

**Sippewissett Association
Meeting Minutes – November 13, 2008 APPROVED**

Board Present: Katie Abrams, Susan Cohan, Maureen Conte, Barbara Eck, Michael Eder, Arthur Gaines

Board Absent: Peter Waasdorp, Kathy Taylor, Carolyn Powers, Deborah Gove, Margaret Goud Collins

The meeting was held at the home of Barbara Eck and was called to order at 7:08 PM by President Katie Abrams.

AGENDA

Coalition for Buzzards Bay Business

Status of 2008 invoice for Water Testing Program – Maureen Conte

Maureen provided a brief history of SA's involvement with the Coalition for Buzzards Bay (COBB) 'Baywatchers' program. It began in 2000 when there was concern about the impact of Cape Codder waste discharge. The COBB provided kits for testing water quality and paid half the cost of the associated analysis; SA paid the other half. Testing was done by SA volunteers who were trained by COBB. Maureen commented the program has a dual benefit of not only tracking water quality but also educating interested residents about water quality issues. The Baywatchers program's state funding was recently eliminated. The total bill for Sippewissett area testing for 2007 was \$760; we've already paid half, as has been customary.

Discussion with Tony Williams, Director of Monitoring Programs for COBB regarding Baywatchers status

Tony briefly reviewed the history of the Baywatchers program. Beginning in 1992 as a result of the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan for the Bay, the Buzzards Bay Water Quality Monitoring Program was initiated to collect data and note trends about nitrogen coming into the bay. The EPA funded the program startup. In 1996 COBB started building its own funding sources for the Baywatchers program which included the State of Massachusetts. Current annual cost of Baywatchers is \$175K.

Anticipating the likely loss of state funding, COBB had plans in place to replace that funding with endowments for 2010. However, the recent loss of funding for 2009 was abrupt. They are working to lower costs and are approaching partners for funding to prevent interruption of the program in 2009.

Other points from the discussion with Tony:

- 75% of the Bay's harbors and estuaries are showing signs of nitrogen enrichment. Causes and solutions vary for each harbor/estuary.
- Baywatchers data is used by the state when developing its 'Dirty Water' list.
- Baywatchers is the largest monitoring program in the state.
- They do not test for pathogens; towns typically do this. COBB's top priority is tracking and reducing nitrogen pollution.
- Arthur suggested they should get a comparative bid from WHOI to do the analysis (UMass Dartmouth currently does the analysis.)

Michael moved that we pay the remainder of the 2007 bill (an additional \$380) and that we pay the full bill of \$870 for 2008. VOTED.

The Board will review the amount of this year's COBB donation at the time we review all donations. **Barbara** will review the membership forms and check how many members

checked off and paid an additional amount for Water Quality Testing, as well as for other listed programs.

Secretary's Report – Sue Cohan

Barbara moved to accept the minutes of the September 11 meeting. Michael seconded. VOTED.

The Corporation Annual Report was submitted in time for the November 1 deadline.

Treasurer's Report - Michael Eder

As of 11/13/08 the Eastern MMF balance is \$9692.50, the checking balance is \$345.90.

Membership Report – Barbara Eck

We currently have 151 members. Eleven members did not renew this year. The second mailing yielded fifteen additional membership checks.

Web site update

A running list of desired web site changes follows.

- Ongoing Activities - Sue to add a heading 'Support for Other Organizations'. Include SippOwisset under it which will clarify that SippOwisset is independent of SA.
- Ongoing Activities - Sue to adjust text so it describes the activity in general terms, then include links to the most recent update in a newsletter. Important updates between newsletters will be added either as a 'News' item or inline.
- Ongoing Activities – SippOwisset – **Sue** to email Arthur to finalize handling of SippOwisset info
- Ongoing Activities – Beebe Woods – **Peter** will again request that the FINAL study be posted on the ConCom website
- Ongoing Activities – Cape Codder Condominium Wastewater Disposal System Assessment – add an item about this with link to the report – Not assigned (**Maureen** Plans to check on recent test results in time available.)
- Ongoing Activities – Coastal Access committee – add an item about this - Not assigned
- Statistics report – **Sue** to send out current report

Content and Schedule for January Newsletter - Barbara Eck + Board members

Articles and assignments:

- Phragmites article-Nancy McDonald-Barbara
- Congratulate Crismans' son, also Shakimura (Nobel Prize) – Maureen
- Membership and new member recruitment-Barbara
- SippOwisset update –Arthur
- Welcome – Katie
- Thank you to Peter and Tinker – Katie
- Invite membership to provide topics for the newsletter-?????
- Christmas bird count/winter bird count results for Sippewissett- Arthur volunteered Jennifer to contact local birding expert
- Board steps up to help COBB - Michael

Articles must be to Mary Fran Buckley by Jan. 1. Target for mailing is mid-January. Idea for a future article– Pam Pallone on wetland plants

Barbara made a motion that if a person is named in our newsletter that person should be contacted for permission prior to publication. Katie seconded. VOTED.

When approaching new residents to see if they would like to be SA member we should also ask at that time if it's ok to welcome them in the newsletter.

Coastal Access Committee– Arthur Gaines

Arthur reviewed the origins of the SA Coastal Access committee. About eight years ago the Board concluded that Beebe Woods and our coastal assets were key to the Sippewissett lifestyle. The Coastal Access committee was formed and met about five times to review ownership and management status of coastal property in Sippewissett. Their findings, generally, were:

- Some of the coast is owned by the town (ex. Woodneck), some is owned privately (ex. Salt Pond Areas Bird Sanctuaries), and some is community owned (ex. SippOwisset, Racing Beach). None is federally owned.
- Some areas seemed well managed. SippOwisset seemed problematic.

SippOwisset has had many open-ended issues which have been pursued by the SippOwisset Homeowners while SA has watched with interest. Until these are settled the Coastal Access committee cannot produce its final report.

Role of the Sippewissett Association Board

Michael is anxious to determine whether the Board intends to pursue coastal access issues going forward, and in what capacity. He has a particular current interest because, as a homeowner on Gunning Point, he has been pursuing a problem described below.

Gunning Point rip-rap prevents public access to coast

A coastal stretch considered 'common' and 'for the benefit of Haynes subdivision owners' was rippapped in 2003 by someone. According to Michael the riprap prevents residents from being able to pass through the area safely. He has brought this to State's attention and the State says there is a violation because the project does not have the necessary permit. He believes the ConCom gave its ok without ever verifying that the petitioner owned the property; their process requires someone coming to them to have the owner's signature on a permit request. He has asked the ConCom to enforce their order of conditions and require the project to get State and town permits that are missing, but the ConCom has said that is not in their job to support the State and town to follow their regulations.

Arthur believes settlement of the Sweeney situation will go some distance to resolving Michael's issue relating to 'no ownership' land. He views Michael's concern as a subset of the Sweeney issues. Michael points out that while nothing has been built in the Sweeney situation, in the case of the riprap there's an existing structure at issue and work done on a parcel by someone other than the owner (The parcel has no owner according to the town records unlike the Sweeney parcel which is listed as owned by Sweeney). Arthur thinks once the Sweeney decision comes down from Land Court the town and state may be more responsive.

Due to the hour and lack of progress, it was decided to continue the discussion about the Role of the SA Board either at the next Board meeting or at a special meeting.

Agenda items for next meeting

Role of SA Board; summer social time change - was there a motion?; should socials include an informational component?

Katie moved to adjourn meeting at 10:02 P.M. The next meeting is January 8, 2009 at Sue Cohan's home.

Submitted by: Susan Cohan, Secretary - Sippewissett Association