

## ARROWSIC CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

Dec 20, 2022

Present: Phine Ewing (Chair), Jenna Howard, Karen Robbins, Jesse Nankin McMahon, Priscilla Tucker, Jody Jones, Karin Sadtler, Pamela Wishcaemper and Jack Carr

The meeting, held on Zoom, was called to order by Phine at 5:33 PM.

**Minutes:** The minutes of October meetings were formally accepted.

### **Community Resilience:**

**Meet Climate Resilience Volunteers:** Four people may be interested in joining us. Margaret Cochland who lives on Mill Island is interested. Mona Schline is also interested in joining but departs for three months every winter. Rick Beverage indicated he'd like to volunteer with us as we keep moving.

Pamela Wishcaemper and Jack Carr are present to introduce themselves:

Pam moved to Arrowsic and is impressed by the awareness of townspeople. Her major issue is looking at small things individuals can do to make a difference with climate change. Pam has a lot of writing experience that could lend to grant writing. Jack has lived in Arrowsic for five years and he's a professional civil engineer. He is semi-retired for three years. With the Portland Society of Architecture, he was involved in charrettes about rising sea level to the working waterfront. Jack has gotten involved with flood zone management. He lives on the Kennebec River and has been boating for 40 years, he's looked into the maritime history of Arrowsic and is a tour guide at the Maine Maritime Museum. He's on Arrowsic's Properties Committee and authored Arrowsic's Capital Needs Assessment for the various Town owned buildings. Karen knows both Pam and Jack.

**Make up of Climate Resilience Committee:** Phine wonders if we should ask a member of the planning board to join. The Resilience Subcommittee is looking at immediate grants we're working on and future grant possibilities. We aim to have broad representation with a well-rounded group of individuals. Would be great to have a youth member join. Some ideas of high school students who attended our workshop were discussed. Phine will help Jody connect to high school students. Jesse will connect with Camille's family.

Jenna and Jesse will share the responsibility of meeting with the Community Resilience Group as representatives from the Conservation Commission.

**Ideas for Regional Collaboration:** We have a meeting on Feb 1 to meet with Chloe Shields and our five towns to discuss regional projects. We need to come with ideas. Jesse brought up micro-grid consideration at our last meeting. Kathy Gravino in Georgetown mentioned that their selectmen were organizing a meeting with representatives of each committee in town. Phine suggested we convene a similar meeting with a representative of the selectboards, conservation commissions, and road commissions in Arrowsic and Georgetown to discuss Rt 127 and our climate resilience goals.

Priscilla notes we have time to map our priorities and map out a regional project for the next round in September with an action plan based on our understanding of what GOPIF is hoping we

can accomplish. Rt. 127 can be expected to be a priority and perhaps mapping sea level rise. Phine notes we want to ensure healthy water passage and healthy marshes helps with flood control and carbon sequestration. Jack considers emergency preparedness resilience, giving the examples of emergency road passage and wind knocking down trees and will call Jack Stump to discuss.

Westport Island has put off their sea level rise study for 12 to 18 months. We will pause on moving forward on that. We don't need to join them in a sea level rise study until later. They are currently going ahead with their well head study.

Karen notes that there are lots of pressing priorities (and points to Gabe McPhail's summary of available grants and including transportation type-resources) and we could be doing background work with regional planners at MDOT. She'd like to know their process to understand where we need to fit in our needs most seamlessly. We do not know what work the spending listed, \$100,000, is covering.

**Actions:** Jody will set up a Resilience Meeting and connect with the other volunteers. Phine and Jesse will connect with Jody on high school students.

**Mail:** Water quality testing results. The June July August and September bills came in and Phine OKed payment. Phine has sample numbers and results.

**Water Quality Report:** August's total phosphorus was 20 micrograms per liter (20ppb); chlorophyll  $\alpha$  count was 0.005 mg/L.

September phosphorus was 15 ppb and chlorophyll  $\alpha$  was 0.006 mg/L. The state and federal nutrient target values for Sewall Pond are less than 16 ppb for total phosphorus, greater than 2.0 meters for Secchi disk transparency and less than 0.008 mg/L for chlorophyll  $\alpha$ . This is the first time Sewall Pond has met or exceeded the target metrics since monitoring has begun.

Young-of-the-year alewives were seen leaving the pond in October and November as the monthly high tides were entering the pond. They were observed swimming against the tidal flow to exit the pond. Due to the extreme drought this summer, high tides were the only times that there was flow across the culvert control plate that maintains the water level in the pond.

**Alewife Update:** Juveniles were schooling up 10,000 on the days we saw them all at high tide in mid-October, swimming against the incoming tide. When the culvert was perched during the dry season, Karen sent the info to Mike Brown and he sent his team to do their own sampling. We wondered "How do the fish know how to get out of the pond against the tide?" These fish go against the flow. Our fish are not the same fish as their stocking parents. Karen asked Mike Brown to come to us at the January meeting to discuss this with us. Phytoplankton and Zooplankton shifts through the season would change the alewife population. Phine met with Bob Ater who saw them boiling in November.

Mike sent back to us their summary "young of the year" sizes and weights. Ours were second largest only to Sabattus where phos levels were through the roof. Now that we've lowered our Phos levels, our fish are smaller. More middle range.

The Gulf of Maine River Herring Network is a consortium of towns and state agencies building what should be our next research focus--what defines a productive pond or lake and how does that relate to returning to lakes and ponds? Water quality variables will be included.

Selectboard meeting: Phine, Jesse, Mike, Mark, Angel and Karen asked that the ordinance creating the stand alone Fish Commission. Questions from the Select Board: How would the Commission be populated? At least the first term is full.

Karen and John Wood re-mapped the bottom of Sewall Creek from the outlet of the culvert to the location of the removed fishway and it was close to the same as in 2008 despite the cattail creep. Looking for a professional to help us address that issue. A few oyster harvesters think channelizing a little tighter might help. Brunswick did battering at a public launch with oyster shells.

**Sewall Pond Conservation Area:** Phine asked Walter twice if we have confirmation from the Sheriff office about enforcement. We can address changes once we nail that down. We'd need money in the budget for signage if we shift parking requirements. "Closed Dusk to Dawn" and "No Parking Between Signs." Phine took out the handmade signs to replace in the spring when we refurbish the trail. We discussed parking for seven cars in the height of COVID which we don't think would pass at town meeting.

**Browntail Moth:** Barbara Boyce got an email from the state with the map of outbreaks and it showed they expect one in the Holt Forest due to the defoliation they'd seen from above. Phine wonders if it was *Eubulus obliquefasciatus* Weevil.

**Water Access:** Ongoing efforts to identify water access was discussed. A ranked list of things to be looking at, weighted, are available in the Minutes. They are all things we've looked at in the past. One of the things that isn't on the list is the availability of the land.

**November Field Trip:** 11 attended the November Field Trip: Marnie, Janet, Norma, Lisa, Clarke, Jenna, Karen, Margaret, Phine, Priscilla, Roz and Lucy. For future "field trips" Priscilla mentioned tracking "bio-blitzes" to chronicle what species are there on a given day in Arrowsic with graduate students at Bowdoin and an assistant professor at UMaine and the local community. It would be an educational activity. iNaturalist would be the tool to facilitate this. Karen mentioned that Paul S. pointed out that Bowdoin students took inventory at Bufflehead for the Nature Conservancy. We could do something like that, too.

**Nature Notes:** Karen saw a ring neck duck at Fisher Eddy at high tide. "*That is the beauty of an electric truck!*" Jesse is sad we still have mud from a warm fall. Ice in: on the pond started last Tuesday, December 13. Then we started to lose it and it seems to be staying. If the ice doesn't disappear in this coming rain, we can note it. Phine has turkeys that often roost in trees. One tom turkey landed in the chicken pen. Three turkeys were on the outside. Don and Phine herded him out and two immediately started fighting and went at it for hours. Jenna noted the winter moths.

**Other:** Rte 127 Picture Posts are scheduled to be maintained, especially those at the north end causeway.

Meeting adjourned at 7:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jenna Howard