

Islesboro Harbor Committee
Regular Meeting
Thursday, October 19, 2023
In- Person Meeting at 6:30 PM, Town Office

APPROVED

1/18/24

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, Gil Rivera, Dylan Purington, Peter Anderson,
Via Zoom: Palmer Sargent
Members absent: Stan Makara

Others Present: Dick DeGrasse, Robert Giles, Hilary Giles

Approval of Minutes of August 24, 2023.

Motion: To approve Minutes of August 24, 2023, as written, E. MacKenzie, seconded by D. Purington. No Discussion. Roll Call. Motion passed 6 yes, 0 no, Unanimous.

Anyone Wishing to Address the Harbor Committee

Dick DeGrasse asked the Harbor Committee if Robert and Hilary Giles had renewed their aquaculture lease with the Maine Department of Marine Resources, and asked if they needed to file their application with this committee also. Ken Smith answered that they do not; the Harbor Committee has very little jurisdiction, and the Harbor Master can only determine if an aqua farm interferes with riparian access, navigation, and fishing or other uses. The DMR sent a letter to the public, primarily to coastal communities. Some towns were considering placing a moratorium against all aquaculture. The DMR stated they couldn't do that. The DMR, by statute, has the authority to approve leases, based on feedback from the Harbor Master. The Harbor Committee tried to set up a subcommittee with the Shellfish Committee to provide a public forum for discussions about aquaculture leases and applications, but the Select Board did not approve this proposed committee. They were concerned that we might do or say something that would be contrary to State law. Now the DMR is holding meetings to allow for questions regarding the hearing process. Earl MacKenzie added that the Town has more jurisdiction within the intertidal zone.

Robert Giles was present and answered that he has filed a renewal of his lease with the DMR. He referred to the letter he sent to the Harbor Committee outlining the status of their oyster farm and observations on activity in Broad Cove. They have found no evidence of a mooring at the original site of their farm, though they moved it in June due to concerns of Dick DeGrasse's mooring being there. Mr. DeGrasse had not provided any evidence as of the deadline of September 29th.

Harbor Master & Deputy Harbor Master Reports

- Earl MacKenzie reported on Seal Harbor. He stated Ryobe is the name of the company that makes a battery-powered pump for \$150-180. In his opinion, it should be up to individuals to purchase pumps to be used to bail dinghies.
- Dylan Purington stated that Janet Anderson bought a manual pump for the Town. Next season, it can be placed at the dinghy dock.
- Budget: Dinghy floats: Earl spoke with Josh Conover to get a rough idea of how much to put aside. The floats at Grindle Point are most urgent. \$8,000 – 10,000 to build one, the hardware could make a difference. They are trying to standardize them so we can shift them around.
- Earl asked Josh to leave one float in at Seal Harbor for winter, as a few boats are using it. We can get another year out of the floats at Seal Harbor.

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- PYY is taking out the float at the Ferry landing, and putting it on the beach. Last year Christian said it was getting worn out, and Earl screwed a few planks down. He thinks it's time for a new one.
- The Seal Harbor ramp needs repair. There's a new one in storage; it's longer. Josh can take the old ramp out and do some welding repair over the winter. We'll move all the floats out about 4' farther.
- Long-term: Redo walkway/pier. The I-beams need work, replace side rails. Right now, it's functioning. We should start getting some hard estimates on that.
- At Grindle Point, the dock will need repair. Dylan stated Christian looked at it last year. It's fine for now, but we should get estimates from Prock, PYY, and IME. PYY did repairs on wood in past.
- Electrical box has been replaced, but the electrician never came back to finish the conduit work.
- Dylan reported that the winch was ordered six months ago, they followed-up last month. On Sept. 22nd Dylan was told it would be put in the next week, but it wasn't because it wasn't a direct replacement and they had to do some modifications. He was told today that PYY is putting it in next week. They will rebuild the old one and keep it as a backup.
- Ken asked about new uses on the winch. Dylan stated he hasn't seen any specific new uses. Dark Harbor used to use it a lot, but they are doing more directly from Lincolnville. With diversification and aquaculture, there will continue to be use for the winch.
- Some people feel more entitled to the waterfront facilities than others, but they've also been courteous and responsive when Dylan has asked them to move.

Approve a recommended FY 25 budget covering the period July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025

- This year the budget is \$50,000, and we've cut back quite a bit from prior years. The community is going to be faced with increases in taxation. We had about \$13,000 in reserve last year. Ken Smith stated we can get a statement from Town Manager Janet Anderson. We should look at the revenues, including excise taxes from the boats.
- Dylan asked about the cost of the last dinghy float. We could add about 30% to that number for a new one. Ken stated it was about \$8,000. Earl asked Josh for a rough figure. He said it would be less than \$15,000. We could base it on \$4.50/sf. + hardware.
- Gil Rivera asked about the money from the projects that haven't been done yet: Pleasant Point and Big Tree docks. Earl stated that the biggest donors want to maintain the money for those uses. There was no Town money put aside; it was all private money.
- Lincolnville dock. The Town pays \$15,000 for access to the dock. About \$76,000 was raised from Islesboro to build the original dock.

Discussion of Dept of Marine Resources Aquaculture decision criteria under 12 MRSA, § 6072

- Ken referred to the DMR letter that was sent to communities across the State, dated 10/10/23.
- The department is trying to communicate with municipalities and educate them about how they can participate. The fact that they want to expand the involvement of communities is good.
- Some communities are asking for votes on moratoriums on aquaculture.
- Lobstering is declining and many lobster fishermen are transitioning to aquaculture.
- Ken feels a 20-year lease is too long and who can predict the island needs 20 years from now. We have limited space around our island.
- Earl feels that there has to be a balance for business. With thousands of dollars in equipment, it's a risk. A reasonable lease would be 10-20 years. Lobstering also takes up a lot of space.
- Dylan feels there should be some kind of renewal process. 20 years is a long time.

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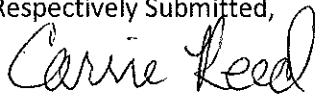
- Ken stated we need to treat everyone fairly. He requested of the Harbormasters, if you're advising someone, please recuse yourself if an appeal comes before the Harbor Committee.
- Ken stated he is planning to attend a November 20 regional Dept of Marine Resources meeting at UMaine Machias where the Department is going to address how they intend to improve communication between the Department and towns.
- Dylan is planning on attending Harbor Master training in March.

Discussion of developing a Comprehensive Harbor Plan

- Ken stated we would ask for a grant, paid for by the State. Many towns throughout the State are taking advantage of this.
- They look at the economic impact of harbors.
- The Comprehensive Plan would have to be approved by the voters.
- The grant money would be used to hire someone to write the plan, and we'd participate with them.
- Earl asked if there would be any strings. Ken answered not if through the State, usually with Federal grants there are.
- Ken will put together a report on the benefits of this potential opportunity.
- More people are moving to Islesboro, therefore we need to plan for growth.

**Motion to adjourn meeting at 7:25 pm by E. MacKenzie, seconded by D. Purington. No discussion. Roll Call.
Motion passed 6 yes, 0 no.**

Respectively Submitted,



Carrie Reed, Secretary

