

Attending: Herb Gstalder, Laura Hewitt, Tom Slack, John Duane

Guests: Kathleen Bacon – Select Board liaison, John Riehl – NRAB consultant,

Jude Ahearn, Jenny Parker, Diane Brandt

Excused: Jake Puffer

Call to order: 4:05

### **Ponds Management Plan (Hewitt and Gstalder)**

Hewitt and Gstalder reported on a Zoom Meeting they had with Marty Burke of the Brewster Ponds Coalition. Hewitt described how the Brewster town management actively manages the health of the ponds and how the Brewster Ponds Coalition works with the town, for example by managing the Cyanobacteria sample collection and management. They were aided in their formation 10 years ago by Brewster being in the PALS system, which unfortunately did not extend to Eastham and Wellfleet. Gstalder cited a current impressive program in which 4 homeowners have volunteered to have their healthy septic systems monitored for Nitrogen and Phosphorus flowing into the ground water for a year from their system. Hewitt described the Brewster ponds management effort as “what we want to be when we grow up”.

Hewitt and Gstalder are making slow progress on the Ponds Management Plan. They have not yet received the Historical Ponds Data from the Cape Cod National Seashore, and will continue drafting with a place marker for the historical data. Gstalder reported that GUPACA has some historical data from the CCNS for the Gull Pond chain. They will also be working in July on the formation of the Wellfleet Ponds Coalition.

### **Mayo Creek Restoration.**

John Riehl, acting as a volunteer consultant to the NRAB, presented the proposal from the Woods Hole Group for a Wellfleet Harbor and Mayo Creek Sediments Analysis. The object of the study is to reduce the cost of dredging in the North Channel by additional restoration of Mayo Creek beyond the 15 to 20 acres that are currently in process. Would the dredging of an additional approximately 50 acres of the sediment known as “black custard” and thin-layer deposition of the material on the marsh be worth the cost? Some of the homeowner’s properties in the 50 acre area are below sea level, making it a complicated process. John explained that it is worth looking at the long-term project to assess its possibility. The lead investigators on the project would be Kirk Busma and John Trowbridge. The cost of the project is \$9,810, quoted in June 2023. (The ATM Article 25 from 2021 provided NRAB with \$25K to explore methodologies to reduce the cost of future dredging by alternative handling of dredge spoils/“black custard”.) The NRAB unanimously approved the proposal 4-0.

### **Harbor Update**

Duane reported that we are still searching for consultants to define what should be included in the new Harbor Survey. He has reached out to Ryan Curley and John Portnoy. John Riehl added in a response to a question that in the initial stages of the Herring River project, they had used consultants from the Woods Hole Group.

Duane reported that we have not heard back from the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) requesting their participation in and funding of an updated Wellfleet Harbor Survey.

Duane reported the fishermen's concern with the regulation requiring striped bass to be only in the 28 to 31 inch window to be kept. This is requiring large striped bass to be removed from the water to be measured, potentially damaging the fragile living fish, before returning them to the water.

Duane mentioned the controversy in the shellfish community about the regulation requiring the grantholder's name be listed first on the grant application or the corporation's name if the grantor has incorporated his/her business. There followed a lengthy discussion with some of the guests, centered on the fear of corporations taking over the oyster industry now that oysters have become so valuable. The NRAB will look to review whether this is an issue they will follow more closely.

### **Open Space Committee**

Slack reported that the outreach program with the local schools was very popular with the teachers and students, and that the Committee is completing their five-year plan.

**Minutes** - Approval of draft minutes from 5/25/23, approved 4-0. The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for Monday, July 31.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:58pm