**Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday, June 17, 2021, Surry Town Wharf**

Attendees: Tom Minogue, Sharon Minogue, Ralph Topham, Chris Stark, Marie Merkel, Susan Shetterly, Addie Heifetz-Shaw Institute Intern, Heather Richard

**Treasurer’s Report –** no change

**Conservation Commission Annual Meeting plans –**  The meeting will be held on **July 22, 4:30 pm at the Town Wharf or at the Old Surry Schoolhouse if it rains and is a Meet, Greet & Share** what different groups and individuals have been working on in conservation. Invitees will be from a list Marie had developed from a previous annual meeting. Chris asked if, as an annual meeting, if nominations for secretary and chairperson will be included. Tom said that we can do that in the next monthly meeting.

The invitation list that Marie recommended is:

Sue Sokol for **Friends of Patten Pond**

Lucy Leaf for **Toddy Pond Association**

Susan Shetterly; Norm Mrozicki for the **Surry Alewives Committee**

Michelle Berger; Heather Richard (and intern Mary) for **Shaw Institute**

Mark Whiting, associated with the **Hancock County Soil and Water District**

Susan Curran (Jacques) and Susan Guilford, **Friends of Morgan Bay**

Chrissy Beardsley Allen and Hans Carlson, **Blue Hill Heritage Trust**

Kate Mrozicki, Judy Tucker, Leslie Lichko, **Hancock Soil & Water District**

Pat and Barbara Tedesco, **Alewives Committee**

Marie also added Annie Langston Noll of Pemetic Sea Farms.

**ACTION**: Send email letter/Invite people above ASAP

**Patten Bay Dredging Feasibility Study – Info from Town to Corps of Engineers 6/30** The Corps requested any environmental studies, completed surveys and dataon Patten Bay such as habitat information – elvers, alewives, shellfish (restoration), rainbow smelt… Tom, Ralph, Chris, and Susan formed a workgroup, based on Tom Welgoss’s recommendations, to gather the information. The committee recommended contacting Barbara Tedesco – 667-3417 for Alewife Fish Count (she has the records of counts from the Surry Alewives Committee, Scott Craig US Fish & Wildlife Service, and Downeast Salmon Federation, and the ME Dept of Env’l Protection.

Ralph shared a document explaining why the Surry Dredging Project was rejected in 1986. At that time they determined “there was no commercial benefit that would accrue from completions of an anchorage and navigation channel.” That study was before WesMac and before the wharf was renovated. Ralph said that they had a points system for commercial uses, environmental and other considerations. This workgroup is going to share information that will help determine whether there are any negative environmental impacts or not.

Susan Shetterly said the alewife runs are very fragile. The Alewives Association counts alewives that return from the ocean in the spring, but she said they have not studied the juveniles that linger in the bay in October. She also said that blue back herring spawn in Patten Stream in June.

Ralph and Marie talked about Patten Bay has been a dilution zone Ellsworth Water Treatment plant from the Union River.

Heather said that the clam boxes have shown that the bay has many clams. Ralph said there is a disproportionally high ratio of male to female spat. She said the seed spat will contribute to seeding clams beyond Patten Bay.

Marie expressed concern about big boat traffic disrupting the environment while Ralph mentioned the use of jet skis as detrimental to the bay if it were accessible in all tides.

More studies need to be collected on all the anadromous fish species in Patten Bay/Stream, the waterfowl that feed there and shellfish production. Marie said that the elver season in March could be affected and the Passamaquoddy also fish here. We could get a letter from them for this study. Other letters could also be collected.

Ralph said the dredging project from the Union River might have useful information.

Healther said that she could contact clammer Glen Malven for environmental information that the use.

This task force will meet on Thursday, 6/24, 4 pm at the Surry Town Office.

**Other Items – Aqua Farms project on Frenchman’s Bay**  . American Aquafarms (a Norwegian Company) plans to raise 66 million pounds of Atlantic salmon annually in Frenchman Bay. Marie encouraged everyone to attend the Saturday June 5th from 10 to 3 at the Gouldsboro Town Park (across from Dorcas Library, Prospect Harbor)

**June 4 update: Peninsula Sea Level Rise Committee** – to address Climate Change – June 4th with speakers from the Island Institute, the Maine Climate Council, the Dept of Env’l Protection, FEMA and others to share the current reality about climate change in Hancock County -such as increase in days with extreme heat and extreme precipitation, bringing more frequent severe storms and flooding, rising ocean temperatures, higher king tides, ph of ocean -decreasing while acidity is on the increase weakening the shells of all shellfish, and lobsters shifting their territory northward and further offshore. They recommended we develop a countywide Hazard Mitigation Plan with every town participating. A plan would include studying where we might be vulnerable and need to begin doing things like culvert upsizing, road bank stabilization, building up shoreline, and modernizing septic plans, etc. In participating with this group we can explore grant opportunities for climate mitigation/adaptation in Surry. There is a Peninsula Planning meeting to join communities by zoom on **Friday, 6/18 at 9 am**.

**Annual Meeting – July 22, 4:30 Town Wharf or Old Surry Schoolhouse**