

TOWN OF IPSWICH

Shellfish Advisory Sub-Committee to the Board of Selectman

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday August 25th, 2009

Pursuant to written notice posted by the Town Clerk and delivered to all members, a meeting of the Town of Ipswich Shellfish Advisory Sub-Committee to the Board of Selectman was held on Tuesday August 25, 2009 at 7:30 pm in room C of the Town Hall. Members present were Bradford McGowan, Wayne Castonguay, Michael Lambros, Charles Surpitski, Elizabeth Kilcoyne, Anthony Murawski, Gary Collum, Shellfish Constable Arnold 'Pick' Thistlewood, Assistant Harbor Master Jim Zabelski, Deputy Shellfish Constable Scott LaPreste and Recording Secretary Marie Rodgers.

Others in attendance: John Pelletier, Andy and Linda Alexson, Matt Gonet, Bob Marcaurelle, Shirley Berry, Ernie Brokelbank, Russell Fowler.

Citizens Queries: none

Eagle Hill Parking Update

Ms. Kilcoyne reported on the Eagle Hill neighborhood meeting held on August 4, 2009. It was constructive meeting. Parking was redefined with the help of David Pancoast – 190' across the top 172' at mean high-water – 77' on left and 60' on the right. Neighbors preferred 2" and smaller stone – ICC may have to approve those changes; Army Corp has no preference; there will be no change to grade. A second visit is anticipated with the neighborhood. Discussion took place regarding the process of repair and the distribution of funds. Mr. Thistlewood will find out if the trays and floats were paid for out of the FY09 budget. The cost of the environmental consultant, engineer work which includes survey and obtaining all permits from Army Corp and DEP will cost \$6,200 will be out of the FY10 budget. The Board will consider a visit from Conservation Agent David Pancoast to discuss procedures.

Discussion took place regarding parking currently available and boundaries. Back in January 2009 the Board voted to enforce the parking permit requirement at Eagle Hill effective April 1, 2009. Currently decals are transparent and difficult to see. The Board determined to have decals reprinted on a solid color. Once new stickers are in place the Board will request the police to double their monitoring efforts. In response to Linda Alexson's query the Board will find out whether the payment for decals will be from the general fund or enhancement fund. DPW has filled pot holes and repaired the road.

Selection Committee to Appoint New Shellfish Constable

Chairman Surpitski announced as of September 15, 2009 Mr. Thistlewood will retire. The Chairman expressed gratitude for all his good work. The job has been posted and the Town Manager has every intention to fill the position quickly as possible. It was requested that the committee provide feedback to help in filling the position. Mr. Thistlewood gave his high regards for the two deputies saying they can and do everything he does and are ready to step into his position. Deputy Constables Jeremy Smith and Scott LaPreste can apply if they are interested.

Currently, the selection committee consists of the Town Manager Bob Markel, Police Chief Gavin Keenan, Selectman Charlie Surpitski, Selectwomen Elizabeth Kilcoyne and Wayne Castonguay. Discussion took place regarding the process; Shirley Berry said she would like to be on the committee; locations to post the job for best results; the town manager

appoints the constable; the job description will be revised and updated. The town manager requested the Board to recommend a member from the SAB. Committee member Brad McGowan offered to serve on the selection committee.

Ms. Kilcoyne moved the Board recommended Brad McGowan to be a member of the Selection Committee to interview potential shellfish constable. Anthony Murawski seconded, the vote was unanimous.

Status of enhancement task and future plan-shellfish

Shellfish Constable Arnold ‘Pick’ Thistlewood reported on the 2009 Shellfish Enhancement Task Record. Lengthy discussion ensued regarding activities, tasks and organization of public aquaculture. Chairman Surpitski handed the list to Harbor Master Jim Zabelski and requested he work with Pick and Chief of Police and come up with an action plan/policy.

Mapping Project Discussion:

Mr. Lambros distributed a list of selection criteria for potential private aquaculture sites in Ipswich and three tidal maps (hereby incorporated by reference).

Mr. Castonguay and Mr. Lambros spoke to the process and the difficulty of finding maps showing low water areas. Their report comes with the stipulation that there are errors and some flats are named wrong. Nonetheless, it was requested to look at it as a starting point. The Ipswich River and Essex Bay have not met the criteria, which leaves Plum Island Sound and a larger map was handed out. Mr. Castonguay summarized acres where private aquaculture may be feasible:

	SS (soft-shell clams)	AQ (potential sites)	total (acres)
PIS (Plum Island Sound)	598	54	650
IR (Ipswich River)	208	0	208
EB (Essex Bay)	259	0	259
Total	1063	54	1117

Mr. Castonguay spoke to 54 acres meeting the criteria for private aquaculture and not more than half available for private aquaculture.

Mr. Lambros spoke to the next steps to get a sense of establishing a viable program. He asked John Pellitier for his help, noting his valuable expertise.

In response to Mr. Murawski query about consideration for open water, Mr. Castonguay answered that it may be the next step and challenge; the town does not have authority in open waters.

Discussion took place regarding scope and process.

Several clammers raised numerous questions regarding the process. Concern were expressed about whether the private farmers would truly be self sustaining especially the winter months when the Rowley River freezes and they would be forced to dig on public flats; worry expressed about 54 acres not enough land for 140 clammers; the law suits that will ensue and there were questions as to whether there was a cost benefit analysis conducted to determine if private grants are worthwhile to the town; several clammers opined that enhancement should benefit all, enhancement for one person does not benefit all and should be public and for everyone. Lengthy discussion ensued regarding areas suitable and benefits to the resource and the environment.

Chair thanked the mapping committee for all their work and pointed out that there will be additional information gathering in order for the Board to recommend revisions to the rules and regulations for private grants.

Continuation of Aquaculture Discussion.

Chair spoke to moving forward, sensing the Board is at the point where everyone is well informed. He then addressed the issue of members voting and town counsel opinion concerning conflict of interest for the commercial members. There was discussion and Murawski, McGowan and Collum recused themselves from voting. Chairman spoke to the Board's goal of aquaculture enhancement to enhance the environment and the need to look forward to a balanced approach for the future growth of the industry. **Mr. Lambros moved to proceed with public aquaculture program and continue with seeding and things as they are. Mr. Castonguay seconded.** Discussion ensued regarding far reaching impacts of clamming on the Town's economy. The vote passed unanimously – voting members were Kilcoyne, Surpitski, Castonguay and Lambros.

Mr. Castonguay spoke to the problem of pollution; in 2000 the town voted to implement all recommendations made in a report addressing the problems of contamination and yet nothing was ever done.

Mr. Thistlewood said in the Ipswich River all counts were high – Dave Roach is working with Colleen to see where it's coming from. Discuss efforts to curtail red tide.

Russell Fowler 23 Leslie Road complained about the feds opening the dam and flooding the flats, closing down Fox Creek. Pick and DMF will address the issue again.

Mr. Castonguay moved to recommend to the BOS to continue a modest private aquaculture program to be narrowly defined. Mr. Lambros seconded. Ms. Kilcoyne moved to amend to support private aquaculture in accordance with regulations to be developed. Mr. Lambros seconded the amendment. Discussion took place and several clambers raised objection to the vote and suggested delaying the vote until the Board can present a final plan to the BOS; postpone the vote until all mapping is finished; eliminate vote of four board members and have the BOS put it to the ballot box for a vote by the town people.

Discussion took place concerning how to proceed with narrowly defined regulations.

The Committee recognized the valuable input from all the clambers and anticipates continued exchange of ideas and information. Ms. Kilcoyne spoke to mistakes made in the past with regards to private aquaculture and acknowledged the need for close monitoring and management. Mr. Surpitski spoke to the process and the first step is to decided if mapping warrants further investment of time; a lot of work has yet to take place; there are a few areas with no clams and could lend themselves to enhancement.

The vote passed unanimously – voting members were Kilcoyne, Surpitski, Castonguay and Lambros.

The next Shellfish Advisory Sub-Committee meeting will be September 15th, 2009 same place, same time.

It was moved, seconded and unanimously voted to adjourn at 10:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Marie Rodgers

These minutes were approved by the Board on October 27, 2009.

