

**TISBURY WATERWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES**

Thursday, March 9, 2023, at 5:00pm

In Attendance: Matt Hobart, Michael Baptiste, Jeff Canha, Greg Martino, and Roger Moffat

Also Present: John Crocker, Colleen Wilson, Kim Elias, Lynne Fraker, Mac Schilcher, Eric Litt, Jay Grande, Kim Baptiste, Noah Mayrand, Melinda Loberg, Karen Van Guilder, Peter Grilli, John Snyder, Gerard Du Toit, Jorja Darby, John Lewellyn, Randy Parker, Bob Landreth, Nelson Sigelman, Bev Postad, Marilyn Hopkins, Rick Homans, Cory Nevin, Peter and Lucy Sprayregen, Bob & Stacey Schmetterer, Nancy Weinstock.

- 1) **Call to Order 05:05pm:** Matt Hobart called the meeting to order.
- 2) **Public Comment:** Lynn Fraker acknowledged the recent donation of \$1,200 by Doug Bardwell for conducting an independent survey of the proposed Tashmoo dinghy dock reconfiguration. She also asked for a volunteer from the Waterways Committee as a liaison with Paul Munafo and Ray Gale for the project.
- 3) **Minutes:** Matt Hobart entertained a motion, Greg Martino moved the motion and Michael Baptiste seconded the minutes of February 16, 2023, as amended by clarifying comment made by Jeff Canha "except designated areas". **(Voted 5-0)**
- 4) **Lake Tashmoo Anchorage Discussion:** Matt Hobart opened by acknowledging the letters and emails received from the public in support of no anchoring in Lake Tashmoo. He said the discussion should be to decide on a recommendation to the Select Board. Matt Hobart stated that the current mood of the Select Board was to support a moratorium. At the Select Board meeting, Jeff stated he felt that it was a Town Administrator direction as a quality-of-life and departmental management issue and had gone to explain the reasons in addition to letters received from upland Tashmoo property owners. He felt it prudent for the committee to form their own opinions as they feel towards public access and the value that it has, rather than pandering to influences that are in people's ears. Matt stated that he, personally, was not in support of no anchoring and would like to come up with something that will work for everyone. Further discussion with the committee continued and a photograph of the anchoring area was displayed on screen showing a busy day during the boating season to indicate the density of the anchoring area. Jeff stated that Roger made a good point at the Select Board Meeting that there was no real data that supports whether it hurt the eel grass or not. Greg Martino asked members of the committee if they were in favor of completely banning anchoring, the consensus of the committee was not a complete ban. It was pointed out that there is currently no pump out facility available for Tashmoo. Roger Moffat asked if the anchorage area could be reduced, however John Crocker raised the issues of boats packing in tighter and safety relating swimmers

and the ability to respond to emergency situations. Jeff asked if the Harbormaster was still heading in the direction of adding either pilings or moorings in the area instead. John Crocker stated that his recommendation would be to add pilings. Using a greenheart pile can last longer and create less disturbance. There is also very little maintenance on them. He believed that he could probably get them installed this year. Roger Moffat asked if mooring could be in Drews Cove location for overnights. John Crocker stated with six or so moorings, he could spread them out. Mac Schilcher raised the question of charging a fee for use. John Crocker explained that he has the authority to install moorings. Charging for the use would be another step. Greg Martino said that he would not be in favor of charging for using the moorings. There was a discussion regarding rafting. Lynn Fraker hoped that the committee would listen to other options. John Crocker stated that six mooring was a reasonable start which would allow up to 18 boats. Michael Baptiste raised regarding pilings being a hazard and would prefer mooring balls. John Crocker said that there would certainly be signage on each pile. Overnight boats were discussed and whether it would be allowed. Jeff stated that the next Selectboard meeting was on March 22nd. Matt Hobart Opened up to the public for comment.

Eric Litt raised the question of aesthetics, John Crocker responded by saying they would be like that of Edgartown. Kim Baptiste did not agree with pilings, Marilyn Hopkins also mentioned the same. Mac Schilcher spent a lot of time on Tashmoo and quoted excerpts from eel grass studies stating that there has been no change. He stated that is was a pond for the people and strongly suggested no anchoring in Tashmoo without the express permission of the Harbormaster and not installing or moorings or pilings. John Crocker disagreed and felt is more logical to install mooring or pilings and spread them out. Bob Landreth stated that the select board has a policy for several years and that now it is known that there is eel grass in westerly side Town policy should be maintained. He felt that the idea of putting piling in the areas where John Crocker had suggested was a good idea and also developing a policy in not just one but both areas of Tashmoo. Matt Hobart mentioned the anchoring ban in Cape Pogue, Edgartown which increased the pressure in Tashmoo, if anchoring is banned in Tashmoo it will increase pressure in Lagoon Pond which already has a bad water quality issue. Gerard du Toit felt that the amount on boats has become a severe problem. He supported the idea of limiting the number of boats and his personal feeling was to install moorings as opposed to the pilings. Bob Schmetter made comments regarding the number of boats and crowding had increased. He felt that Tashmoo was a special place and would like to see it stay that way. He felt the Harbormaster's idea was well thought out. Questioned was raised on how the boats attach to the pilings. John Crocker explained that information could be communicated on the Harbormaster's website and also the Falmouth Harbormasters' website also based on the number of moorings in Tashmoo, when people come into Tashmoo, it would be obvious that they would go to a pilling. It would make enforcement simpler, they would be marked and marked with reflective tape and lines to tie up to. Further comments were made by Cory Nevin. Rick Homans, who is a resident on Tashmoo and a member of TWI, wanted to comment on the eel grass and on the health of the pond. He thought that with a moratorium in place then a proactive plan in place to help restore the eel grass would help and to monitor the growth. Tisbury waterways would be excited to look at grants and to actively be involved in the restoration efforts. Lynne stated that there is very little eel grass in the area

and that eel grass cannot be restored until the water quality can be fixed whether in Tashmoo or Lagoon. She said it was acidic mud. She also felt that she could imagine seeing pilings in Tashmoo and was really concerned about it but would suggest moorings instead. Tom Hopkins said that Tashmoo was being loved to death. He believes that the area can be restored and the idea of installing pilings was an excellent idea which will help restore eel grass and limit the number of boats.

Matt Hobart entertained a motion from Jeff Canha to recommend entertaining the Harbormasters six piling proposal for the anchorage on the flat and keep the Drews Cove designated anchorage as is. Roger Moffat seconded the motion. There was further discussion, Greg Martin asked why in that order and not in reverse. Jeff stated that it was deep water and a designated anchorage area and doubts very much that there was eel grass there. Greg wondered if it would force people to move further down to Drews Cove. Jeff stated that the Harbormaster has said that there is only room for 6 to 8 boats in that area. He believed that no one wants to anchor in eel grass and said it was a quality-of-life issue. The eel grass will not come back until the water quality has improved and that is a bigger issue and to satisfy all, go with six piling by the flat and see how it works out and leave Drews Cove as is. Michael Baptiste that monitoring the area was going to be an issue and suggested charging a fee. John Crocker said that he currently has someone in the area over the Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. Mac Schilcher asked for an opportunity to be able to anchor at least during May and September. He quoted part of the TMDL report regarding restoring eel grass. Melinda commented on water quality and the town working towards getting good water quality and stated that septic systems/stormwater and fertilizers are problems. Tisbury has been a Cape and Islands leader in terms of reducing nitrogen. Title 5 regulations although not yet in force. The MVC is currently looking at an EPI grant in coordination with the Town to implement stormwater management. Dredging also provides not just keeping the channel open but also provides flushing. She said that you have to take all the strategies together and eel grass is part of the strategy. There was further discussion about the possibility of having a moratorium during a specific time period such as peak season. The DMF eel grass map was examined during the discussion and whether pilings or moorings were preferable and location.

Jeff Canha repeated his motion to recommend to the Select Board to proceed with the Harbormasters recommendation to install six in the NW flat and retain the existing approved anchorage on the SW side. (Map of location to be provided) **(Voted 4-1)**

Mac asked for a secondary recommendation so that he can continue to enjoy the area. It was suggested that he make that comment to the Select Board and was reminded the Waterways Committee was advisory and that the Select Board may disagree with their recommendation.

06:45pm Greg Martino made a motion to adjourn, and Michael Baptiste seconded. **(Voted 5-0)**

Documents:

Draft Minutes

Letters and emails received regarding No Anchoring

Suggested language comments from HM regarding recommended changes to Regulations