

Islesboro Harbor Committee  
Regular Meeting  
Thursday, January 18, 2024  
In- Person Meeting at 6:30 PM, Town Office

APPROVED  
4/18/24

MINUTES

Call the meeting to order and establishment of a Quorum:

Chair Ken Smith called the meeting to order and a quorum was established at 6:30 pm.

Members Present: Chair Ken Smith, Earl MacKenzie, Dylan Purington, and Peter Anderson, Ex Officio

Via Zoom: Palmer Sargent

Members absent: Gil Rivera, Stan Makara

Others Present: Dick DeGrasse,

Via Zoom: Robert Giles, Chris O'Donnell, Antony Merck

Approval of Minutes of October 19, 2023.

**Motion: To approve Minutes of October 19, 2023, as written, E. MacKenzie, seconded by D. Purington. No Discussion. Roll Call. Motion passed 4 yes, 0 no, Unanimous.**

Anyone Wishing to Address the Harbor Committee

Dick DeGrasse passed out a copy of a memorandum he sent to the Maine Department of Marine Resources regarding the Giles' oyster farm, dated November 2, 2023, for the Harbor Committee's records.

Dick added that this week, the dock to Mr. Giles' property was washed off its supports and is now lying on the beach. Dick explained that he wanted to help tie the dock down to prevent damage, but there is a 'No Trespassing' sign, which he feels is not in keeping with the island tradition of helping our neighbors.

Bob Giles clarified that the dock does not belong to him and is not on his property. It belongs to Avery Colcord, who is working with IME through Rod Johnston to take care of the dock situation. He stated he would pass along Dick's offer of assistance, and thanked him for the offer.

Chair Ken Smith asked Dick what he would like the Harbor Committee to do about this. Dick stated he wants the committee to be aware of the 'No Trespassing' sign.

Harbor Master & Deputy Harbor Master Reports

- Earl MacKenzie reported that there wasn't much storm damage at Seal Harbor. The water came up over the top of the dock, but it wasn't dislodged. It's steel, so didn't have floatation. The saltwater won't help the underpinnings in the long run, but it held up. Everything seems okay for now.
- At the primary dock at Grindle Point, Dylan spent a lot of time there during the storm and took photos for documentation. We hope to apply for assistance. Both inclines were knocked off and the moorings were dragged. The inclines fortunately did not suffer damage. The primary walkway is high enough that it also was not damaged. Something hit the handrail and broke it in one spot, but that's a minor repair. There are some conduit breaks in the electrics, the wires to the easternmost duplex boxes are not working. Greg Janney assessed it, and he will be doing our electrical work going forward. He's scheduled to repair the conduit, and see if there are ways to improve the wiring. Janet approved engaging his services.
- Dylan presented his report. Regarding the winch, PYY has been in charge of fixing it. IME will now take over the repairs because they use it more frequently. PYY and IME are both happy with this new arrangement.
- January 10<sup>th</sup> storm:

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- Both inclines at Grindle Pt. went in the water. Moderate to severe damage to the dinghy floats at Grindle point. Cleats ripped off, boards damaged, at least one plastic dock-float was destroyed.
- One skiff was destroyed, another sustained damage, and 4 engines went underwater due to multiple dinghies capsizing. A dinghy that was tied on top of the floats was also damaged.
- The fishermen's floats ashore at the boat ramp were pushed up high ashore and sustained moderate to severe damage due to racking.
- January 13<sup>th</sup> storm:
  - Damage to the dinghy floats was minimized by pulling them out so no more damage could occur, as well as the wind being slightly weaker and less sustained than January 10<sup>th</sup>.
  - Josh Conover was able to push the fisherman's floats at the boat ramp off the shore with a machine at the high tide. Dylan was able to secure them temporarily with an anchor.
- Dylan is in the process of finding and rigging small anchors as a temporary measure to prevent the fishermen's floats from moving further inshore and across the boat ramp on the high tides. It is his suggestion that the town purchase 2 - 4 screw-type moorings for the fishermen to use for this purpose.
- Earl has suggested driving pylons, or something similar, alongside the boat ramp, to prevent the floats washing over the ramp as they have. Dylan supports this measure if deemed necessary.
- Earl added that he has a 210-pound anchor and some extra line that Dylan is welcome to use this winter. Dylan stated he would accept that. So far, he has one big Danforth, a 100-lb mushroom, and a 150-lb mushroom, which are not ideal, but he has them rigged. Dylan wants to get those things set as well as he can, off the shore, and provide the fishermen with some screw-eyes or something to avoid a similar mess in the future.
- Earl added that he and Dylan spoke about looking into a track machine with a hydraulic screw that can put ground screws in. Lines could be run from there to keep the floats from surging.
- The moorings all dragged. We realized that with this higher water, there was too much lift. We are putting two 2-ton moorings further out with increased scope (more chain). We will use the large mooring that's there now on the inside to stabilize it in both directions. One of the pins pulled out of the granite during the storm. We will also put some bigger moorings and increase the scope on the floats that are pointing towards Warren Island, so that in the future, if we have these extreme heights again, they won't break through. The Habitat moorings have an angle, so they dig in rather than tip and slide, and they're easy to service with a big stainless-steel pin that slides out for new chain.
- Ken asked about stationary floats and putting another line or chain. Would it go way out? Earl answered that the geometry stays the same. They match on each side and cross, and keep it in place. The float at Bounty Cove didn't move throughout the storm, and that was being hit hard. We have two big moorings with that geometry, and it helped.
- Dylan continued with his report.
  - The fisherman with the two wrecked floats (the ongoing debris on the beach) is making efforts to clean his float debris from the beach. He needs to repair a float to move his shack onto, and appears to be doing so. This process has been affected by weather.
  - Earl and Dylan met with another fisherman who has repeatedly needed to tie up over the two-hour limit due to a leaky boat and ongoing electrical issues. While improvements appear to be made, these issues remain unresolved and ongoing.
  - We are open to suggestions from the committee on dealing with these issues.
- Many docks were severely damaged, and some completely destroyed. Many will be rebuilt, and will be raised higher.

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- Ken asked if there are any new docks that have approval to be constructed. Earl answered that there is one that will be built at Indian Point, at the Haley property.
- Earl asked if the Harbor Committee or Harbor Masters should recommend to contractors that docks be built higher. Ken replied that he is in hopes that the Sea Level Rise Committee will give us some definitive data to work with. To get state funding, you have to raise it 4 feet or more. At the Keeper's House 3 feet, the handicapped accessibility would require a ramp that's 36 feet long.

Discussion of the duties of Harbor Master & Deputy Harbor Master

- Harbor Masters are overseers of the Town's waterfront facilities at Grindle Point and Seal Harbor.
- Ken stated that when the Harbor Masters give an order to someone, and it reaches the point where they are disregarding an order, there's a penalty. The penalty can be up to \$1,000 fine. While most people are cooperative, a very few people violate the ordinance repeatedly. Ken encouraged the Harbor Masters to come down hard on repeat offenders.
- A citizen that couldn't be here tonight will email Ken details of his concern. He wants the boat that's been tied up to be removed immediately.
- Earl agreed with everything Ken stated. Ken added that the Harbor Masters can get Fred's assistance if needed.

Report on MDMR regional meeting where improved communications between MDMR and towns was discussed

- Some towns tried to place bans on any kind of aquaculture. The Maine Department of Marine Resources (MDMR) came out with edicts saying that this is their jurisdiction, but they want to have better communication.
- Ken reported that there were seven people from the MDMR at the meeting that took place at the University of Maine at Machias, as well as representatives from small towns in the region.
- The shellfish industry in Washington County is the largest in the State of Maine.
- The towns want to be more involved in decisions for LPAs and long-term leases for aquaculture. The current law doesn't allow that to happen. There were many individuals from Select Boards of various towns, and many people expressed frustration that these aqua farms are taking over. Some towns don't have Harbor Masters to serve the purpose of evaluating the criteria for lease approval, so it might be a Selectperson.
- The biggest thing Ken took away from the meeting is that the best approach seems to be educating people, giving them as much information as possible. Decisions about whether you have an LPA or a long-term lease are then discussed between 2 or 3 different committees, such as a Shellfish Committee, Harbor Committee, sometimes the Planning Board. The decisions become a group decision. This also provides a greater opportunity for people to express their concerns.

Discussion of developing a Comprehensive Harbor Plan

- Ken stated that there's a new series of state grants becoming available that take a new approach to dealing with every aspect of harbor planning. Ken recommends waiting until we can get one of those applications.
- There are many other grant applications available, but they're not as sophisticated enough to deal with harbor planning for docks.

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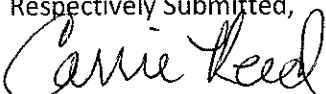
Discussion about the time of Harbor Committee meetings. Most members agree that 6:30 has been working well, and we should keep it at that time.

Discussion of the need to acquire a seaworthy boat to transport Health Center patients to Lincolnville, and for use by the Harbor Master & Deputy Harbor Master in the performance of their duties.

- Peter Anderson stated that there was discussion at the Select Board meeting last night. John King talked about a group of people from various islands trying to form a regional committee to discuss having a mutual emergency boat.
- Earl stated he spoke with a representative at one of the boat companies that's looking at this. They're still looking at a Norwegian company. The state apparently would be interested in funding the construction of a boat, but not the operational costs of the boat. Estimates are being worked up, and the particular boat they're looking at is a high-speed catamaran, which can go about 35 knots. They are thinking of having it stationed in Rockland. At 35 knots, it would be about 30 minutes to here. It could go into Lincolnville if changes are made to the waterfront facilities there, but with the specialized equipment on board, it most likely would transfer directly to Belfast or Rockland. They've talked to Maine Maritime Academy, but they need some way of training because it's different licensing, and they don't have a boat for training like that. It could possibly also service as far away as Monhegan. It is spread out, but these are very expensive vessels, \$5-6 million, with all the equipment. The maintenance cost isn't much, as they're carbon fiber, but they are extremely well-equipped and extremely fast.
- Ken stated that right now, we don't have anything. We are very vulnerable.
- Pete stated that we have a number of volunteers. Earl listed a few: PYY's Dipper, Josh Conover's boat, Dark Harbor Boat Yard.
- The Ad Hoc Emergency Transportation Committee that the Select Board created last year with John King, Phil Seymour, and Earl MacKenzie has been disbanded. Earl stated that the small group felt they weren't getting anywhere, but a couple things have started to change. One of them is the attitude of some of the outer islands. They had a grounding and are starting to be concerned about emergency transportation. The Fox Island Thoroughfare having access for those islands is being discussed again. Also, there are funds now that weren't available a year ago. The DOT has just received major funding for infrastructure.
- Ken stated that the Town owns the Health Center and the Ambulance Service. We have a responsibility. If there's a gap in service, we shouldn't be in a position where we have volunteers doing a needed service. The DOT used to wait until they had a certain number of deaths at an intersection before they put a light in.
- Pete said he'd bring this up with the Select Board. Ken offered to help in any way needed.

**Motion to adjourn meeting at 7:21 pm by K. Smith, seconded by D. Purington. No discussion. Roll Call.  
Motion passed 4 yes, 0 no.**

Respectively Submitted,

  
Carrie Reed, Secretary