

Minutes of the WNSHA Annual Meeting on August 6, 2006

WNSHA President Dan Arons opened the meeting by presenting the Treasurer's Report and the Minutes of the WNSHA 2005 Annual Meeting, both of which were approved by the membership. He then conducted the election of Board members and Officers; Bryden Brown, Peter Watts, and David Rowell were elected to three-year terms and the current officers were re-elected.

CCNS Board member Peter Watts and long time friend of Helen Aaron gave a moving tribute to Helen, not only as a founding Member of WNSHA, but as an extraordinarily vital woman who made significant contributions to the community throughout her long life.

What's New at the Cape Cod National Seashore: CCNS Chief Ranger Steve Prokop began with an update regarding the status of hunting in the Park. He mentioned that the Environmental Impact Statement would be completed soon, and that although no position has yet been established by the Park, in all probability hunting will continue in some form.

Paul Conor suggested that updated maps showing which areas are open to hunting and which are not would be useful. The CCNS plans to update brochures will provide that information.

Prokop encouraged homeowners to take advantage of the opportunity to have an assessment of their properties by the Wildland fire fighters in order to improve the level of fire preparedness on their properties.

Prokop said that people should contact the Park in emergencies, but he encouraged people to be forward looking and prepare in advance for emergencies. He recommended installing generators.

No position has been established as yet about wind power in the Park, but there is considerable interest in the possibilities.

He touched briefly on the conflict of interest between off road vehicles and nesting plovers; so far the plovers are receiving priority.

The regional bus service is running smoothly in every sense, with some 6,000 people riding the flex bus over the initial trial period. He mentioned that there has been a trend towards fewer visitors to the CCNS, and that this downward trend combined with budget cuts by the Federal Government has led to an increase in fees for beach parking, etc.

Inadequate funding has made it impossible for the Park to either tear down or maintain derelict houses in the CCNS. The Weidlinger house on Higgins Pond was mentioned in particular as being in distress, and worth preserving as an example of outstanding architecture.

David Rush touched on the Slough Pond Parking lot, which is over-used and as a result there is considerable damage to the area, both in terms of erosion around the pond, and destruction of vegetation. There were complaints about the trash, including broken glass, that litters Newcomb Hollow Beach. Regarding erosion on the ocean side, Prokop mentioned that an average of three feet per year is being lost off the dunes.

Herring River Restoration: Peter Watts talked about the plight of the herring that have been dying due to inadequate oxygenation in the section of the Herring River that flows from Route 6 towards the dike. He mentioned that four holes at the Chequessett Neck golf club will be moved to higher ground. There is a map of the flood plain available at the Town Hall. Watts mentioned that there will be one opening in the dike to allow the passage of small craft.

Paul Conor touched on the issue that people who live along the Herring River should not be held responsible for any unanticipated negative effects on their property.

Zoning Reforms: Peter Watts discussed briefly the conflict between the Town of Wellfleet and the CCNS regarding zoning restrictions on the ratio of the size of houses to lot size.

Town of Wellfleet and Homeowners in the Park: Tim Smith, Administrator, Town of Wellfleet, talked at some length about the determination as to which “private” sand roads would be maintained by the town. Apparently those roads on which it is necessary to retain access for safety reasons, or because there are year round residents living along them, will be continue to be plowed and otherwise maintained. \$57,000 was mentioned as the current figure required annually to maintain the sand roads.

Regarding the new fire station, he mentioned that \$6,000,000 will be necessary to meet the costs of construction.

The Town Water Commission plans to expand the water system. This will include developing a well field and a 500,000 gallon storage facility for the water.

The Town is interested in exploring wind power options, but so far no specific steps have been taken.

Members' Interests and Suggestions: There was considerable interest in the zoning issues in the Park; it was suggested as a focus for the 2007 annual meeting.