

ARROWSIC CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

January 21, 2020

Present: Phine Ewing (Chair), Karen Dowell, Paul Schlein, Clarke Cooper, Susan Fenn, Jesse McMahon, Karen Robbins and Mike Brown DMR

1. The meeting was called to order at 5:02PM.
2. Mike Brown from DMR provided a brief summary of the river herring (alewife, blueback and shad) fisheries along the Atlantic coast and in Maine in particular. He reported that ASMFC is allowing three additional Maine municipal alewife runs to be provisionally harvested in 2020; Arrowsic is one of them. Arrowsic may harvest up to 15% of the average total return of the last five years as long the criteria for a “sustainable harvest” are met. If the Town decides to harvest, harvesting must start after May 15th. During the conditional period DMR would monitor several times during the harvest season. Arrowsic isn’t required to harvest and what Arrowsic decides to do doesn’t impact the decision to harvest or not in the ensuing years for Arrowsic or other towns. The benefits and costs of harvesting as well as the challenges and risks were discussed. Mike did ask that the current monitoring protocols be continued for another five years whether harvest takes place or not. He thinks that at the end of the 5-year period the intensive stop trap monitoring could be discontinued. Mike also discussed the impact of sea-level rise on the alewife fishery, the knowns and the many unknowns. The Commission decided at this time to continue monitoring as in the past and to keep the harvest closed this season. Karen Robbins, in coordination with DMR, will draft an article for the Annual Town Meeting that will allow the Conservation Commission to make the “keep the closure on or conditionally harvest” decision in the beginning of each year without holding a Special Town Meeting. The Commission will revisit this decision next January.
3. The minutes of the December 17, 2019 meeting were accepted as amended
4. Picture Post Project: MDOT has supplied a completed licensing agreement for the Rte. 127 post locations. The Select Board has the agreement and is expected to sign it at their next meeting.
5. Resilience Workshop: Phine attended the workshop held January 14th. It was attended by representatives of various municipal and county agencies as well as academic and area NGO’s. Its primary purpose was to show case each organization’s efforts and reduce “siloing”.
6. Nature’s Notes: Karen Dowell saw a huge rafter AKA flock of turkeys.
7. The meeting adjourned at 6:45PM
8. The next meeting will be February 18, 2020 at 5 PM at the Arrowsic Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Robbins, Acting Secretary