

ARROWSIC FISH COMMISSION
16 NOVEMBER 2023
ARROWSIC FIRE HOUSE
MEETING MINUTES

Present:

Karen Robbins, Fish Warden
Mike McMahon, Deputy Fish Warden
Jeff Pinette, Deputy Warden for Field Work
Angel Braestrup

Karen Robbins called the meeting to order at 6:02

1. Brief recap of the inaugural meeting in July: The Commissioners reviewed the inaugural meeting decisions, and affirmed the job descriptions of the deputies.

Deputy Fish Warden's role is to learn all the details of the job from the Warden, including by shadowing.

Deputy Warden for Field Work's job is to keep the fish passage clear and to enlist help or otherwise notify the Warden when extra work is needed.

2. Review of the report from DMR on the 2023 alewife season: The Commissioners reviewed the report from DMR and agreed that it should be posted on the Commission's web page. They expressed appreciation for Mike Brown's willingness to get it completed in time for this meeting. They noted that Mike Brown recommended that a harvest occur in 2024, especially if the harvest did not occur until multiple weeks into the run to allow the broadest range of fish (by age and sex) to make it to the pond.

There was some discussion about whether to have a harvest in 2024. Tentatively, it was agreed that an event similar to the May 2023 harvest could take place on May 11th, several weeks into the run.

Karen Robbins agreed to ask DMR about the parameters of a harvest, the timing of a harvest, and related questions about sampling and timing of the reports.

3. Update on efforts to improve the fish passage Karen reported on the meetings she has had with DMR, DEP, and other experts to discuss options for maintaining the fish passage on the west (downstream) side of the culvert. Because it is a restoration project, the permitting process should be fairly straightforward.

There are a number of different options available for doing the heavy work including the "strong backs" option which might mean hiring a Maine Conservation Corps team or half-team for two weeks. It would require a safe place for them to camp, training and oversight. There is also the

option of heavy equipment – there is a firm that specializes in these restoration projects. It was agreed that exploration of options would continue.

Jeff Pinette and Karen Robbins discussed the equipment and labor needs for a cleanup of the fish passage to be held on Sunday November 19 at 9 a.m. when the tide is favorable. The goal is to remove the pile of brush etc. cleared from the culvert and some old downed trees that have floated up and blocked part of the stream near the old fishway.

4. **Update on the draft handbook of the Commission:** Angel Braestrup reported on the status of the handbook, mentioning that Commissioner Witham was reviewing parts of it and had comments that he would be sharing in the future. Karen Robbins said that she would provide any information that Angel needed to finish the handbook.
5. **Other business:** Karen Robbins announced that an unsolicited \$4000 grant from the Henry Foundation had been received for the alewife fund. She affirmed that it had no restrictions beyond the use for alewife passage and ecosystem health. There are no reporting requirements nor time limits on when the funds must be spent. Karen said that she would ensure that the acknowledgement from the Select Board would be sent in a timely fashion.

It was noted that this brings the Alewife Fund balance to \$8821.14.

6. Public comments

No members of the public being present, there were no comments.

7. **Reminder of upcoming meetings: 25 January 2024 and 29 February 2024 are the next two scheduled meetings. They will be held at Town Hall at 6 p.m.**

Angel Braestrup said she would call into both of them as she will not be in Arrowsic on those days.

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.