Willard Beach (WB) Master Plan Committee  
Meeting Minutes – *AMENDED*  
Monday, November 18, 2019, 6:30 – 8:30 pm  
Conference Room, South Portland Public Works, 929 Highland Ave.

Present - Voting Members - Kevin Adams (Director of Parks and Recreation, City of South Portland), Kristina Ertzner (Park Ranger, City of South Portland), Steve Puleo (Community Planner, City of South Portland), Peter Wilson, Catherine Bickford, Emily Wright, Peggy Stewart, Adrian Dowling, Pedro Vazquez. Quorum established.

Absent – Lisa Thompson, Ashley Kilmartin

Public – John Murphy, 2 others

1. Review and Approval of October 21, 2019 Meeting Minutes  
   **Vote** - Steve moved to accept, Kristina seconded approved unanimously, no discussion or changes.

2. Presentations from Parks and Recreation Staff Members
   a. Patrick McArdle, Aquatics and Waterfront Manager discussed lifeguard duties, expectations, and Beach House uses and operations
      - Testing (for e-coli counts) is done 2X a week Monday – samples are sent out with results received one day later.
      - If results are unfavorable lifeguards alert public asap and they raise a yellow flag when there is ½ inch of rain or more
      - Staffing - Normal day 3 lifeguards, 2 from 9-5, 1 from 11-5, Memorial Day to Labor Day. When lifeguards arrive they open bathrooms, prep lifeguard stands and do beach walk
      - Beach walk includes picking up cigarette butts and dog waste – situation with both of these has improved a lot
      - Lifeguards enforce rules and contact police if needed
      - Snack shack - Palmieri leases – hours are generally 11 – 4, 7 days a week
      - Improvements made to snack shack area about 6 years ago some upgrades made, 2 new fridges, new roof to entire shack, upgraded power supply
      - Water test process –
        - ME Healthy Beaches brings in supervisors to train lifeguard
        - Sampling – water taken from deeper water at one site
        - Testing done at Nelson Analytics in Kennebunk
        - Results are posted on ME Healthy Beaches (MHB) website – past e-coli 104 Patrick gets notice and yellow flag posted
        - Red flag 5000 or more - once every 5 or so years
        - Flag system is only for bacteria count, not swimming conditions, etc.
        - Claude – how is WB vs. other ME beaches? Patrick – WB is in harbor other watched beaches are open water – takes 2 ½ tide cycles for water to flush from WB typically higher than other open water beaches
        - Red flag for really high counts – signifies very high count every 4 years or so
        - Patrick stressed this is a public beach so it never closes no matter what
      - Lifeguards do very few rescues, more first aid issues
      - SMCC has no testing program, relies on ours
      - Steve asked about report process for rescues, first aid – any incident report goes into shared drive, Kevin and Karl are alerted
      - No way to tell how many people are on beach, lifeguards do beach walk every ½ hour and make guesstimates
      - Coexisting uses – SUPs, kayaks etc. not an issue, no regulations for launching except for no motors
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- This year lifeguards picked up 2 needles, not a major problem
- John Murphy - cigarette butt “ashtray” has developed at the end of Willard St
- What could be better – Patrick noted that multiple entrances are not ideal, snack shack needs updating, deck is rotting.
- Claude – could we test ourselves – Patrick noted that we have to use MHB.

b. Karl Coughlin, Deputy Director of Parks, Recreation and Waterfront: vegetation at entrances, DEP permit for this project, and future plan for removal of invasive plants and planting native species
- Invasives are non native whose introduction can cause harm; they reach landscape by being imported or accidentally introduced.
  - In recent years invasives have become increasing threat, many well known areas in SP are infested.
  - Management goals include identification, prevention, get rid of without use of pesticides
  - WB and Fisherman’s Point (FP) are two most heavily impacted areas.
  - City has made application to ME DEP to cut back and remove all plants from every WB entrance and replace with natives.
  - 2 beautification days were held last summer at FP – severe overgrowth.
  - Future plans start removing invasives from entrances.
- Catherine expressed concern about bird habitat, especially at FP with recent cutback of invasives and natives.
- Steve – should have some interpretive signage at every entrance.
- Steve asked if crews being trained to tell what is invasive and what isn’t.
- City will rely on ME Audubon to choose new plants and check to make sure existing natives are not being removed.
- Steve asked how to get volunteers involved – Karl plans to use social media, local PR; his hope is that everyone on Deake St. comes and joins.
- Project time frame is March to April– Kevin noted that per terms of permit with DEP it must be done Mar. -Apr. or Oct. – Nov.

c. Kristina Ertzner, Park Ranger/Committee member: Park Ranger operations and initiatives
- Kristina started this summer as full time ranger with 2 part time rangers.
- Dog hours/dog issues are the biggest thing the rangers deal with.
  - Kristina noted that dog issues seem to be a bigger problem in the off season.
  - Rangers are finding a fair amount of dog waste between Willow and Beach entrances.
  - Rangers work to educate people about not walking through sand dunes.
  - Rangers also do some of same work as lifeguards - alcohol and tobacco use, no motor vehicles, landing boats.
  - Kristina noted that informal trails are starting to develop in the dunes in the off season
  - Enforcement - Right now only animal control and police officers can issue tickets; Kristina has asked City Council to change ordinance so rangers can issue tickets – police are on board
  - Dogs - lots of problems with voice control / being within 100 feet of owner.
- Suggestions –
  - Wording on dune vegetation signs should be changed to have more teeth.
  - Punts – need identification.
  - Policy for animals besides dogs – all but dogs are allowed during “non-dog” hours.
  - Dogs should be leashed until after the playground area.
  - Steve asked about possibility of using CCTV to monitor beach – group discussed privacy issues, practicality, etc.
  - Group discussion about dunegrass trails, boardwalks, fencing.
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3. Discussion of Willard Beach System document – tabled until next meeting
   • **Vote** - Kristina moved, Peggy seconded, unanimously approved.

4. Discussion of hiring a facilitator for the committee –
   • Steve – timing should be when we start to put together our document, when we get into public phase/meetings.
   • Claude – important to consider when you shut them down, need to set expectations and goals
   • Peter – need to hash things out a little more amongst ourselves.
   • Kevin – timing, need to create RFP, noted lag between RFP and actual start date.
   • Steve – RFP will be kind of an ongoing thing, get a draft started and take time during these meetings to review draft and RFP development.
   • **Action Item** - Kevin will distribute open space committee RFP so we might use that as a starting point
   • The group discussed whether or not to hire a facilitator. All members present agreed that a facilitator would be helpful. When the committee is ready, staff will initiate the facilitator RFP process.

5. Scheduling next meeting and future agendas
   • Monday 12/16 same location.
   • Monday 1/27 same location.
   • Agenda for next meeting agenda will focus on WB System document with some discussion of RFP process for facilitator.

6. Questions, Comments, General Discussion
   • Claude noted that the city just redid its traffic schedule / parking etc. – council knows that it has left some areas imperfect, one of glaring areas is WB, got rid of all handicapped parking, many complaints that we need to revisit entire WB area, SMCC.
   • He wants to get this on the CC workshop/agenda before the season starts – he would welcome input from the group but needs to go forward with this anyway – earliest available workshop would be February.
   • Group agreed that we should have some involvement in this issue depending on timing and complexity.

7. Adjourn
   • **Vote** - Peggy moved; Emily seconded; unanimous approval.
   • Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Stewart
Secretary