

**ARROWSIC FISH COMMISSION  
23 JANUARY 2025  
TOWN HALL @ 6 PM  
MINUTES**

**PRESENT:**

Karen Robbins, Fish Warden  
Jack Witham  
Angel Braestrup

Members of the Public: Wendy Van Dyke; Vince Capone

1. **Call to Order.** The meeting was called to order by Karen Robbins at 6:05 p.m. She reported that Mike McMahon and Jeff Pinette were unable to attend.
2. **Minutes.** The minutes from the 11 Nov 2024 meeting were reviewed and approved as presented by unanimous consent.
3. **Public Comment.** No members of the public were present.

4. **Proposed Amendment to the Enabling Ordinance**

The commissioners discussed ways in which the Commission's work might better be carried out. They agreed that five commissioners is simply not enough to carry out the work of managing the public resource within the complex regulatory framework that governs migratory fish such as alewives.

In addition, the Commission found that

1. Often decisions about contracts, grant applications, and other activities need to be made on an urgent or deadline basis and it is not always possible to get the necessary quorum of commissioners to make those decisions.
2. There is a strong need to bolster institutional memory and expand the number of people who have operational awareness as the recovery program proceeds through the end of its second decade and into the third.
3. There are enough tasks throughout the year that could use more consistent support.
4. Others should share in the fun.

Thus the commissioners presence agreed unanimously to request that the Board of Selectmen approve changes to the enabling language for the Commission to change the name of the Fish Warden role to Chair and to provide for the addition of two non-voting alternates to the Commission in time for a vote at the Town Meeting. The proposed language will be discussed at the February Commission meeting.

It should be noted that Vince and Wendy have agreed to be nominated as the first of those alternates should the measure be approved.

**5. Sewall Creek Project Update**

The Commissioners discussed the matrix that emerged from the Alternatives Evaluation Workshop held in December 2024. It was agreed that once there was additional information from SWCA about alternatives and a report from DMR about the status of the fishery for the 2024 season, there may need to be additions made to the matrix of tasks and priorities for the project and other activities.

Karen briefed everyone on the status of the surveying (to be completed soon) and the recommendations from SWCA about the restoration of the fish passage. She also briefed everyone on the eDNA applications for Arrowsic's fish resources. Basically eDNA can tell if a fish species is present in a stream or other water body, but not how many nor any other specific details. There may be much to confirm about the presence of alewives and other species

## **6. Alewife Count & Harvest 2025**

Preliminary discussion about the 2025 harvest took place at the November meeting following the news that the Arrowsic alewife population is eligible for commercial harvest should the Commission so choose (as representative of the Town's interests). It was agreed unanimously that the 2025 Alewife Harvest will be conducted under the purview of the Fish Commission in the manner it was undertaken in May of 2023 and May of 2024. It will be held on May 10<sup>th</sup> in the morning.

It is expected that the Maine DMR report on the Sewall Pond alewives will provide more information about the status and characteristics of the 2024 alewife run.

Karen will be collecting names and dates of birth for the permit that allows volunteers to participate in the fish count. She reported that Jeff is working on ideas for repairing the fish trap—with an eye towards making sure it is both sturdy and weighs less.

## **7. Other business & adjournment.**

Karen described the process needed to participate in Video Counting for the Pennamaquan River run (half of the 2024 season videos still need to be counted) <https://www.maine.gov/dmr/fisheries/sea-run-fisheries/river-herring-counter>. She provided the dates for the annual Maine Fishermen's Forum (<https://mainefishermensforum.org/>) to be held at the end of February at the Samoset in Rockland.

The Commission agreed unanimously to expend the necessary funds (\$25) to be added to list of those receiving the communications of Alewife Harvesters of Maine. <https://alewifeharvesters.org/>

The meeting adjourned by unanimous consent at 7:20 p.m.