

SELECT BOARD

Minutes of the Meeting of March 21, 2023. The hybrid meeting took place in person at the Public Safety Facility Training Room at 4 Fairgrounds Road; and, via remote participation using Zoom. Members of the Board present were Jason Bridges, Dr. Malcolm MacNab, and Matt Fee. Brooke Mohr and Dawn Holdgate arrived later in the meeting as noted. Staff members present were Town Manager C. Elizabeth Gibson, Natural Resources Director Jeff Carlson and Sustainability Program Manager Vincent Murphy.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Bridges called the meeting to order at 5:01 PM and read a statement as to the remote participation status of the meeting.

Conservation Commission Chair Ashley Erisman called the Conservation Commission (ConCom) to order at 5:02 PM.

I. JOINT MEETING WITH CONSERVATION COMMISSION TO DISCUSS SCONSET BLUFF EROSION CONTROL MEASURES.

Tanya McCoy-Caretti of Arcadis, professional facilitator for this meeting began with a review of the protocol for emergency departure from the room, if needed. She reviewed Sconset Bluff erosion control scenarios (3) for the Select Board and ConCom to review during the meeting and reviewed the process by which the review of each scenario would occur.

Dawn Holdgate joined the meeting at 5:09 PM.

Ms. McCoy-Caretti explained that while a final solution may not be reached this evening, hopefully it will at least progress the discussion of the options. She used a “rose, bud, thorn” analogy to further explain how to discuss the scenarios. Some discussion followed on the specifics of the parameters for the discussion groups.

Brooke Mohr joined the meeting at 5:13 PM.

Mr. Fee asked if staff would be involved in the discussion groups. Ms. McCoy-Caretti said staff is available for technical advice and assistance.

Ms. McCoy-Caretti asked the Board and Commission members to assemble themselves into three pre-arranged groups, with each group to discuss each scenario using the “rose, bud, thorn” framework.

The groups reported out as follows from the scenario reviews: Brooke Mohr stated that the same idea was seen as both a “rose” and a “thorn” by different people in the various scenarios. She said she prefers focusing on the “buds” (potential ideas) and there were several of those throughout the scenarios. ConCom member Seth Engelbourg reviewed each scenario as to the number of “roses”, “buds” and “thorns” associated with each. Ms. McCoy-Caretti commented that in her observations, there was a lot of commonalities in the scenario discussions. Chair Erisman commented that a middle ground needs to be reached for this situation. She added that there are extreme opinions on both sides, which makes reaching the middle ground more difficult. Discussion continued about each scenario. Ms. McCoy-Caretti agreed that there is “progress to be made in the middle”. Mr. Engelbourg commented that the structure of public meetings, especially a regulatory body like the ConCom, are inflexible by nature and that makes it even more difficult. Ms. McCoy-Caretti discussed ways that public bodies can work on difficult issues like this

one, such as workshop style meetings. ConCom member Mike Misurelli commented on the potential influence of social media on problems such as this one, in which few facts are often used. Ms. McCoy-Caretti said that social media is often considered unnecessary “noise” with situations like this. Chair Erisman questioned whether the Select Board and ConCom might have been more successful together, without the presence of a private entity that was “pulling the strings”. Ms. McCoy-Caretti asked if Chair Erisman is suggesting removing the private entity (Sconset Beach Preservation Fund – SBPF) from the “tactical planning” for the project. Chair Erisman responded affirmatively. Some discussion followed as to the nature of the Town’s relationship with SBPF. Ms. Mohr said she believes there is an opportunity to “reset” the situation, as a result of the withdrawal of SBPF from continuing with the current project. Discussion followed as to whether or not the current outcome might have been different with a different management structure for the project. Some discussion followed. Mr. Engelbourg said he thinks the decision for this situation needs to be shared between the Select Board and the ConCom. Chair Erisman suggested the “Town put out a fact sheet” of this project. Some discussion followed. Mr. Engelbourg and ConCom member Mark Beale said they were disappointed that the Notice of Intent application was withdrawn. Mr. Beale said he is concerned over the cost of the project, including maintenance. Dr. MacNab commented on the reality of the scenarios and said that timing, funding, probabilities and permitting all have to be taken into consideration. Ms. Holdgate questioned how the Select Board would feasibly put forward its own Notice of Intent, including funding and management. Discussion followed as to what the current project actually protects. Mr. Fee spoke on the associated requirements of an erosion control project, specifically with the need for significant amounts of sand and how that contributed to a partnership with SBPF. Ms. McCoy-Caretti asked if there was anyone present who did not agree there is a current opportunity to “reset” this project. Chair Erisman said her concern is responsible management of the project, as it seems there is no viable party to currently do that. Discussion followed as to whether there is private funding available for this project, or a modified project. Ms. Mohr wondered if there was a way to gauge the feasibility of private funding. Discussion continued about decision making with regard to a solution, as well as how to secure funding from private sources. Ms. Mohr suggested the possibility of the Town submitting a Notice of Intent “contingent” upon private funding to pay for it from the neighborhood. Discussion followed on how this would be accomplished.

Ms. McCoy-Caretti said that Arcadis will compile the results of this session and could make recommendations on next steps forward. Mr. Engelbourg asked about extending the removal order to accommodate the time it could take for the Arcadis report to be completed. Mr. Misurelli suggested another meeting. Discussion followed as to the status of the management of the current project. Chair Bridges expressed support for meeting again. Dr. MacNab concurred but said that he doesn’t feel the Town has the time, resources or funding to handle the project. Discussion followed as to the date for another meeting, with April 11, 2023 being generally agreed to.

The Conservation Commission and the Select Board both adjourned at 7:12 PM.

Approved the 5th day of April 2023.

**SELECT BOARD
MARCH 21, 2023 – 5:00 PM
PSF TRAINING ROOM, 4 FAIRGROUNDS ROAD
AND REMOTE PARTICIPATION VIA ZOOM
NANTUCKET, MASSACHUSETTS**

List of documents used at the meeting:

None.