



TOWN OF HARPSWELL
HARPSWELL CONSERVATION COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7, 2023
MINUTES

Meeting Opened: 2:37 PM

Present: Mary Ann Nahf, Wendy Batson, Tony Barrett, Nancy West & Town Planner, Mark Eyerman.

Absent: Deirdre Strachan

Observer: Jenny Zagariello (via phone, Nova Scotia),

Guest: Paul Ciesielski RAB/BACSE member, (via phone)

- Minutes of 5/17/23 meeting approved 4-0-1
- Announcements: Wendy Batson received a letter from the Maine DEP asking for permission to study wetlands on their private land. Apparently selected property owners in town who have significantly large wetlands on their properties are also receiving such a letter in order for a 3 to 5 year study to be undertaken. This is just a heads up.
- RAB's Representatives' letter regarding Navy & PFAS removal obligation at Brunswick Landing: Paul Ciesielski is the Town's appointed RAB (Restoration Advisory Board) representative. At the May 17th RAB meeting Paul learned that MRRRA (Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority) may purchase (or accept a public conveyance of?) Hanger 4 from the Navy. MRRRA currently has a lease on this building (the largest hanger in the state of Maine) and subleases sections of the building to various tenants. The building contains 4000 gallons of fire-fighting foam AFFF (aqueous film forming foam) this material contains concentrated amounts of PFC (perfluorochemicals) such as PFAS (per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances) & PFOS (perfluorooctane sulfonic acid). This is of concern to Harpswell because small amounts if leaked or spilled would enter the surface and sub-surface drainage system flowing into Upper Harpswell Cove, and potentially contaminate shellfish.

Dave Page (Brunswick's RAB representative and BACSE – Brunswick Area Citizens for a Safe Environment- president) drafted a letter to the MRRRA board of directors asking that they study the issue further and not go ahead with the acquisition of Hanger 4. Paul is requesting the Town sign this letter, as well as himself sign as the Town's representative. The draft letter was circulated to Kristi Eiane and the Conservation Commission for review.

Paul called in on the telephone to join the meeting for this discussion. It is expected that PFCs will be added to CERCLA (the national EPA list of most hazardous chemicals) later this year, when this occurs the fire fighting foam that is currently stored at Brunswick Landing becomes the responsibility of the Navy to dispose of. If Hanger 4 is transferred to MRRRA before the CERCLA listing, MRRRA will be responsible for storage and or disposal. It is anticipated that once it goes on the CERCLA list, disposal

costs nationwide will increase dramatically.

After much discussion commission members had a number of questions and felt that the select board should not sign this letter at this time. Committee members also objected to the tone and the assumptions of the letter as written -- not appropriate for communication from the town. MOTION: Wendy moved and Nancy seconded: 1.) encourage Paul to attend the June 8 select board meeting to discuss the situation; 2.) suggest that the town administrator discuss the potential hanger purchase with Brunswick's counterpart and 3.) Harpswell to draft a separate letter to MRRRA with its concerns and questions. PASSED 5-0.

- Public Roads presentation- Monday June 12: In early June a postcard was sent to 240 residents living on the five roads (Abner Pt., Lowell's Cove, Bethel Pt., Long Point & Dingley Is.) subject to potential sea level rise impact. As previously discussed, public participation is a grant requirement and a public meeting is required to review how the town selected the two roads that will be included in a grant request for future study. Gorrill Palmer estimates \$44,000 to study Bethel Point and Abner Point roads. The Town will seek a grant to cover this expense. The grant application deadline has not been announced but is anticipated to be announced in the 2nd Quarter. The public should have some say or at least an opportunity to object to the selection of roads (2-ft. Sea level rise is forecast to impact 4 other town roads. Long Point, Basin Point and Lowell's Cove Rd. were thought to be less impacted than Bethel and Abner Points). The Basin Point Road has already been studied for sea level rise impact.

There are four state roads (Mountain Rd, Cundy's Harbor Rd, Rt. 123 & Rt. 24) in Harpswell that comprise about 50 miles and 60 town roads which comprise about 28 miles. However, 68% of the 190 roads in town are privately held (each with much shorter distances). The public meeting will be held on Monday, June 12 at the town office starting at 5 PM, Mary Ann circulated the draft slide presentation (still a work in progress) for comments. After some discussion, she requested more photos and other comments to be sent via email and she will incorporate them into the final presentation. Also, all members of the commission are encouraged to attend the meeting.

- Waterwise presentation updates: Presentations are now scheduled for August 10 at the Orr's Bailey Island yacht club and September 14 at the Orr's Island library. A WaterWise table presence with handouts will be at the non-residents meeting thought to be July 6 but later corrected to July 5 and a future presentation hopefully will be scheduled at the Cundy's Harbor library in the Fall
- New Business: none
- Adjourn: 4:12 PM
- Next meeting date: June 21 & July 5

APPROVED