

Lost Lake Watershed Advisory Committee (LLWAC)

Town of Groton, Groton, MA 01450 978-448-1111

Meeting Minutes - March 26, 2015

At Town Hall

Present: Mark Deuger, Susan Horowitz (BOH), Tom Orcutt (Groton Water Dept.), John Petropoulos (BOS), Arthur Prest (Finance Comm.), Michael Rosa

Visitors: Alex Woodle

Recorder: Stephen Legge

Call to Order: Chairman Prest called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM.

Responses to Published Request for Information (RFI):

Chairman Prest asked that each member give his/her ranking of the four companies' written responses. The four companies are all in Massachusetts and are: Cadmus Group, Inc. of Waltham; ESS Group of Waltham; Lombard Associates of Newton; and Nitsch engineering of Boston. For ease of discussion we will refer to them by their first three letters.

Orcutt: CAD, ESS, NIT, LOM

Deuger: LOM, ESS, CAD, NIT

Rosa: NIT, CAD, LOM, ESS

Prest: ESS, CAD, LOM, NIT

Petropoulos: LOM, NIT, ESS, CAD

Horowitz: ESS, LOM, CAD, NIT

Visitor, Alex Woodle, who has had much experience in the field, was asked his ranking: ESS, CAD, LOM, NIT.

There was open discussion of why people ranked as they did. Orcutt said he likes CAD because they have expertise and a good project management approach. Woodle thinks CAD is well-rounded, does good work on watershed projects and may be less expensive if hired.

Deuger has concerns about CAD – ranked LOM first because they are not too large and are well qualified. He feels they went the extra mile with the committee's criteria and support documents. He liked ESS also, but felt they were less focused on Lost Lake.

Rosa said NIT was his #1 because they are good with storm water management. He knows specifically of good work they have done on a project in Billirica.

Prest chose ESS because they are expert limnologists and good at quantifying problems, which is what we need. He talked to Savos Danos, recently retired head of Littleton water and electric utilities, who also respects ESS. Prest thinks highly of CAD also, for their expertise in limnology.

Petropoulos expressed frustration that most responses focused on qualifications, as opposed to answering to our needs for information. He feels that LOM is the only party who actually offered ways to approach our problem, and he therefore ranks them #1.

Horowitz likes ESS and LOM. This is based on good personnel. She assumes good people will eventually share good information with us when we meet together.

Woodle likes ESS and CAD very much. Both have done many studies in the area of watershed management.

All members agreed that it is difficult, and sometimes misleading to judge candidates on what they have submitted in writing. It was felt that face-to-face meetings would tell the real story as to how useful each party's information and perspective may be to LLWAC's main objectives.

Orcutt: interview all four. Deuger: very concerned about CAD - most expertise is out of New England, in other parts of the country. Also they mostly do large federally funded projects. Deuger would consider disqualifying NIT. Nothing for us with them, he says.

Discussion about whether to meet companies one at a time or two in one night, and what format would be best. Prest commented one per night, discuss afterward. Rosa suggests limiting the up-front presentation. Petropoulos suggests we ask for clear input on what LLWAC needs to do - try to limit sale of firm's qualifications at this point.

There was a consensus to meet firms one at a time and hear all four. We need to set clear expectations as to what we want from them. We will try for ESS first. Look at four consecutive weeks on Thursdays, beginning April 23rd (also 4/30, 5/7 and 5/14). Prest and Orcutt will develop an invitation letter and talk to the firms, inviting them to meet on our schedule.

Other Business:

Prest wants to write an overview of our activities for the Board of Selectmen before Town Meeting at the end of the month. He wishes to emphasize repurposing the \$17,000 of funding approved by the town before the current LLWAC was created by the BOS. (This funding is presently unavailable to the committee.)

Prest feels Jane Peirce of MASS DEP who spoke to the committee in January is very supportive of our efforts and may support grant funds for these efforts from the state.

Approval of January 8, 2015 Meeting Minutes:

Orcutt moved and Deuger seconded that the January meeting minutes be accepted as revised by Prest. Passed as amended, with four in favor, Horowitz and Rosa abstaining because they were not present at that meeting.

Adjournment:

Orcutt moved and Deuger seconded for adjournment. Unanimous consent. The meeting was adjourned at 8:03 PM.

**** The next meeting will be scheduled for April 23rd, provided that one of the RFI responders can attend. ****