



Edgartown Dredge Committee Meeting Minutes

October 28, 2021

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting of the Dredge Committee was called to order at 4:00pm on Thursday, October 28th, 2021 via Zoom teleconference.

II. ROLL CALL:

The following persons were present:

Members: Ed Handy, Dudley Levick, Ryan Smith

Advisors: Jane Varkonda, Jen Smyth, James Hagerty

Guests: Julie Pringle (GPF), Michael Shalett (GPF), Emily Reddington (GPF), Tara Marden (WHG), Paul Morrison (TTOR), Russell Hopping (TTOR)

III. OPEN ISSUES:

- a) Motion placed on the floor by Dudley to approve the 10/21/21 draft minutes. Ryan seconds, no discussion, vote taken and passed 3-0.
- b) The Committee discussed the Left Fork projects. Ed stated that the beach is currently impassable to the Great Pond, but the Committee received permission from the County to dewater at the Norton nourishment location.
- c) Michael Shalett, President of the Great Pond Foundation, asked for the opportunity to speak. He said that he had been receiving updates from Ms. Pringle, Paul Bagnall and Mr. Bronner regarding the potential dredging in the Great Pond; he then received notification that the beach was impassable and dredging would not happen. He stated that he was concerned that there had only been discussion about sand, and no discussion of the actual health of the pond; he said the only mention he heard was that Paul had told him the pond would benefit greatly from dredging. He then gave a brief history of the health of the pond (full text included as attachment to these minutes): in 2008 the pond was not healthy so the GPF raised funds through donations to purchase a dredge and perform the dredging work through continued donations, which resulted in increased pond health. Mr. Shalett mentioned the Arthur Gaines report and the importance of flushing out nitrogen. A study published in 2018 showed improvement and the Great Pond was removed from the State's list of impaired bodies of water in 2020, after 30 years of work. Mr. Shalett concluded by saying that dredging is a significant factor in the health of the pond, and none of the studies mention sand as a benefit and he hopes that the Committee plans to put the dredge in the Great Pond at some point this dredge season.
- d) Ed responded that the Town-owned dredge was in the Great Pond just last year, as well as in 2014. Jane stated that the Committee has had discussions with GPF Executive Director about the frequency the Great Pond needs to be dredged, and with the larger town-owned dredge, it was agreed that every 2-3 years was appropriate. Ed followed up

by saying the Committee has certainly committed to regular maintenance of the Great Pond, but not annual maintenance.

- e) Dudley stated that dredging does not increase flow in the Great Pond, it increases the length of the openings, which means fewer openings and also prevents certain species from being able to enter and exit the pond at their respective times of year. After a brief back and forth between Dudley and the representatives from the Great Pond Foundation, Ed stated that the Dredge Committee needed to push ahead with the business on the agenda.
- f) Ms. Reddington then asked for two minutes to address the points made by Dudley. Ed allowed her the time to speak. She said that while she agreed with Dudley about the various species' ability to enter the pond, she disagreed that dredging is a detriment to the pond. She said there is a drastic difference in pond health when a year of dredging is skipped. In responding to Emily Reddington's comments on the scientifically documented impacts of not dredging Edgartown Great Pond for one year and the effect on its water quality, Dudley dismissed this evidence. He stated that the Great Pond Foundation's dredging program was a "dog and pony show" and, therefore, not comparable with the Town of Edgartown's dredging program. Mr. Shalett stated that he thought Dudley's comment was unnecessarily inflammatory; Dudley apologized immediately and stated that he would like to see the scientific documentation that supported Ms. Reddington's statement as there has been no data provided.
- g) Ed then moved the meeting back to the Left Fork projects. Mr. Hagerty asked about how the cost of the project would change, given the change in plans on where to dredge. Ed responded that dredging in Katama Bay, instead of the Great Pond, should cut the project costs down as the sand will now only travel half the distance. Mr. Hagerty then asked if payments from the Trustees to the Town were in hand. Mr. Hopping said the checks were being processed during this meeting. Mr. Hagerty said that the money needed to be processed and held in a separate account from the General Fund, before the project commences. He added that if there were any procurement questions, the town's procurement officer was on the call; Ms. Smyth stated that she just needs to know where the sand is coming from and who will be loading the sand into the trucks. She placed the advertisement on Friday, and bids are due November 12. Ed responded that the Committee decided last week that the dredge department would dewater and load the trucks at the end of the pipe.
- h) Ed informed the Committee that the dredge will be launched on Monday. After that, the crew will spend the next couple of days preparing and transporting the pipe over from Chappy. The dredge will begin pumping the week of the 8th, and will stockpile sand until the Left Fork projects are ready for the sand.
- i) Tara stated that with prevailing wage, it come to about \$10/CY to truck the sand, so they are within budget. The Town will be reimbursed for all dredging work. She then asked Ed if it was confirmed that there is enough sand in Katama for both projects. Ed said it looks like there is.
- j) Mr. Hopping asked the Committee what they needed from the Trustees to ensure over sand access for vehicles remains. Ed said that the boys will bury the pipe to maintain access. He suggested an on-site meeting next week so they can determine the best location and explain the dewatering process. Tara suggested Tuesday so she could also be present. There was some further discussion on whether the beach needed to be shut down for the haul trucks to work, Ed said he didn't think that would be necessary, but people might have to be patient at some times.

- k) Moving onto the Katama Bay permit, Tara stated that Woods Hole Group was planning to put the tide gauges throughout the harbor next week, so she would like confirmation that the locations are approved. She said she is also working on the ENF for Lighthouse Beach and will get that submitted before the end of the year.
- l) Ed acknowledged Mr. Shalett's request that the town dredge the Great Pond this season and said it was a possibility but depended on conditions and financials. Mr. Hagerty said he would look into whether the CZM/TTOR funds paid to reimburse the dredge department for the work in Katama Bay could be used to off-set the cost of the crane that would be needed to get the dredge into the pond.
- m) The Committee reviewed the invoices and authorized payment of the bills.
- n) Ed then invited Mr. Shalett and Ms. Reddington to continue their discussion regarding the Great Pond. Mr. Shalett stated that he appreciated the Committee's efforts to get the dredge into the Great Pond this season and would be happy to consider another contribution to help make that happen. Dudley stated that there should be a written schedule for annual openings. Mr. Shalett responded that the Great Pond Foundation does not set the schedule for the openings, the Shellfish Constable does. Ed added that these conversations should be taking place at the Shellfish Committee meetings, not dredge meetings.
- o) The Committee decided to hold its next meeting next week.

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The meeting adjourned at 4:55pm.

Minutes submitted by: Juliet Mulinare

COMPLETE NOTES FROM MICHAEL SHALETT:

10/22 Information shared to Exec Committee of GPF by Julie Pringle our Scientific Program Manager after she attended the October 21st meeting of the Dredge Committee indicated the following:

- Plan to dredge EGP: truck sand over to Left Fork
- Needed permission from HCF LOA: Crax already gave OK
- Bids needed to go out to trucking firms
- Questions arose as to whether or not beach was too narrow for trucks
- If no permission, or if beach not wide/safe, would go get sand from Katama

10/22 that same date Paul Bagnall sent email to GPF saying that there was still need from permission from HCF. Quick fix if we can get.

- Further wrote, "EGP benefited greatly last year from dredging and will benefit again."

10/23 Michael Bronner, President HCF LOA emails that he had spoken with Juliette and that HCF is fully cooperative.

10/26 3 days later Bagnall writes: Woods Hole Group, John Keene (trucker) and Dredge Super (?) say beach is too narrow and steep to get sand from Great Pond.

Nothing reported by Pringle in the meeting, nor virtually anything in any of the emails correspondences, discuss the impact of the dredging or of not dredging on the health of the Edgartown Great Pond. The conversations all talk about "Sand". Nothing about maintenance of the pond. Only the Town's Shellfish Constable's email statement: "EGP benefited greatly last year and will benefit again this year" Even then while making that statement he was asking for help to seek permission from HCF to truck sand over their beach.

Last year the Town of Edgartown put its dredge in the Great Pond for the first time in 10 years. In the previous 10 year plus time frame the only dredge in EGP was "Nessie" the little yellow dredge purchased by our non-profit, for which capital and operational costs were financed by donations from individuals and other foundations.

The purchase of this small dredge came about as a result of the recommendations of the Town Funded Massachusetts Estuary Project first published in 2008. In its "Approaches to Improving Water Quality" talks about more frequent openings of the pond and for longer durations. At that time, high nitrogen levels were found in the pond. In 2008 a very significant algae bloom had taken place in the pond. It was in ill-health by all standards.

The New England Water Environment Association in its presentation "A Watershed Nitrogen Mitigation Plan" an Implementation to meet a Total Maximum Daily Load of Nitrogen in the Great Pond and it's watershed, it cites regular openings and dredging as a recommendation. Specifically it cites "dredging to increase circulation and regular pond openings."

The well-known 604(B) study, sometimes known as the Wilcox report speaks to "the continued development and implementation of plans for the period breaching and dredging of the pond". These events enhanced the ability of pond to absorb and flush out nitrogen.

Dr. Arthur Gaines also spoke of the enhanced flushing of the pond. Increase the water exchange. Make the openings persist longer. When the Town dredged in 2001 as part of a five year long master dredging plan it proved successful and led to a 77 day opening from April to June. Clearly the benefits of dredging the delta north of the cut is longer openings.

In February of 2018 GPF published an important research paper showing that water quality had improved greatly over the ten years of careful management, in large part to dredging and improvement of the openings. In 2020 the Edgartown Great Pond was delisted from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection's impairment list. It was first listed in 1992 by the DEP. It took almost 30 years of work. Work by the town, work by the MV Shellfish Group, work from the Foundation, especially its dredging and its monitoring of water quality.

Dredging is an extremely significant factor in the maintenance of the health of Edgartown Great Pond. I do not mean to be disrespectful, or in disregard to other Town projects or needs, but in none of these studies is "sand" mentioned as an important factor.

As Shellfish Constable and Biologist Mr. Bagnall said, "Edgartown Great Pond benefits greatly last year, and will benefit again this year." As President of and representing the Board of Directors of the Great Pond Foundation, I hope so.