a road in North Haven. It's right on the town line. And drone flights in the month of February, Josh performed drone flights at the West Pond Tank for the engineering staff. There is five articles for you to read and I'm happy to answer any questions that you have.

Greg:

The monastery is still out there, huh?

John:

The monastery is still at Race Hill Road and Hoop Pole Road.

Mark:

It's a Dominican monastery.

John:

That's correct.

Mark:

Hey John, you had something about ice? The fire department of Woodbridge asked them to do ice. Can you get back to that page?

John:

Oh, is that in the special permit?

Mark:

Yes.

John:

Yes, I believe we issued it.

Mark:

Yes, is that just Woodbridge does that ice training or did anybody else get in on the ice training?

John:

I don't know if they have anyone else attending with them, but it was just Woodbridge Fire Department that applied for it and got the permit but if they brought fire department members from other towns, that would be fine.

Mark:

Good. Do you know, did they do it or was it they just asked to do it? Did they really do it?

John:

I don't know. I assume so. I will say that I drive down Route 69 every morning to come to work and it was interesting to see that we got sort of an old normal winter where all the lakes were frozen and in the period of two days, I think the lake went from 90% ice to no ice so if you go there today, there is no ice.

Mark:

Yes, Yes, I thought so.

John:

[inaudible 00:47:50].

Mark:

My pond is just like that too, I couldn't believe it. My pond was frozen solid and bam.

John:

Yes.

Mark:

All right, thank you. Anybody else have any questions?

Jamie:

Yes, I don't know the answer to this, John. It's a fish question, but when the lakes unfreeze that quickly, does that impact the fish population?

John:

No, I don't think it does. I mean I'm not a fisheries' biologist, but certainly there's chemical and turbidity stuff happens when lakes turn over, when we go from the fall into the winter and then from the spring into the summer, the fish are well adapted for their environment, so I don't think there's any problem.

Jamie:

And by unfreeze I meant thaw.

John:

Yes.

Jamie:

Thank you. All right, thank you.

Greg:

How many people are you looking for the Recreation?

John:

Just two.

Greg:

Just two?

John:

Yes, and I think he's definitely given an offer to one I think has accepted and he thought he had another person who would be a good fit, but I don't think they made an offer to the second person yet.

Mark:

People we have last year don't come back usually or do they come back?

John:

Most people do come back. We had one guy who did not come back this year.

Mark:

Okay.

Bob:

John, this guy wire, is it larger or farther into the property than normal? Most poles if they're making a change, have guy wires and this one here is-

John:

Farther in than normal because I don't understand all the complexities of their system, but they're putting on some kind of heavier line or line with more tension so it's pulling it across the street. So they need to go farther into our property with the stronger, the longer guy wire. It is an unusual situation.

Speaker 9:

I was going to say there's all kinds of guy wires all over. Are we going to have to license every one of those?

John:

No, because most of them are short where they go down. But this one is far in, so if they're just short they're probably still within the town's right of way or the state's right of way, where we don't have to get involved at all but this one goes quite a ways into the property.

Mark:

Okay. Anybody else have anything? Any questions? No? Hearing none, let's see what's the next thing we have. Thank you very much, John. Another great report. Upcoming meetings, the Finance Committee meeting with Monday, April 7th, 2025, fiscal year 2026 budget review. Like always all RPB members are invited to attend. Our next regular meeting is Wednesday, April 9th, 2025 at 5:30 PM. You think we'll be going out in the field that day?

John:

Well, actually I had written something down here. I need to change it. We have talked to Josh because he's got someone from UConn who's going to come in and talk about drones, so I think it was here. And what I've written down here, I've written down Skiff Street because Mark and I had a conversation on the phone that he would like to see places that we have on the future radar for disposition. And if we go to Skiff Street, it will be far enough away from the disposition application where it's not ex parte communication so I don't know. Right now, the guy from UConn is on the schedule. He expects to come on the 9th of April. We can keep that, and I can just do the Skiff Street in May.

Mark:

Okay, whatever.

John:

Would you like to do that?

Mark:

Yes, whatever works. The reason I asked John to do that, we get like the Seymour property, we got that we said that we wanted this disposed of. We don't get to see it and I think our committee should see stuff like that. So I've asked once it's given to the RPB or the RWA, we can't see it because you have to see it as a group and everybody has to give out notices and stuff like that. So if we know something is coming up and it hasn't come up yet, I'd like to see it and give us a chance to look at it, so we know what we're talking about when it does come in front of the RPB. Does anybody have an objection to that? I just think it's a good idea.

John:

We'll do Skiff Street in May, and we'll keep the UConn guy on schedule so we don't screw him up.

Mark:

Thank you. Thank you very much. Okay, in the joint meeting of Consumer Affairs and Land Use, very important meeting Thursday, April 17th, 2024 at 5:30 PM and that's for the fiscal year budget. Again, all RPB members are invited so you can attend either. You can attend both. I've done both many times. They're very interesting to come to our field, the budget hearing so I suggest that you go to both, or you go to one. Any other questions that come before us? Hearing none, can I have a motion?

Jamie:

You have a motion.

John:

That's Jamie.

Mark:

Okay, motion to adjourn from Jamie. Second, do I get a second or are we going to stay-

Brian:

This is Brian Eitzer, I'll second.

Mark:

Thank you very much, Brian. Okay, all those in favor of adjourning?

Committee members:

Aye.