

The Herring Ponds Watershed Association
Board of Directors' Meeting
March 23, 2020
Meeting held via conference call.

Submitted by Brian Harrington with thanks to Martha Sheldon for editing.

Present: Phil Angell, Peg Burke, John Foye, Brian Harrington, Jerry Levine, Jack Kedian, Paula Kuketz, Lee Pulis, Beth Sobloff, Martha Sheldon, Don Williams, Geri Williams

1. Meeting was opened by President Don Williams at 7:05 PM with instructions of how to mute or un-mute telephones during the conference call.
Don thanked the *ad hoc* committee people who had worked hard in planning and arranging for the Herring Crawl event, now cancelled in response to spreading of coronavirus. He also thanked Beth for arranging the conference call.
2. Minutes-Taker Volunteer. Brian agreed to take minutes of this meeting.
3. Approval of BOD February 24, 2020 Minutes: **Approved.**
4. Treasurer Report, Approval of February 202 Balance Sheet: **Unanimously passed.**
5. Approval of 2020 Operating Budget. Proposed by Treasurer John Foye: **Unanimously approved.**
6. Budget Reserve Figure. Discussion of need for having reserves included in our annual budgeting, and what the level of reserves should be. Based on 5-year averages of the budget provided by Treasurer John Foye. **Agreed and Voted** that we should hold an *operations reserve* and an *opportunities reserve*. These reserves are intended to be under direction of the BOD, and are not intended to be mandated by HPWA Bylaws.

An Operations Reserve would amount roughly half of the average operations costs of the previous 5 years (\$3,000 for 2020 budgeting) and would be for meeting unexpected costs of HPWA operations. Expenditure of operations reserves would require a 2/3's majority vote of the Board of Directors.

An Opportunities Reserve would be set at \$5,000 for 2020. The purpose of this reserve would be to stand ready to meet unanticipated costs of opportunities that could advance HPWA's mission. In emergencies these funds could be transferred to operations reserve by vote of the BOD. Expenditure of Opportunities Reserves would require a majority vote by the BOD.

7. Committee Reports

As customary, written committee reports were electronically provided to BOD Members prior to this meeting. Supplemental comments/discussion are outlined here.

- a. Membership Committee. Our open rates for Constant Contact communications with our contacts continue to have very high open rates by all standard measures.
- b. Water Monitoring Committee. Concerns that our income for operations may decline due to coronavirus, and that we should consider reducing water quality monitoring costs. BOD responds that this should not happen unless we have firm evidence of declined income following membership renewal period (June-Aug).
- c. Lack of reporting of results of 2019 Water Testing from SMAS. John Foye wanted to remind and point out to the Board that HPWA still has not received any results from water testing that HPWA completed in 2019 and helped pay for (\$2,900). Don Williams agreed to look into this.

8. Summary of meetings attended for HPWA business. No reports.

9. Old Business.

- a. World Fish Migration Day. Lee reported that all Town-sponsored events for WFMD have been cancelled because of the coronavirus pandemic, and that there likely will be cancellations of all WFMD events by the WFMD coordinating office in the Netherlands. HPWA has cancelled its participation—the Herring Crawl—in WFMD. The brochure produced by Kim Tower, Plymouth DMEA, for the Herring Crawl, is available online so that people can take a self-guided tour of Plymouth's 5 herring runs. There was additional discussion of how the brochure might be given broader distribution, perhaps by providing a copy to the Army Corps of Engineers and the Visitors' Center. Martha reported that the large fish banner ordered for our use with WFMD will still be produced and available for future uses.
- b. Programs. Geri reported that all of our scheduled public programs have been cancelled because of the coronavirus pandemic. An August program is up in the air until we know more. She reported that free programs we present with Wildlands Trust will no longer require registration.
- c. Web status. Beth invited BOD members to look at a prototype for a new design of our web site. There was broad agreement that it had a very good "look and feel". There was additional discussion of whether/how to archive materials on the present web site, given space limitations. **Voted** to purchase an external hard drive for storage of these materials.

- d. Interns Update. Brian reported that due to school closures, perhaps for the rest of the school year, our student-intern projects are probably not going to happen this spring.
- e. Boating safety course. Discussion of whether HPWA should try to offer a boating safety course in concert with the Town. There was general agreement that this would be a good idea, but no agreement as to when and where. General sentiment was that the Town should take the lead, and that HPWA would try to promote Town water-safety initiatives.
- f. Peg Burke Outreach—Summary. Peg reported she has been visiting new watershed area residents and providing HPWA greetings and materials to them. These visits have been well-received, but that they are now necessarily suspended because of coronavirus.

10. New Business.

- a. Form Nominating Committee. Brian agreed to form the 2020 nominating committee, and John volunteered to be on it. Positions needing nominations are President (2 yrs), Treasurer (2 yrs), and Secretary (1 yr). Brian agreed to head this initiative. Agreed that the committee should have four members, including one who would largely focus on finding a candidate for filling the position of Secretary. Brian asked for a volunteer for that effort but no one responded affirmatively.
- b. Secretary Position. See above.
- c. Herring Counts. Ramona reported that we are organized to proceed with conducting herring counts, that protocols for operations in light of coronavirus are being developed, but that there still is doubt about doing this because of the virus. Agreed to find out how “stay-at-home” proclamations will read, and how other associations are dealing with counting decisions and that Ramona will make go/no go (or suspend) decisions accordingly.

11. Other Business. No discussion.

12. Next BOD meetings. **April 10 and June 6**, 7 PM.

Comment [B1]: This should be June 8th

13. Adjournment. Voted Unanimously at 8:36 PM.