TOWN OF HARPSWELL

HARPSWELL CONSERVATION COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY APRIL15, 2026 4:30 PM

Approved Minutes

Open Meeting at 4:35 PM

Roll Call: Mary Ann Nahf, Wendy Batson, Nancy West, Jamie Hark, Lori Falcone, Deirdre Strachan, Planner, Margaret McIntire. **Absent:** Anne Caldwell, Tony Barrett, Jamie Hark

Guest: Matt Kales

- **Approval of minutes of 4/1 meeting:** Deirdre Strachan moved & Nancy West seconded move to approve the April 1st, 2026, minutes with changes. Unanimously approved.

- **Announcements:**
  Annual Roadside Clean Up: Chair Mary Ann Nahf reminded members that the annual Roadside Clean Up will take place next week on April 20th. Conservation members helped hang posters around town. Wendy Batson will check with Recycling Committee member Gina Snyder to see if help is needed in picking up trash bags at the end of the day on Cundys Harbor Road. Wendy and Nancy can do so if needed.

  New member applicant: Matt Kales attended the meeting as a guest who is interested in joining the commission if he can be of use. He was on the staff of the US Fish & Wildlife Service for twenty-five years, based out of Denver, CO, and specialized in wildlife and habitat conservation. Earlier in his career he worked on water quality issues. Members expressed appreciation for his interest and believed his background experience could be useful in the work of the commission. He will send members his cv.

- NOAA's GOPIF funded Drinking Water Study Grant: Mary Ann Nahf updated members on this grant, reminding us that it took the funder months longer than anticipated to finalize approval. The proposal was provisionally funded in January with additional approval last week with the exception of the booklet, which was denied. Work on the study should begin this summer. Data collected in the 80's and again in the early 2000s had a remarkably high rate of response as people were concerned about contamination. Worries today more often center around salinity and supply. This study will update the data collected in earlier studies.

Bowdoin has provided funds to hire an intern for ten weeks and three or four people have expressed interest. The intern will work on two parts of the grant: First, to update the data initially collected in the early 2000's, the septic information collected needs to be digitized; Second, a survey needs to be developed and sent out to identify citizens' concerns. We will be working with the hydrologist Carol White who worked on Harpswell's previous studies. The study is designed to help address town concerns about the availability and safety of drinking water in town as the town grows.

- **Update on the WaterWise series articles for the Anchor:** The first article, written by Jamie Hark, will be published in the May Anchor and will serve as an introduction to the series that will touch on articles to be published over the summer and early fall of 2026. The articles are designed to help residents better understand the role a healthy landscape plays in stopping erosion and maintaining a good supply of water for wells. Mary Ann also noted that the state requires that a certified arborist be hired under certain conditions and the state web site has a good page explaining why.

    - **Topics so far**:
        - Nancy West met with the town's forester Tim Vail and with arborists Ben & Amber Stuart to discuss article(s) on creating and maintaining a healthy community of trees and why landowners should do so. The three of them produced too many good ideas to cover in one article so the topic will be covered in two. Nancy will check back with them to set deadlines.
        - Sean Ruel will cover using vegetation, berms, and swales to hold water on the land rather than having it run off into the ocean.
        - Wendy Batson will reach out to Lance Linkel and partner to set up a Q&A interview with the Linkels but needs their contact information to do so. The Linkel article will be the last in the series and will cover using existing vegetation and landform features to keep and slow down water from running off. Wendy and Mary Ann will conduct the interview.
    - **Others:** Other possible authors include Sven Pulsifer of Island Arborist LLC, and Welltree's Jeff Gillis. Nancy will reach out to Sven Pulsifer.

      Finally, Mary Ann reminded members that all articles must be reviewed by the town administration before publication. Each article draft will be shared with HCC members and then sent on to the town for final approval.

    - **Schedule:** June, July , August, and September. Each article will be due on the 10th of the previous month.

- **New Business:** None.

- **Adjourned:** 5:17 PM
- **Upcoming meeting dates:** 5/6 & 5/20

Note Taker Today: Wendy Batson (substitute for Tony Barrett)

Minute Taking Info

Minute Takers	2025
December	Deirdre
January	Nancy
January	Tony
February	Jamie
February	Wendy
March	Anne
March	Deirde
April	Nancy
April	Tony

Minute Taker Hints

Can use the agenda as template, just substitute Minutes for Agenda

Record attendance, opening and closing time

Record votes - if vote split show the #Yea and nay

Record action items and responsibility

Where possible summarize pertinent discussion

Sign minutes, send draft to members for review; update w edits and resend.

Once minutes approved mark APPROVED and send to: Tina Deschaine, tdeschaine@town.harpswell.me.us

Parking Lot:

- How we might coordinate Willie C Landscape Design into our WaterWise program.
- Planning Board updates to 2025 ordinances regarding Resource Protection flood zones:
  - How to include the updates to the new velocity areas.
  - How will we think about marsh migration and new vulnerable areas.
- Outdoor Pesticide and Fertilizer Ordinance
- Control of Pesticide use on West Shore Rd. (Mary Ann to contact applicator)
- Discuss steps re: increasing no pesticide /fertilizer no use zone.
- How else might we consider keeping duff in 100ft setback.
- Time for a larger conversation https://www.harpswell.maine.gov/vertical/sites/%7B3F690C92-5208-4D62-BAFB-2559293F6CAE%7D/uploads/outdoor_pesticides03.10.18.pdf
  - Ticks – Should we learn more about what is being used from the applicators in the area, what we can provide differently than the State regarding control products, how the products affect the marine environment?
- Marine Resources desire to regulate disintegrating polystyrene in floats and in construction materials. being cut and used near the water. Contact a couple of builders, also check for sample ordinances. SENT BACK TO MRC for writing ordinance. Needs more work. 01/2024

Some interesting reading and watching:

- resources from Maine Organic Farmers and Gardners Association Low-Impact Forestry (LIF) program with focus on the ecosystem of a forest.
- i-Tree will show you effects of planting or removing a single tree the other National EPA Soils Calculator - https://www.epa.gov/water-research/national-stormwater-calculator
- https://www.maine.gov/dacf/mgs/explore/water/facts/well.htm
- **P. Slovinsky Jan 2023 explanation of storm erosion on bluffs and wind direction and hard armoring**: https://www.themainemonitor.org/here-are-some-resources-to-learn-more-about-coastal-erosion-in-maine/
- P. Slovinsky Feb. 2021 Maine Coastal Property Owner's Guide to Eros., Flood. & Other hazards. https://digitalmaine.com/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1605&context=mgs_publications
- MOFGA webinar regarding Radical Forestry Management https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WPorH1i__Uw#t=0m0s
- Edgewood Nurseries Lecture re: Food forest gardening; discusses ability to grow under the canopy of trees if understand the root structure. (Possible talk w/Aaron. edgewoodlandscapes@gmail.com 4 Cruston Way, Falmouth, Maine