

Town of Falmouth Massachusetts
Waterways Committee Zoom Meeting
Minutes - Wednesday January 4, 2023, 7:00 pm

Members present: Jeff Thomas - Chairman, Mike Kinney - Vice-Chairman, Kevin King, Dan Shearer, Chuck Eastman, Joe Voci, Gregg Fraser – Harbormaster, and Doug Brown-Selectman
Members not present: Chuck Martinsen

Public Attendees-Dave Thompson, Debbie Scott, Gilda Geist, Jack, Jacqueline Dufresne, John Eldert, Lisa Cavanaugh, RFL

Welcome: J Thomas – Start 7:00 pm

Public Comments: None

Review and approve minutes of December 7, 2022 – Committee approved as written

Harbormaster Report

- Contract signed for Engineering and Permitting of Great Harbor Ramp
- Test piles hit no obstructions for Simpson’s Landing, Notice of intent to be filed with ConCom soon
- West Falmouth Boat ramp project out to bid, opening is on 2/10/2023
- Will be bidding out Wild Harbor Float/ramp project soon. Additional roll over borrowing approved for engineers estimate to complete of \$168,000.
- Ashumet boat ramp selected for APCC storm water runoff grant improvements. Engineering underway now.
- Dredging of Falmouth Harbor Inlet to begin soon, approximately 1000CY’s, will be done by time of year restriction closure on 1/15

<https://www.falmouthma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/13902/2022-2023-Falmouth-Inner-harbor-Dredge-info>

Committee Discussion – Reevaluate Dredging Priority List (last version Dec 2020)

<https://www.falmouthma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/13900/dredging-priority-list-2023DRAFT>

Committee discusses the difference between the short-term plan, adjusting the existing channel to aid navigation and the long-term solution, widening the channel by removing part of the tip of the spit, to Eel River West. G Fraser explains that the spit is not owned by Falmouth, therefore permitting would require state approval which can be costly and time consuming.

D Shearer – Would like to add adjusting the main channel of West Falmouth Harbor by inserting a Y channel to improve the quality of water and shell fishing. D Scott advocates to keep Great Pond embayment on the priority list. Committee agrees to adjust the current list, create their own ranking within the list and then compare their findings.

Discussion for creating a waterways reserve account- C Eastman recommends the committee speak to the finance committee. D Brown explains that the acting Town Manager, Peter Johnson-Staub's response to creating a reserve account. He states that creating a large budget account at this time, so far into the budgeting process is difficult. He offers a waterways stabilization fund from the free cash budget but adds this should only be used for something with immediate need. Alternatively, we can look at the current capital stabilization fund. We can move forward with the finance committee, address our needs and determine how to move forward. Committee discusses emergency uses for the capital stabilization fund. G Fraser explains the bid for West Falmouth may come in high, we may want to discuss moving the project along by using this fund.

Megansett Harbor Status – The estimate from Woods Hole Group came back between 2000 to 3000 cubic yards. All material should be suitable for beach re-nourishment. The beach can be used to dewater the approach material and then DPW can move the material to other permitted spots in town. The committee expects the standard time of year restrictions will apply.

/DocumentCenter/View/13901/Existing_Conditions_Megansett_Entrance_Channel_1-2-2022

https://www.falmouthma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/13901/Existing_Conditions_Megansett_Entrance_Channel_1-2-2022

J Thomas reads Molly Kammerer's status report. The amount of material is large and maybe difficult to place. The Animal Rescue league owns Lawrence Island and is not interested in beach nourishment. D Brown adds there may be space, near the transfer facility, to dewater the organic material.

Waquoit Bay Embayment and Inlet Dredging project status – To move forward the committee agrees to discuss an updated quote from WHG to get cost/investigation of disposal of material and a spot for disposal. D Brown -discusses approaching Peter Johnson-Staub regarding the 18-acre site, could it be considered for dewatering. K King – How does off shore disposal work? G Fraser – Right now disposal goes either north of Boston or to south to Rhode Island by barge.

Eel River West Project Status- G Fraser – Costs, time and a disposal site all depend on which way we move forward. It's an embayment so all bird and time restrictions will apply. Committee discusses widening the channel. Will discuss deeper into this issue next meeting. L Cavanaugh – Is there anything we can do to move this process along? G Fraser explains that because of Federal and State filing, it takes years to complete and there is not much we can do to speed this up. We need a funding source to move forward with permitting and engineering. D Brown – Can we build up a bank of sand in front of the properties in question? G Fraser – If we use public dollars to dredge and dispose of spoils than that area would need to be open to the public. If It's private funding that does not apply. Jim Cavanaugh – Can leftover money can be used to dredge? G Fraser – It can be used to permit.

Member comments – K King – How difficult would it be to make Waquoit Bay a federal channel. G Fraser – Explains that they run on an "as needed" basis and creating a channel only to have to dredge it seems unlikely.

Meeting Adjourned – 20:22

Next meeting date – February 1, 2023

Respectfully submitted by Paula Cushman