

Shellfish and Waterways Improvement Advisory Committee Minutes of May 2, 2023 Meeting

1. Call to Order—The meeting was called to order at 6:45 p.m.

2. Review of Minutes

The minutes from the March 2023 meeting were reviewed. Suzanne Phillips made the motion to accept; it was seconded by Craig Poosikian, and approved by all.

The minutes from the April 2023 meeting were reviewed. Bill Amaru made the motion to accept; Craig Poosikian seconded, and they were approved.

[As the secretary was not present, Suzanne Phillips volunteered to take minutes].

3. Public Comment—there was no public comment.

4. Orleans Comprehensive Plan—continued discussion focusing on Natural Resources and shellfish

Bill started the discussion by saying that last time we basically said not to “take away” anything. He also reported he has been talking to fishermen, and the main issue is trouble accessing the landings, and that some of the ramps need maintenance and improvements.

It was pointed out that the landings were “maxed out” at the last update of the plan (in 2006) and that now the pressures on parking and additional users have increased. But it is acknowledged that there is only so much parking available, and that there are regulations and statutes that limit what can be done.

One idea was to identify properties next to landings that could possibly be used for increased access if they were available, and that the town should acquire funding for that purpose in advance (much as the housing committees have proposed).

Committee members agreed that the “working waterfront” should be a priority for any re-development, and access especially for commercial fishermen. It was recommended that to implement the recommendation, the town should start with a comprehensive survey of the landings.

Then the committee turned to section 5.4.1 of the Orleans Comprehensive Plan, the section on shellfish. [This section was sent out to the list before the meeting; it’s in the “Natural Resources” section of the report].

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Nate presented a suggested paragraph on propagation, and the committee had a lively and detailed discussion about aquaculture, the role of the shellfish department and other issues. Nate and a couple of committee members will finalize a draft to be presented at the next meeting.

There was also discussion about having a cover letter (perhaps drafted by the chairperson) to briefly comment on other relevant issues, e.g. water quality.

This discussion will be continued (and hopefully completed) at the next meeting.

5. Natural Resources Manager/Harbor Master/Shellfish Constable
Report—Nate Sears

“Red Tide”

Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute scientist Michael Brosnahan is coming to Pleasant Bay tomorrow to take water samples for analysis of the “red tide” bloom. One question is whether it is part of the “bloom” in Nauset Estuary, or is a separate bloom”. Hopefully, that can be determined.

In Nauset Estuary the “red tide” cell counts are going down (although in Salt Pond in Eastham they are still over 1500, a high count).

In Roberts Cove, the numbers increased from 85-300 (the threshold for closure is just over 85).

Nauset Beach Parking Lot

The parking lot is now the entrance to the beach. The bottom of the hill will be used for “back-ups” and drop-offs only. This is a change for the summer.

New technology includes license plate readers, which will allow the administration to know who is doing what [“surveillance” at the beach].

The new system will be implemented right before Memorial Day.

Seasonal harbors maintenance

The floats are in at Rock harbor. Docks are in place at Meetinghouse Pond and at River Road, as well as various channel markers.

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Beaches

Callahan's Pass looks different every week; it is unknown if/when it will open, as there needs to be room for 2 vehicles to pass at high tide, and that sometimes is not the case.

There are piping plovers everywhere. The nesting season started early this year, so hopefully the beach closures will end earlier too.

Skaket Beach was "nourished" last week, and the sand looks like "brown sugar". The DPW was collecting sand for the beach all winter from sand that blew up into the parking lot from the beach.

Parking regs

Nate met with police chief MacDonald to review the parking situation at the different landings. They will be making maps and proposing regulations to be submitted to the Select Board before June 15th.

Warrant articles

Nate and the committee recommend favorable votes on the following articles that are on the warrant for the May town meeting:

- 1) herring run repair and reconstruction, 2) Rock Harbor dredging, and
- 3) replacement and relocation of the fuel tanks at Rock Harbor.

7. Select Board Liaison Report—Mark Mathison

Mark was not present, so no report.

8. Announcements

- a. town meeting—May 8th
- b. town election—May 16th

9. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Suzanne Phillips, seconded by Craig Poosikian, and approved by all. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne Phillips