

Town of Wareham

Marine Resources Commission

Meeting Date August 13, 2014

Attendees: Trenton Blanchard, Larry Bearse (potential member), Garry Buckminster, Warren Hall Jr., Don Jepson, Jim Smith

The Meeting opened at 7:00 PM.

The meeting notes from the previous meeting were read and accepted by the members.

Larry Bearse, a guest and potential member, was introduced to those present. Larry is a retired former Woods Hole research ship's captain who has sailed all over the world. Prior to working for Woods Hole Larry crewed and captained private yachts.

Garry Buckminster briefed those in attendance that there was less time priority for MRC to review the Proposed Waterways Bylaws as he has decided not to bring the Proposed Bylaws to fall town meeting. Garry opined that review of the Bylaws would be best done via workshops rather than dedicate MRC meetings to that task. Trent Blanchard then volunteered to be lead person to ensure that the Proposed Waterways Bylaws review continues. Don Jepson offered to assist Trent in that review. Any others interested in participating should contact Trent.

To bring Larry Bearse up to date Garry was asked to provide an overview of the various improvement programs he has in the works. Garry described his plans for the Tempest Knob launch area. Plans include renovating the float and adding dinghy docks to facilitate getting a number of dinghies off the beach. He also described the plan for adding two floating docks on the Narrows opposite those that are at Besse Park. When queried about the bulwarks that were driven to contain erosion at the shoreline at Besse Park, Garry indicated that the contractor, who the State selected to do the work, used plastic rather than steel and that when they encountered granite blocks and other hard surface debris at the river's edge, they cut off the plastic rather than remove the debris and drive in full length bulwarks. Hence, the shoreline is eroding, and caution tape marks the area that is undermined

Garry indicated that the State offered funds to renovate and upgrade the Onset boat ramp that is deteriorating. However the project was cancelled/ put on hold because a number of Onset residents are using the decree to stop any improvements there. The decree is also being used by some of Onsets' residents to challenge the town's pay to park program. The issue of whether the decree's intent is to promote access or to deter change will be decided by the court. The Onset Pier is not covered by the decree and Garry is working with an engineer to determine what is necessary to shore up the pier to stem the erosion that is taking place.

Regarding Zecco's Marina, work to replace the existing pile docks with pile and floating docks is under review by the Commonwealth.

Don Jepson reported that the Coastal Communities Resilience Grant program will be offered again this year. He briefed those present that in February he had investigated applying for a CCR grant as a means to obtain funds to facilitate updating the Harbor management Plan. CCR grants are awarded to coastal

towns so they can educate their residents to the anticipated impact and challenges of climate change and sea level rise. Wareham's current Management Plan has no mention of the projected impact of climate change. In February, after consultation with the Town Administrator it was decided not to complete an application for a grant because it was a reimbursement grant. The town would have been reimbursed 75% of the cost if a grant was obtained. However the town would have to spend the money first and upfront money was not available because of the town's fiscal crisis. Transfer of money from other accounts was not feasible because transferring funds requires approval at town meeting and the spring town warrant had closed. Garry Buckminster advised again against applying for a CCR grant and that he would investigate to see if there are other grants out there that are not reimbursement grants. Garry pointed out that the engineering firm that did the original Harbor Management Plan no longer does that type of work and he would be making contact with one that does. Larry Bearse then asked Garry if he had sought out interns to help update the Harbor Management Plan. Garry said that when the town had received interns in the past, they were assigned to the police department. Larry then offered to contact some of his former colleagues, who are now at Mass Maritime, to see if they can provide assistance.

Regarding Emergency Preparedness, Garry was queried when a Hurricane Warning has been issued, and he has ordered boaters to take their boats out of the water, is there an area designated by the town away from the harbor and away from storm surge where boaters can trailer their boats. Garry offered that when an order is issued to remove boats from their slips and moorings that the marinas and boat yards have their hands full just trying to pull the boats. To haul them to another area is time consuming and in the case of sailboats there is not sufficient time to remove the masts so they can be hauled to an alternate location. Garry said boat owners, who have boats of sufficiently small size to be moved over Wareham's roads, are advised to, whenever practical, to take their boats to their residence. This way they can maintain a watch over their boat in a secure location.

With regard to a small boat and kayak launch at Merchant's Way, Garry indicated that the water next to the railroad tracks is quite deep. He indicated that Sal Pina is in conversation with the railroad to see if they can come to an agreement regarding public access over the tracks. Garry indicated there are safety concerns with train activity there and that those who are fishing from the shore behind Merchants Way are trespassing.

Garry gave an overview of Wareham's Aquaculture Program and spoke of Mike Besse's and Ben Sutter's oyster programs. When queried about plans for the now vacant aquaculture grants in the Wareham River he indicated that when the remainder of the grants' lease terms end, the area will likely become a quahog management area.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM.

I attest these are the true MRC minutes of meeting held August 13, 2014.



Donald H Jepson, Chairman

Please cc: Board of Selectmen, Harbormaster Office