

Town of Harpswell
Mitchell Field Committee Meeting
September 13, 2021

Attendees: Spike Haible, Don Miskill, Dave Znamierowski, Bob Yanders, Mose Price, Sharon Oehmig, Katherine Goodrich, and Philip Conner.

Also present: Mark Eyerman and David Chipman.

A quorum was present. The meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM.

Meeting Minutes: The August 2, 2021 minutes were approved as written [8-0-0].

New Business:

• **Blue Sky Tower:**

- The foundation has been poured, set and backfilled. They have dug the trench for utility services from the street to the site through the former water tower area. They will finish all the site work – fencing, landscaping, etc.
- Tower structure to arrive tonight, erected on 14th or 15th. Truck approved to park overnight.
- Tower complete by end of September; AT&T should be operational by end of October.

• **Running Tide Lease:**

- Lease amendment should be on BoS agenda for this Thursday, Sept 16th.
- Lease allows for “transfer of the lease.” Town wants to have a say in a transfer. If Running Tide wants to create a subsidiary, do they need to get it approved. The lease is specific to the approved uses. Cannot start other operations not covered by the lease.
- Question about the MF Marine Business District boundaries. Running Tide is within the existing boundaries so MFC is not involved in the lease negotiations. The Admin Building is not part of the MFMBD. Their lease is rectangular with the option for the additional 3.5 acres.
- See attachments to the minutes for maps of the MFMBD and the RT lease areas.
- Question about redrawing the MFMBD boundaries. It was not done earlier since we had not been approached about reuse of the Admin Building and the disposition of the service road. The triangular area is what we want to take out of the MFMBD and is not part of the RT lease area. The total MFMBD will stay the same. Once the lease agreement is approved, we will begin the process to redraw the MFMBD. The triangle area is where we might need to locate a well, septic system and additional parking so it needs to be removed from the MFMBD.

• **Integrated Town Landing:**

- Town has submitted a supplemental application to MaineDOT to reduce scope of work for town dock and increase the budget for the boat launch. The two approved grant applications remain in place. Total cost of the two grant projects is ~\$715,000. We have already spent some money on engineering services to date. Matching funds remaining is \$340,000. Hence the difference between 715 and 680. Any additional costs beyond \$680,000 must be covered by the town.
- Maine DOT said we can amend the Baker Design Consultants contract for the revised engineering services. We do not have to rebid the engineering contract, just amend it.
- Once the revised agreement is approved by Maine DOT, Mark intends to move quickly to complete the final engineering design and bid documents, get the permit changes approved, and get the revised underwater land lease approved. This will allow us to get MDOT approval to go to bid. Once approved, we can decide when to release the RFP based on what we think construction cost are going to do. Our budget is tight as designed.
- Question about Underwater Land Lease – It is not a year to year agreement. If not in perpetuity then it is a long-term agreement.

• **Proposed MF Operating Budget for 2022:**

- Don's proposed a budget of \$14,500 with the caveat that we do not have the Recreation Director's inputs for the Community Garden and the Bandstand. Our 2021 Budget was \$22,600 and included \$3,000 for the bandstand.
- Don't have 2021 expenditures to date. Once we get out Budget Advisory Review binders, it will have that information in it. Fiscal year ends on December 31. If there are any substantial changes Don will come back to the committee to present them. Many of the expenditures don't vary much from year to year.
- Reduced \$2,500 for one-time purchase of swimmers' area line and buoys. Community Garden money comes from a grant administered by HHLT. Bandstand fund request comes from the Recreation Director. Question – Why doesn't this migrate to the Recreation Department . Probably because it is set up under MF in the accounting software. Not a big deal.
- Mark has submitted a memo to ask if the town should fund a consultant to conduct a feasibility study on reuse of the Admin Building. Garages area would not be renovated. Town pays for well, septic and additional parking area. Current uses are limited to existing zoning as Shoreland Residential – Residential, Government, Community and Commercial Fishing. Town request for a CDB Grant was denied last year, does the MF Cmte think we should include money in the 2022 Budget Request for a consultant. Proposed cost is \$15,000 for 2022 budget.
 - Question – Could this work be done by the committee using public hearings and canvassing the community. Answer – Who's going to pay how much rent for how much space? Not focused on the uses for the renovated space but what would the market bear for the space. Focus on market need for the space.
 - Question – How is this connected to donor's offer to do the renovation? Why not let the donor renovate the building with their money? Doesn't seem like a critical path need to wait. Renovate the building and let it sit.
 - Question – How would it connect with the town dock, boat launch and a need for restrooms and shower off? Don't we need services and more parking. Yes, we do.
 - Question – Does the building serve a purpose? Is it what the town needs? Does the town want to have it renovated? That's why we do a survey or study. Need to put things in the right order.
 - The survey needs to be very carefully done so we don't have it falsely loaded, or a captive audience. Do we need to pay someone, or can we do it in house? That's what the MFC must decide.
 - Before major projects like this, we need wetlands study, market analysis, and community interest, but the key to a project like this is, What's it going to be used for?

- **Motion** before the committee was approved (6-2-0):

Amend the 2022 Mitchell Field Operating Budget to add a \$15,000 line item in the to conduct a Feasibility Study on the potential uses of the Administration Building?

- Disparity question on numbers. Don will enter the \$15K number, check the formulas, and send a new budget.
- **Monitors** – We didn't hire this year because Gina couldn't find staff. We did use them last year during the increased attendance. We did not have a problem this year. Let's reduce the amount to \$500. Will be a different issue when we have a boat launch.
- **Lifeguards** – Our signs say "Swim at your own risk. No lifeguard." The risk factor is low. The beach slope is very shallow and people pay attention to their kids.
- Why are the Community. Garden and Bandstand a budget line item for us? Because they are at the field. When the projects were first started, they came under the MFC. They were transferred to the Recreation Department later on. For accounting purposes, they are still in the MF Budget.

- **Upper Meadow Nature Trail** – Spike, Don, Lee and Nat Wheelwright walked the field on Tuesday, Aug 24. Nat very impressed by what we want to do. Talked about a rough trail route. First pass. Also talked about connecting it to the woods trail entrance across from the Community Garden. Finally, we walked the woods trails. This is first pass so to speak. May change the path from year to year. Envision an interpretive trail with signs. We are going to go slow. Nothing permanent to start. Question – What about birds and dogs? Can close it when birds are nesting. Dogs would have to be on leash. Question – Bike Park issue is still out there. Should it be part of the survey.
- **User Survey Sub-Committee:** Chair will be calling for a meeting with sub-committee. Will take some serious planning to do it well. Might ask about all the remaining buildings. “User Survey” should be changed to a public survey. We are asking everyone in town, not just the users.
- **Picnic Tables** – Done. Both are built. Meet with RT as a formal donation to the town.
- **Shark Warning Flag** – Is up. Town has someone designated to hoist the flag.
- **Work Party** – Last Saturday very successful. 8 people plus Don.
- **Field Mowing** – Has Started.
- **South Perimeter Road** – North end is closed until cell tower work is complete. Signs are posted.
- **Harriers Road Race** – Wednesday, Sept 22. Six elementary schools. Parking in lower meadow.
- **Dinghy Rack** – Next project we will work on.
- **Work Plan** – Will send out emails.
- **Goals and Action Items Update** – See changes.

The meeting adjourned at 6:05 PM.

Handouts: (All handouts are available electronically)

- MFC Chair memo, *Chairperson Update*, September 7, 2021
- M. Eyerman memo, *Planner’s Update*, September 9, 2021
- MF Steward memo, *Steward’s Update*, September 11, 2021
- *Mitchell Field Goals and Action Items List*, August 26, 2021
- Proposed 2022 Mitchell Field Operating Budget, August 27, 2021
- M. Eyerman memo, *Feasibility Study for the Reuse of the Admin Building*, September 13, 2021

Attachments: (Related to the Running Tide Lease Discussion)

Next MF Committee Meeting:

- MFC meeting on Monday, October 4th, 2021 at 5:00 PM
- MFC meeting on Monday, November 1st, 2021 at 5:00 PM
- MFC meeting on Monday, December 6th, 2021 at 5:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Don Miskill, Secretary

Mitchell Field Marine Business District



Running Tide Lease Areas

