

Charlestown Dredge Sub Committee Meeting
Telephonic and/or video remote regular meeting
January 13, 2022 at 10:00
Draft Minutes

Call to Order:

Acting Chairperson Rob Lyons declared a quorum present. Called meeting to order 10:07 A.M.

Present:

Rob Lyons, Art Ganz, Rob Krauss, Rich Thomsen, Bill Wilson, Steve McCandless

Absent: None

Town Staff in Attendance:

Tom Toscano – Harbor Master
Deb Carney – CTC, CPMC Liaison
Chris Pancaro - Host

Public:

John Lyons

Appoint Chair and Secretary:

Rob Lyons volunteered to be Chairman and Bill Wilson volunteered to be Secretary.

New Business:

Discussion of current status of basin and channels

Ninigret pond breachway and channel has 3 dredge basins. Steve McCandless shared a satellite image of the area and lead a discussion on the current status.

The Primary Dredge Basin starts just north of the mouth of the breachway. It continues north to where the Channel is forced to turn west by a point of land blocking direct access to the pond. The flooding tides has caused erosion of the point. The ebbing tide creates an unstable, unsettled sand bar on the western shore. This combination causes sand to accumulate at the end of the primary basin in the area where it turns west. Steve documented water depth as low as 1 foot in this area. Navigation is very difficult or impossible due to the shallow water.

The Secondary Basin at the point where the channel enters the pond and the relief channel, through the sand flats into the pond, have retained most of the original dredge depth on 4 feet.

Dredging History

- 1985 – 1st dredging project
- 2004 – 2006 – Eel grass restoration
- 2012 – Post Sandy with revetment wall repair
- 2017 – Salt Marsh Restoration
- 2019 – Clean out Dredge associated with Quonnie Pond Dredge Project.

Past dredging has occurred on a random basis. It has been conducted in response to a significant weather event, in coordination with environmental projects, or when state or federal money was available.

Future dredging options discussed

The Town has a 10year dredging permit at expires in 2023. The committee recommended the town initiate the process to renew the permit for another 10 years. The basins should be retained as much as possible with the recommendation that the Primary Basin bend be reduced to straighten the channel slightly so that less sediment will accumulate in that area.

The potential need for core samples and the method of collection were discussed.

The original dredge plans included maintenance dredging approximately every 5 years.

5-year maintenance dredging is very complex and expensive with long periods where issues with navigation may exist. Is it possible to schedule annual targeted dredging, keep the channel open for navigation and is the cost less over the 5-year time period?

Moving the sediment to the town beach when large hydraulic projects are conducted is problematic. The committee discussed piping it through the marsh channel, along the road, through private property along the beach, into the pond and up to the beach parking area, wash zone.

Mechanical dredging as an alternate to Hydraulic dredging and the alternate methods of removal of sediment collected.

Financing of future projects. CRMC originally committed to help fund maintenance dredging. Is this a possibility? There is some evidence that CRMC has requested State funding in the next Capital Budget.

The town has \$ 1,014,839 in the Pond and Beach Preservation Fund.

Next Steps

- Begin the 10-year dredge permit renewal project

- Contact Jeff Willis, CRMC Director about available funding

- Invite a representative from J.F. Brennan Company to provide professional, expert advise of the issues identified

Quonnie Pond post dredging update

Dredge channel holding up well. Water depth remains at or close to 2019 dredge depth.

Town has received multiple complaints about the new boat launch. The angle of entry into the water is not sharp enough. The water depth is uncomfortably shallow.

The TNC/DEM Quonnie Breachway Resiliency proposed project plan was briefly discussed.

The members hope that additional local expertise will be included.

Next meeting

- Scheduled for January 27, 2022 at 10:00

- The meeting will be a Telephonic and/or Remote regular meeting

Draft Minutes Submitted by William Wilson on 1.15.2022