

**Marine Resources Committee
Town of Bar Harbor
Minutes from Wednesday, June 22, 2016**

CALL TO ORDER – 4:06 p.m. Port Authority Building, Bar Harbor Municipal Pier

Committee Members Present: Megan McOsker (chair), Chris Petersen, Ron Landis, Matt Gerald.
Harbor Master: Charlie Phippen.

Guests: Tyler Quiring, Carter Hathaway, Heidi Leighton (DMR)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – April 2016 minutes were approved 4-0.

OLD BUSINESS.

A. Closure at head of Northeast Creek. The committee reviewed the February 29, 2016 report by the Lamoine office of the DMR that has led to the opening of the clamflats in Thomas Bay at the mouth of Northeast Creek. The committee briefly discussed this report at the April meeting, but went over the report again in more detail here. This closure occurred several years ago due to some high fecal coliform test scores. Initially, classes from COA had tried to isolate the source of the contamination, and could not get consistent sources at the site. DMR sampled at the site extensively, and similarly noted that there was not an apparent specific place that was consistently high, leading them to suspect that the problem was transient and caused by wildlife. The DMR did accelerated testing at the site, doing 10 samples a year, and a string of lower scores has led those flats to be reopened. A copy of the report is attached to the April minutes (Bar Harbor, ThomasBay47upgrade2016.doc). The committee thanked the DMR for their attention to this site and their work at getting the site reopened. We also noted that earlier this week there were 12 cars and at least 15 harvesters at the mouth of NE Creek, but they were all believed to be wormers.

B. Jordan River discussion. A member of the committee brought up a conversation he had recently with a clammer, claiming that a mussel dragger had dragged the bar at the mouth of the Jordan River (in Trenton). We had believed any dragging in this area had been delayed until the DMR could assess the mussel population there, which had not yet happened. We discussed Ralph Smith's current permit to collect seed mussels at that site, and we all were unclear and what was happening in that estuary. This area is of interest to Frenchman Bay generally but not within the Bar Harbor limits, so not part of this committee's jurisdiction.

C. Hadley Point Signboard- The Hadley Point educational material is up at Hadley Point, it has been added to the signboard with a plexiglass cover.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Report from surveys at Hadley Point and Clark Cove. These two reports were separated out into separate discussions.

i. Spring clam survey. Chris reported out on two clam censuses, one at Hadley Point East and one at Clark's Cove, both done in May 2016. The report (Spring 2016 clam census.pdf) is attached to these minutes. At Hadley Point East, clam densities (soft-shelled clams, *Mya arenaria*) were extremely high (247 per plot or 123.5 per square foot), but clams were still very small, averaging slightly less than one inch with virtually no legal-sized clams. At Clark's Cove, only quahogs (*Mercenaria mercenaria*) were found, and at very low densities (approximately one clam per plot), but with a much larger average size. We discussed potential reasons for the slow growth of clams at Hadley Point, and many believed the high density of clams and mussels has led to strong competition for food and reduced growth locally.

ii, Clark Cove. In addition to the survey at Clark's Cove, at the request of the DMR we also collected opportunistic data on hen or surf clams, *Spisula solidissima*. There is a known history of people harvesting hen clams at this site, and the DMR was interested in what we had found.

Only one clammer was out there the morning we took data, they allowed us to measure their catch, and the results and our observations are summarized in an attached file (Surf clams at Clark's Cove 5.16.pdf). The committee then discussed whether or not we would consider adding hen clams to our ordinance. The harbormaster commented that the population at Clark's Cove had been harvested for some time, and so overexploitation wasn't obviously occurring. However, concerns for this species and population were raised. It was decided that during very low tides over the next several months, individuals from the committee would try to go and obtain some information from current clammers on both the current state of the population, and how it has changed. The committee would then use that information in the next year to decide the benefits of adding the species to the ordinance.

B. Plans for summer work. Current plans include some continued pH monitoring of clam flats, as well as some work on bacterial monitoring from both the Maine healthy beaches program and work on Cromwell Brook. Committee members will also try to do some surveys of clammers at Clark's Cove. All of this work is funded by resources apart from the town.

C. Review of annual budget. The committee has spent virtually all of its very small budget, under \$300. We will use any remaining funds to buy materials for clam census equipment. The harbormaster reported that there is \$4000 for environmental monitoring in the cruise ship budget, and that it appears that our committee may be able to make some suggestions in how this money might be spent. We discussed more funding to help study bacteria on Cromwell Brook, and other pollution issues that might be worth investigating. We will discuss further at our next committee meeting.

D. Recruitment for new committee member. We are currently short a committee member, we reviewed the new process, including the online application for new and returning members. The decision is made by the town council, but public comment is allowed at the meeting where members are approved. The town has invoked term limits for committee members, a short discussion followed on when the 'clock' for those term limits begin, with one committee member believing that it would start now but now count previous terms. Charlie will try to clarify this issue.

E. Acadia National Park intertidal and DMR. At the request of the DMR commissioner, Heidi asked for feedback on where within the town and park boundary there might be mudflats where harvesting has or could occur. The committee went over maps with Heidi.

E. Other discussion topics. There was a short discussion of the new MEDMR webpage, and the difficulty with finding previously easy information, particularly on clamflat closures.

F. Election of officials for 2016-17. The current slate of committee officials was put forward for an additional year, that slate was approved unanimously by the committee (Megan McOsker – chair, Ron Landis – vice-chair, Chris Petersen – secretary).

Next meeting: The committee decided to break for the summer, with the next meeting in September. The tentative date for that meeting will be September 21, 2016.

5:14pm – Meeting adjourned.