

Town of Wareham

Marine Resources Commission

Meeting date: August 12, 2015

Attendees: Larry Bearse, Jim Smith, Trent Blanchard, Don Jepson, Dick Wheeler, Garry Buckminster, Mark Rasmussen

The meeting opened at 7:00 PM

The meeting notes from the July meeting were read and approved.

Mark Rasmussen, CEO of the Coalition for Buzzards Bay gave a presentation regarding proposed plans for an Onset Bay Discovery Center that would include acquisition of Wickets Island and a parcel of land on Burgess Point and renovation of the bathhouse at Onset Beach. The purpose of the proposed center is "to provide high-quality on-the-water programs to engage hundreds of people of all ages each year in a variety of active outdoor activities focused on building connection and a sense of stewardship towards Buzzards Bay". The model that the Coalition for Buzzards Bay would like to emulate is the Duxbury Bay Maritime School. The proposed plan's projected costs for land acquisition would be funded through \$400,000 from Wareham's Community Preservation and \$375,000 from private donors. Costs for the bathhouse renovation and stone pier work on Wickets Island are projected to be \$1,200,000, of which \$200,000 would be from Wareham's CPA funds in 2016. Additional costs are to be paid from private donors and MA historic tax credits. Total costs for the proposed plan, to include land and property stewardship and launch of community engagement programs, are anticipated to be \$4,625,000. When queried about how critical the town's voters' approval at fall town meeting of the \$400,000 CPA funding was, Mark indicated that that approval is critical to the project going forward. Questions regarding American Disability Act requirements for water access to and use of Wickets Island were raised.

Subsequent to Mark's presentation discussion was had regarding the Coast Guard's proposal to no longer provide and maintain navigational buoys in Wareham River from Parkwood Beach to the Narrows. Garry Buckminster was of the opinion that a letter being sent by the selectmen opposing the Coast Guard's proposal had sufficient arguments to overcome the Coast Guard's position such that the Marine Resources Commission did not need to send an additional letter.

Garry then indicated that they have made significant progress on installing/ converting 30 moorings in the Wareham River as part of the State funded program to protect eelgrass beds.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 PM.

I attest these are the true MRC minutes of the meeting held August 12, 2015.



Donald H. Jepson, Chairman

Please cc: Board of Selectmen, Harbormaster Office.