



## Edgartown Dredge Committee Meeting Minutes

August 31, 2023

### **I. CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting of the Dredge Committee was called to order at 4:00pm on Thursday, August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023 via Zoom teleconference.

### **II. ROLL CALL:**

The following persons were present:

**Members:** Ed Handy, Dudley Levick, Michael Shalett

**Advisors:** Jane Varkonda,

**Guests:** Tara Marden, Joel Kubick Kara Shemeth

### **III. OPEN ISSUES:**

- a) The Committee reviewed the draft minutes from the 8/17/23 meeting.  
*Motion placed on the floor by Mike to approve the 8/17/23 draft minutes. Dudley seconds the motion, no further discussion, vote taken and passed unanimously (3-0).*
- b) The Committee reviewed the five applications submitted for the Dredge Crew: Greg Bettencourt, Donny Benefit, Peter Jackson, Douglas Benefit and Steven Buckley. All have experience previously working for the dredge crew. The Committee then discussed the FY24 pay rates for the crew. Juliet said the other town employees received a 5% COLA this year and Ed stated that he felt the dredge crew rate increases should reflect what the rest of the town employees receive; the rest of the Committee agreed. All acknowledged the success of the dredge program over the past few years, which is a reflection of a well-performing crew.  
*Motion placed on the floor by Dudley to increase the FY23 dredge crew pay rates by 5% for FY24. Mike seconds, no further discussion, vote taken and passed unanimously (3-0).* Juliet will draft a letter to the Selectboard for final approval of the FY24 rates.
- c) Tara and Joel from the Woods Hole Group were present to provide updates on each of the on-going permitting projects: Comprehensive Permit, Katama Bay and Lighthouse Beach. For the Comprehensive Permit, they still have a couple bathymetric surveys to complete and they are working on gaining access to areas where bird closures have prevented surveying. Donny will take the Woods Hole Group folks out in the skiff when they are here to survey. After surveys are complete, Joel will put drawings together and the SAP will be submitted to the ACOE. Tara also informed the Committee that through other projects, she is learning that the endangered Tiger Beetle may become an issue for some of the nourishment sites.
- d) The Committee took issue with the increasing complexity of the permitting process and questioned why other government agencies (Natural Heritage in particular) is making things so difficult. The Committee expressed the need for government agencies to work together to accomplish goals, not make it exceedingly more difficult to permit projects that have been on-going for decades. The Committee discussed engaging with our State Representatives to bring attention to this matter, and to ensure that the permitting agencies are not overstepping their bounds.

- e) Tara continued with the permit updates and stated that both Katama Bay and Lighthouse Beach are almost ready to file. Tara has not heard from Amy Hoenig at Natural Heritage in over two months, despite multiple attempts to communicate. Ms. Hoenig requested changes to the mapping of the dredge channels in Katama Bay, which Tara made and submitted, but Ms. Hoenig has neglected to provide any feedback on the changes she requested so Tara made the executive decision to file the project with MEPA without Ms. Hoenig's comments. Tara is also working on an expanded Environmental Notification Form, which she will file in six weeks. For Lighthouse Beach, the drawings are completed and Tara will try to file in four weeks. She said the mitigation plan still needs to be discussed.
- f) The Committee continued to discuss what to do about the slow and arduous permitting process, and how to address the issue that specific individuals are operating outside their authority and holding up the process as a result.
- g) Tara announced that she is leaving Woods Hole Group but will continue to work on Edgartown's projects as a subcontractor until she moves down South next year. Joel will be taking over a lot of her work and will also be assisting with the Town's projects until her departure. Tara stated that the billing process will remain the same, as will the rates the town pays. The Committee asked her to send something over in writing to confirm this arrangement.
- h) Ed updated the Committee on the FY24 dredging season. Oak Bluffs has decided that they want to keep the sand from the Little Bridge so the Committee needs to come up with a price for doing the work. OB will dewater the sand, so the price will include mob and demob and the daily rate. After some discussion, the Committee decided on a daily rate of \$4,250 (a 50% discount based on shared interests of the pond) and \$5,250 each way for mobilization and demobilization. Ed said he is meeting with the OB folks tomorrow and will present the rates then.
- i) The Committee discussed the other areas to be dredged, Ed said Cape Pogue is still the plan but the Committee should also be considering the Great Pond this year if delays with the permitting process prevent dredging next year.
- j) The Committee reviewed the invoices and authorized payment of the bills.
- k) Ed updated the Committee on the new boat. Myer is about a week behind schedule but because of the delay, they have offered, at no additional cost, to do all the rigging of equipment that the crew would otherwise have to do. They will need the equipment sent to them. Dudley asked if rigging the boat would make it unsafe to transport. Ed said it will still be fine to transport and all the equipment will have warranties. The Committee had no objection to the one week delay and authorized Ed to order equipment and have Myer install.
- l) The next meeting will be in two weeks.

A motion to adjourn was made, seconded and approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 5:04pm.

Minutes submitted by: Juliet Mulinare