

Trustees of the Hingham Bathing Beach

Minutes for the meeting held on January 9, 2020, 6:00 PM

at Town Hall

In attendance:

Bathing Beach Trustees - Edward Johnson, Alan Perrault and Chris Daly

Hingham Farmer's Market – Mark Cullings, Bill Marshall, Karen Whitfield, Linda Luke, Paula Coughlin, Linda Davis

- Chairman Perrault called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM
- Discussion of Hingham Farmers Market and plans for the 2020 season:
 - Mark Cullings provided an update on the status of the market, some statistics on attendance and information on other farmers markets in Massachusetts:
 - The HFM experienced a decrease in market attendance in 2019. Attendance in 2018 was 1200+ visitors and in 2019 is was 900+ visitors. Market attendance has been dropping every year since 2015 based on HFM records. The 2019 decrease was larger than previous years.
 - HFM conducted a vendor survey. A significant number of vendors commented that there business was down in 2019. One other notable comment is that many vendors stated that Hingham's market was "better" than other area markets. This includes Braintree which is held on Saturday mornings at their Town Hall and Cohasset on the Green on Thursday afternoons.
 - HFM's peak hours of attendance are 10:30 AM to 12:30 PM. A change of hours from 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM will have no impact in the summer and some impact in the Fall. If the hours are changed to open earlier than 9:00 AM this would have a significant negative impact on attendance, in the opinion of HFM. M. Cullings provided a list of Saturday farmers markets in the Commonwealth. In the list of 50 markets by town only nine open before 9:00 AM (18%).
 - Market location discussion:
 - The meeting attendees discussed several different locations as options.
 - HFM prefers not to be on the grass near the bandstand as it will be difficult for the vendors to unload and load their cars and trucks. It was noted that the Cohasset Farmers Market is on grass and it might be helpful to contact the responsible party (Cohasset DPW?) and obtain an understanding of the impact on the grass.
 - A. Perrault suggested placing the market in the new parking area north of the new bathhouse and parallel to Route 3A. This area will be covered with a pervious covering distinguishing it from the paved main parking lot and the grass areas of the Bathing Beach property. Vendor trucks could park nearby in the spots along the Grove. Feedback from meeting attendees was positive on this location and it was agreed to continue discussing this option in the near future.
 - Market hours:
 - A. Perrault suggested that the BBT may consider changing the hours from 8:00 to 12:00 PM during the summer. This could reduce congestion with beach users and the new concession stand.

- HFM prefers not to have different hours between Spring, Summer and Fall.
 - M. Cullings commented that opening at 8:00 AM will mean that several vendors will not participate in the market. If the hours are changed from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM then HFM will only operate from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM.
 - HFM believes they will “deliver” customers to the new concession stand and will increase business for the concessionaire. HFM would like to have a discussion with the concessionaire to see how the two can work together.
 - A. Perrault reminded HFM representatives that the priority for the property is for beach/grove use, the concession stand/bath house and the revenue delivered from the bathhouse.
 - The meeting attendees discussed a date for a next meeting. It was decided the week of January 27th would be the target.
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- The Trustees discussed preparations for the CPC meeting to follow this meeting in conjunction with the Harbor Development Committee.
 - Meeting adjourned at 7:00 PM so the Bathing Beach Trustees could attend the CPC Meeting.