



Minutes – Jan 9, 2026; Susan Cyr’s house; 118 Headwaters Dr Harwich

Attendees:

Susan Cyr	Diana Preston(zoom)	Scott Norum(zoom for first few items)
Ann Frechette	Donna Connolly(zoom)	
John Ketchum	Ben Warshaw(zoom)	
Erik Skramstad	Patrick Otton(zoom)	Absent: Rich Walker

Discussion

- Approval of Dec 8 minutes – all board members approved via email.
- **Wastewater Update from Scott –**
 - Original wastewater group disbanded in 2018. Scott is pursuing from Finance/CWMP perspective. Finance chair is pitching to Select Board to resurrect it. SB member will bring up in Sat Jan 10 SB exec meeting. Scott will push for urine diversion focus.
 - CWMP is due from a year from now so good timing to offer additional options to sewer.
 - Wetlands restoration is another option. Capital Plan has item to study West Reservoir for another eco restoration project(2028).
 - Confirmed that CWMP collabs with Chatham and they would be part of the update.
- **Admin Update Google Drive** -Security concerns highlighted; ok temporarily but will get HPC ownership (vs individual board member) long term. Ben walked through the google drive structure with everyone. MDAR reports – Eplace – could register if interested in getting reports. Ben to send link if interested.
- **Financials:**

Total Funds Available	\$1,833
- Cape Cod 5 balance of \$881.25	

- PayPal balance of \$952.48			
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1. 2026 – our fiscal year is Jan-Dec; What is our membership year? While it can be different, let's put Jan-Dec on the website but no heavy collection until prior to Annual Meeting. Signs are not considered a donation, memberships are considered tax deductible but we need to clarify in our communications.
 2. With respect to Volunteer fair, be prepared to direct folks to website or be prepared to take cash for signs/membership.
 3. Susan to circle back with woman who donated the \$500 with the language for IRS. Susan will also send Erik the language from HCT that we can copy for draft of go forward email.
 4. John will do a standard email (automated) to thank people/acknowledgement of dues/donation.
- Pond testing
 - Rearrange ponds to group Six Ponds – Susan to reach out to potential volunteers on Six Ponds.
 - Susan to follow up with Lynn(APCC) on why Sand Lake? No water
 - John – PALS testing in April – he can't do; will find a substitute. Can also do the Cyano testing.
 - Donna uses cinderblock on a rope to ensure no drifting and then takes the block back with her. Could pay \$50 for a mooring permit. Susan to check with Stephanie.
 - Susan will also check with Stephanie on paying for kits and how much was the Town of Harwich paying APCC for cyano testing. (Ann confirmed that GLSA paid \$110 for individual sample in 2023).
 - Annual Recap – approved. Susan to send out to membership distro this weekend.
 - Membership renewal/Fundraising/Donations/tiers – what do we want to do?
Brainstorms:
 - Keep the \$25 but add “suggested donations”
 - Sponsor specific things – pay for a pond to be tested.
 - “Sponsor a pond”
 - “Sponsor a porta potty at Seymour Pond”
 - Could highlight sponsors on the pond pages
 - Orleans – “Celebrate our Waters”, Brewster “Environmental Education”; HPC event that could be sponsored
 - Scavenger Hunt

- Put this on next month's meeting for brainstorm!
- PTA, Dinah's Harwich TV interview, Newcomers, Garden Club for additional PR – Susan to explore and update at next meeting.
- Website redesign
 - Larger redesign makes sense
 - Initial proposal from 3rd party \$3k for redesign; Ben to solicit additional proposals
 - Explore monthly maintenance option long term
 - In addition to Ben, Ann will explore potential resources through her CLI network
- Fertilizer Discussion – great discussion, lots of content and ideas
 - Option 1 - Citizen's petition drafted by Patrick
 - Patrick shared the various towns who have passed home rule petitions for both fertilizers and pesticides that are still in front of the MA legislature for review.
 - Mass Audobon has a ban on rodenticides in front of MA legislature
 - Citizens petitions have to be filed by Feb 13 at noon.
 - Option 2
 - Focus on enforcement of existing state regulations. State law may not be protecting us. Not just homeowners – landscapers who flout the law. Laws on record keeping are not being kept. BOH/MDAR – stakeholders but system broken. We aren't enforcing the existing law – how can we bring on additional regulations if we can't enforce the existing ones?
 - Get to data collection. Current reported data is ad hoc, more specific data would be ideal but opens up questions on funding who gathers, analyzes and maintains going forward.
 - Option 3
 - Scott's earlier idea of study group with cross functional group of stakeholders
 - **Discussion points**
 - Should we petition be to have the town gather the data so we can make better decisions on future more effective regulation of fertilizers and pesticides similar to our neighboring towns.
 - More specific language is better for the state with whatever petition is submitted.
 - What's new? What is our hook? Other towns are moving forward, why shouldn't we? LCP has been rolled out – protecting our land, our water, statements of value. Aren't we out of compliance with CWMP?
 - We need to vote as a board on whether or not we move forward to revise doing Patrick's current citizen's petition for fertilizers and pesticides in time for Feb 2 4pm. Susan made the motion and Ann seconded. Discussion points as follows:
 - Don't want to do anything without grassroots support. Finance committee, Select Board, stakeholders
 - Are we here to empower or regulate?
 - Select Board members approved last year, town vote lost by 40 votes.
 - If only 40 votes away last year, but could we get it to pass this year?

- Same thing for 4 yrs, do we have time to change and make a stronger argument?
- o Board voted - 6 no, 1 abstained, 1 yes. HPC can still soft sell behind the scenes but at this point, not willing to put HPC official support on citizens petition.
- o Ann and Susan both volunteered to deliver comments on citizen petition assuming Patrick moves forward with it. We can strategize highlighting some of the discussion points from today's conversation but would speak as Harwich residents and not representing HPC.
- o Last comment by Susan – as we move forward with our monthly newsletters, would like to highlight different persuasive arguments and build over the next few months. Bite size nuggets and sound bites for folks to share with their individual networks will continue to socialize and educate.
- **PONDFRONT POSTCARD redesign** – pushed to next meeting but please review the current design (see google drive) and start brainstorming on additional content for either front or back of post card (leaving room for address on back, obviously).
- Everyone – please get back to me on the four dates/time I proposed for next meeting. I have heard back from Ann and Rich so far.
 - o Original date of Mon Feb 9 2pm EST (or noon if that's better?) This feels later than I would like....
 - o Move it a week earlier to Mon Feb 2 2pm EST(or noon if that's better?)
 - o Friday Jan 30 12-2pm EST
 - o Friday Feb 6 12-2pm EST

MEETING ADJOURNED