



Hampton Beach Area Commission Draft Minutes: 5/28/2020

Chairman Nancy Stiles has determined that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, she has determined that to properly ensure the safety of the public and as several of the Commission Members are within the CDC guidelines needing to take special precautions, this body is authorized to meet electronically. Please note there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order.

Meeting called to order at 7 pm by chair Nancy Stiles,
followed by the Pledge of Allegiance

Attending:

Commissioners:

Nancy Stiles, Town of Hampton and Chair
Dean Merrill, Member at Large and Vice Chair
Rick Griffin, Town of Hampton representative
Barbara Kravitz, RPC representative
Michael Housman, NH Dept Natural & Cultural Resources
Chuck Rage, Hampton Beach Village District
Robert Ladd, Hampton Beach Village District
Bill Watson, NH Dept. of Transportation

also attending:

Jason Bachand, Town Planner
Ann Carnaby, meeting assistant

Not present:

Bob Preston, Hampton Chamber of Commerce

Public Comment related to agenda items:
there was no public comment

Appointments:

Senator Tom Sherman, District 24

- is Vice Chair of Election Law and Municipal Affairs Committee which is currently working with the NHMA to deal with the issue of town meetings and budget for the towns of Stratham, New Castle, and Hampton - should be resolved in June
- Hampton Beach reopening - the task force created a bridge with the Dept of Health with many towns involved. Hampton Board of Selectmen Jim Waddell and Jamie

Sullivan, Assistant Town Manager worked hard with reps of many towns and are now reaching across state lines into ME & MA

Tim Roache, Rockingham Planning Commission was introduced to the group by Barbara Kravitz as the Executive Director of the RPC in his second year, doing "a grand job" leading RPC's efforts to provide regional planning support services to member towns for the things they can't do by themselves.

Tim reported that in early May the NH, ME and MA Coastal Town Managers/Administrators along with the RPC, Southern Maine District Planning, and the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission came together to discuss a coordinated approach to reopening beaches in all three states. The goal was to develop a coordinated plan to protect public health, minimize stress to local resources and coordinate beach openings across state borders, to avoid placing any unnecessary burdens on limited local resources. During the process of compiling the data needed to develop such a plan the following occurred:

- the Hampton Chamber task force group submitted a proposal to open Hampton Beach to the NH governor at his request
 - several Maine communities chose rules of Maine beach reopening that differed from community to community
 - by May 15, Commissioner Taylor Caldwell of NH Dept of Business & Economic Affairs asked the tri state planning group to work with Phil Bryce, NH State parks, John Nyhan of Hampton COC, and Senator Tom Sherman to develop guidelines for all NH beaches.
 - on May 21, every community had input into the development of the final guidelines
 - on May 22 the governor announced the plans for the reopening of all NH beaches
- The tri state Regional Group continues to meet to achieve a safe and effective coordinated effort this summer through Sen. Sherman's office.

Discussion

Kravitz - what about the access to the beach for residents-

Roache - all local residents will have full access to the beach & their parking spaces.

Parking at state parking lots is restricted to visitors

Ladd - some "residents only" signs are being pulled; the "Island section" has concerns about possible traffic jams

Roache - parking issues & traffic jams can be mitigated by how effectively we communicate the message of the rules, restrictions & policies to the public before they get to the beach area - word has to get out throughout the 3 states via the press & media so people are prepared to understand the restrictions

Griffin - when will people be allowed to SIT on the beach & not just walk or run?

Stiles - this is a public health issue & will be determined by Dr Chan and the Dept of Health & Human Services

Roache - people should feel free to contact the Statewide Reopening Task Force

Kravitz - when the media information is developed, suggest there should be a vehicle (method) for informing when traffic is heavy or backed up, slow or moving

Rage - the marketing is being developed by the Village District, the Chamber of Commerce & state parks - the village District will also have the parking app active again this summer

Treasurer's report (Housman)

current balance \$6767.12

acceptance of report moved by Rage, seconded by Griffin, unanimous roll call vote

Commissioners' Reports

Rage, Ladd

- Village District has an election of officers scheduled for Tuesday (June 2) that may have to be rescheduled (it was cancelled ed.)
 - the sand sculpting competition has been moved to the week going into Labor Day weekend to allow time to prepare, as it is the 20th anniversary of this event and requires major planning
 - fireworks are planned but there are no permits issued yet
 - there are several ideas for shows at the bandshell - thinking about removing the benches & placing folding chairs 6' apart and into the street
 - all plans are "frozen" at this point since state parks won't issue any permits for anything yet
 - the Village District is trying hard to be flexible to come up with a plan that can work
- Merrill - it's not just the beach - it's the whole town
- Stiles - parks has to wait for the state permits for fireworks
- Thanks to commissioners for all their hard work

Mike Housman, NH Dept Natural & Cultural Resources

Parks is excited for the opening on June 1 - signage is in place, bathroom hours aren't posted yet - staffing is challenging

Bill Watson - NH Dept. of Transportation

presented & discussed the map of the most affected area of the beach traffic plan for the summer (map is attached to these minutes)

Kravitz asked about the status of the new plan for the bridge design

Watson - design is still ongoing as is the selection of a design consultant

Update on CHAT presentation

Kravitz - this report really needs a visual and face to face presentation & will therefore postpone it until that can happen - CHAT continues to meet monthly - virtually. The last meeting had the Salisbury town planner discuss an actual wall to contain sea-level rise that was built but no one has ever seen it.

It is apparently located toward the Seabrook end of the marsh, A theory is that it was built when work was being done on the Rte 286 bridge that changed the flow of water, and the wall was built to correct that.

New Business

- Stiles - the NH Coastal Program Grant can help us with the environmental component of the Hampton Beach Master Plan and we are eligible. Barbara Kravitz will coordinate this with the Hampton Master Plan.

Motion to allow the chair to apply for funding from the NH Coastal Program Grant for assistance with the environmental component of the Hampton Beach Master Plan - moved by Kravitz, seconded by Griffin - roll call vote unanimous yes.

- Watson - the 10 year plan is still active - it never got through the house but may do so in a couple of weeks. There is work being done on a Senate bill & there will be discussion of all projects in it. Motion by Griffin, seconded by Kravitz to have Chair Stiles work on moving the transportation portion of the Beach Master Plan forward - roll call vote unanimous yes - Watson will update chair in prep for this.

- Representative Mike Edgar called in with a report that HB 1020 is out of the Public Works Committee & is going forward with a small amount of money for engineering but no funds for construction. If there are changes made to it in the Senate then it goes to the Committee on Conference. It needs to be worked on jointly.

Next meeting: TBA

Adjourn at: 8:57 pm

motion to adjourn by: Merrill

second: by: Kravitz

Vote yes: unanimous

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Carnaby, Meeting Assistant