

WEST TISBURY
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
September 10, 2019

Present: Brian Beall, John Brannen, Whit Griswold, Donna Paulnock, Geraldine Brooks, Binnie Ravitch, Peter Rodegast, and Tara Whiting-Wells

Absent: Michael Turnell

Staff Present: Maria McFarland

Also present for all or part of the meeting: Sheri Caseau and Adam Turner

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 P.M. Tara Whiting-Wells, Chairman presiding.

Minutes: The minutes of the August 13 meeting were approved as revised. Peter and Binnie abstained.

Old Business:

Tisbury Great Pond: Adam Turner was present to discuss plans to fund projects for water quality management in Tisbury Great Pond.

He provided some background on the creation of 208 Plans on Cape Cod for projects (primarily sewerage) with funding from the Commonwealths Waste Water Bond Commission. 208 Plans look at conditions of ponds, implementation strategies for improvements and alternatives and offer recommendations.

In 2018, the Commonwealth passed a 5.7 % tax short term rental tax. In addition, towns on the Cape approved an additional 2.7% tax fund waste water management projects on Cape Cod under the Cape Cod Area Wide Water Quality Management Plan referred to as the 208 Plan done by the Cape Cod Commission.

West Tisbury passed a 6% tax on short term rentals but did not consider the additional 2.7%. If the town were to pass the additional 2.75 tax, we would need to have a 208 Plan in place to qualify for funding.

In June, Adam held the first meeting of a group of staff from the up island towns to begin discussions about creating a 208 Plan and the feasibility of doing so. The consensus at that meeting was that there is no money to fund it. Open to discussing it. What the scope of the work might be

He explained some of the pros and cons of the island doing or WT doing a 208 Plan.

Adam has been working the DEP to obtain funding specifically for the up island towns whose waste water management will not include sewerage. After the June meeting, Adam went back to Brian Dudley and others at DEP. He obtained a commitment of \$100,000 to develop water quality plans for the three up island towns to do projects such as alternative systems and pond openings.

Adam will forward a link to the Cape Cod 208 Plan.

Maria asked if this dovetails with talking with Brian Dudley about the final TMDL report on Tisbury Great Pond. Adam said Brian is willing to meet with the up island towns next month.

Maria suggested that Adam and Sheri include the West Tisbury Board of Health in the up island group as the Commission has been encouraging the Board of Health to have more stringent regulations requiring enhanced systems.

Sheri Caseua updated the board on her 2019 monitoring activities. She will update the water quality testing report for Tisbury Great Pond as soon as the test results come out.

Sheri also updated the board on work being done by the Buzzards Bay Coalition to monitor water quality in Buzzard's Bay. BBC does mostly citizens science monitoring of Buzzards Bay. They produce a health index for ponds and estuaries.

Sheri showed the board a one page hand out she has been working on for Tisbury Great Pond and James Pond. She will include the health index provided by the Buzzards Bay Coalition. Board members liked the one page summary for Tisbury Great Pond and James Pond. It was suggested that it be widely distributed, especially to the riparian owners.

In 2019, samples were taken in June, July, and August, but she hasn't gotten the test results from SMAST to date. The pond was opened on July 6 and closed on August 27/28. It was noted that the pond was open more than 17 days which is a threshold in the MEP. Samples were taken a week or so after the pond opened in July and after it was closed in order to see the efficacy of the actual openings. She plans to do this sampling again when the pond is opened this fall.

The board paid for the June sample and Sheri asked if the board can pay for the next sample testing that will be done in October. They will.

When asked about the water quality of the pond. Sheri replied that the nitrogen was going down but the chlorophyll is going up. The Secchi disk readings show that there is not a lot of clarity in the water. She noted that some of the ponds around the island are almost 2 degrees warmer than last year.

She also discussed the placement of ground water wells. She monitors the USGS wells located on the Edgartown-West Tisbury Road up gradient of the development at Deep Bottom. Mal Jones has given her permission to place ground water wells on his property down gradient of Deep Bottom. Also, she is working with Bill Wilcox and Dave Grunden at the Dukes County Conservation District. They work with farms on manure management.

She sampled dissolved oxygen in Deep Bottom Cove last week. The results show that this cove is very stressed. She would also like to put some ground water wells in Town Cove in order to see what kind of contribution the horse farm at Pond View Farm Road is making.

Maria asked if Sheri had found out any more information about the original MVC decision that required a deep exploration well at Deep Bottom. She had not. The condition required the developer to put in a deep exploration well with specifications to be determined by the West Tisbury Board of Health and MVC staff. The Board of Health and MVC were to create a testing program and retain monitoring records. The Town was to pay the expenses related to testing. Maria has checked with the Board of Health and the Town Accountant, but neither had any records. Sheri will ask John Powers. Maria will send a copy of the decision to Adam.

Sheri has deployed a long term dissolved oxygen monitoring device in Deep Bottom Cove.

She also updated the board on work on James Pond. Three years of sampling data have been collected. She has spoken to Brad Chase who is working with SMAST to put together a hydrological survey of the barrier beach to see where the barrier beach could be opened.

There was a brief discussion on removing the groins in front of the Graham property. Sheri will continue to work with Brad Chase as needed.

Ponds Committee: John submitted a couple of examples of the purpose of a water quality management committee and coastal pond management committee. There was a general discussion about what a committee in West Tisbury would look like. It was agreed that Chilmark should be brought into this discussion. Maria will talk to Jen to see if she should talk to Tim Carroll first before we make a plan to meet with staff from Chilmark. No action was taken.

Mill Brook Watershed Committee appointment: A motion was made and seconded to recommend Brian Beall as the Commission's appointee to a Mill Brook Watershed Committee that will be responsible for implementation of the recommendations in the Mill Brook Watershed Study. The board will also endorse the request of Prudy Burt to be appointed to the committee. All in favor.

Map 6 Lot 2/ Rattner-Sheriff's Meadow Foundation/ Amendment to Conservation Restriction (CR): At the last meeting, the board voted to send a letter to the Board of Selectmen stating that they did not support the amended and restated Conservation Restriction. By email dated- August 20, Adam Moore asked the board to delay submitting their letter to the Board of Selectmen as the parties to the CR are discussing changes. No action was taken.

Administrative:

Certificate of Compliance: Map 6 Lot 8/SE79-402/septic upgrade: A motion was made and seconded to sign this Certificate of Compliance. All in favor.

Correspondence:

In: Email from Adam Moore dated August 20, 2019 re: CR/ Map 6 Lot 2.1

Out: Map 43/ Lot 2/ SE79-381/130 Watcha Club Road: approval of additional selective view channel clearing

Orders of Conditions: SE79-404/350 Big Homer's Pond Road
SE79-405/62 Music Street

There being no further business to conduct, the meeting adjourned at 6: 25 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Maria McFarland
Board Administrator
APPROVED