MIC Meeting
May 6, 2016 10-2
Island Institute, Rockland

Topic: Island Historical Societies

Attendance:
MIC Members
Roger Berle, Cliff Island, Co-Chair
Cheryl Crowley, Cliff Island Institute
Mary Anne Mitchell, Peaks Island
Mark Greene, Long Island
Beverly Johnson, Chebeague
Kendra Chubbuck, Isle au Haut
Donna Wiegle- Swan's Island, Co-Chair
Beverly Roxby, Frenchboro
Eva Murray, Matinicus
Andrew Dorr, Vinalhaven

Island Institute
Karen Burns, Community Development Director
Jessi Duma, Island Institute Fellow- Cranberry Isles
Michelle Tussing, VP of Development
Brooks Winner, Community Energy
James Crimp, Marine Programs
Tom Groening, Working Waterfront
Meghan Cooper, Island Institute Fellow- Isle Au Haut

Guests
Donna Damon, Chebeague Island Historical Society
Todd Little-Siebold, College of the Atlantic
Patrick O’Bannon- Islesboro Historical Society
Kim Maclsaac- Peak’s Island 5th Maine; CBIDA
Meredith Sweet- Long Island Historical Society
Katharine Steward- Long Island Historical Society
Karen Rea- Long Island Historical Society
Allison Paradise- Chebeague Island Historical Society
Mary Holt- Chebeague Island Historical Society
Phil Whitney, Great Cranberry Island Historical Society
Sandra Lunt, Frenchboro Island Historical Society
David Lunt, Frenchboro Island Historical Society
Donna Haskell, Frenchboro Island Historical Society
Suzanne Rankin, Matinicus Island Historical Society
Rachel Robinov, Cliff Island Historical Society
Pam Anderson, Cliff Island Historical Society
Jane Laughlin, Great Diamond Island, CBIDA
Bob Laughlin, Great Diamond Island, CBIDA
Introductions

MIC Introduction- To start the meeting, Roger Berle gave a brief history of the Maine Islands Coalition for our guests.

The minutes from the previous meeting were discussed. Mark Greene made motion to accept the minutes as sent. Donna seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

Treasurer’s Report: Islands assessments are coming in. The treasurer has collected $2100 to date; 4 islands are still outstanding. Mark Greene made a motion to accept the report. It was seconded by Cheryl Crowley. The motion was passed unanimously.

Roger presented the MIC Certificate of Recognition to Donna Damon for her contributions to Chebeague Island and the Chebeague Island Historical Society. Beverly Johnson, MIC rep from Chebeague, nominated Donna for the award.

Island Institute:

Karen Burns, Community Development- There are 7 Island Fellowship placements coming this year. There is one returning fellow on Frenchboro and the rest are new fellows in Eastport, Long Island, Vinalhaven, North Haven, Deer Isle, and Swan’s Island. The Maine Island Scholarship awards have been made- 74 students are receiving $113,000 in scholarships this year.

Michelle Tussing, VP of Development- Michelle introduced herself in her new role, as she was formerly Donor Relations Director. The Climate of Change film screenings are happening in communities up and down the coast. Please try to attend and let Michelle know if you would like to host one. A schedule was passed around. It is a great event for the community!

Brooks Winner, Community Energy Update- The Solar Bill was not passed (due to the Governor’s veto) but he thanks you for all of your support. There will likely be another bill for next session.
In terms of energy efficiency work, the Community Energy Team is trying to learn from people about what the needs are in efficiency. Please let him know if you have heard interest from your community for weatherization and LED's. If you would like to be involved in further projects, let Brooks know!

Heather Deese- Heather introduced herself in her new role, VP of Research and Strategy. Heather outlined her research projects for the year.
1. Website that is a digital resource of data for communities. It will be based on census data, and augmented with local information.
2. Expanded version of the Island Indicators Report, which has been published by the Island Institute for many years. It will look at 10-12 data points for islands and remote coast. If you have an interest or know someone who does in your community, please let Heather know.

James Crimp, Marine Programs Associate- James gave a Marine Programs Update, including an update on the Ocean Planning Process (a draft plan should be coming soon!). The Ocean Acidification Symposium is happening on June 29th this year at the USM campus on Portland. Details will be share with MIC as the event draws nearer. Also, the Aquaculture Business development program is under way.

Legislative Update
Senator Miramant- Knox County Rep
Senator Miramant urged MIC members to elect Representatives who are courageous and represent you, not any ideology. He reported that the ferry bill was a struggle, but had general support from both parties and the DOT. He gave credit to Rep. Guilway for his support in the process. He also wanted to note that John Anders from DOT was trying and working to do the right thing in the ferry bill process. He had to leave shortly, but promises to attend the next MIC meeting, and come to talk about anything and follow up with ‘anything you need’.

Representative Guilway, Searsport- He works on the transportation committee and was very appreciative of the persistence of Senator Miramant on the ferry bill. The ferry bill required a review of the service and the DOT will follow through on that. He gave a plug on the Heritage Day in Searsport.
There is a working group who is planning to create a magnet school for marine science and transportation. The preliminary plan passed and is a work in progress. It is all about bringing kids to the water. This is a Penobscot Marine Museum, Searsport, and RSU 20- partnership.
He was asked about any rumbles around the Army Corps and resubmitting of dredge proposal. He has not, has heard that the DOT may do a maintenance dredge-which, he feels, would be less impactfull and is important for safety.

Chris Rector, from Senator King’s Office- The Swedish Lobster ban is a concern. It is being seen as trade protectionism for Europeans. The Senate is working to get it resolved.
Another issue is mail delivery service on Swan's and Frenchboro. The delegation is united in figuring out a way to adapt postal service laws to work for islands. Senator King is VERY interested in finding a resolution to the problem. The discussion about Broadband as a utility (not an optional service) is still underway. He is also working on National Park boundary issue; there is disquiet on the way that the Schoodic Woods was acquired. There is a huge concern on MDI and in island communities about the erosion of the tax base. They are working on a resolution around park boundaries.

Emily Horton, from Rep. Pingree’s Office- Representative Pingree is focused on a variety of things including Food Waste and Recovery Act and the Farm Bill. There are 2 bills she wanted to make sure that the islands are aware of:

Working Waterfronts Bill- This will create a competitive grant program and a National Working Waterfronts Task Force
Ocean Acidification Bill- This has bipartisan support to bring the OA conversation to the national stage

Also, Rep. Pingree will have conversations about broadband access in appropriations.

David Lunt, Frenchboro- Explained to the group and the Legislative representation, a big problem with non-profits holding property and conservation land on Frenchboro. This raises the taxes for local people because of the degradation of the tax base.

**Historical Society Sharing:**
(Each Historical Society that was represented was given five minutes to talk about their organization.)

*Swan’s Island*- Candi Joyce, Gwen May, Bev MacAloon (virtual attendance)
There will be an exhibit this summer at the Lighthouse “A Living From the Sea” including speakers having to do with boat building. It also includes information about schooner captains. This exhibit is taking lots of information from the Marine and Lobster Museum; they are all working together in a great way.
Some highlights of organization include installation of Jellyfish from the library ceiling.
Historical catalog and virtual museum can be seen from website: Swansislandeducationalsoociety.org
It is always a challenge to find volunteers
Donna Wiegle brought along books from Swan’s Island Historical Society books for people to look at; they were both done by island Fellows and based on oral histories.
Candi mentioned a report she did 10 years ago with all of the information about the historical societies. It might make sense to work together on a cooperative project and to update the information.

*Cliff Island*- Pam Anderson and Rachel Robinoff
The Cliff Island Historical Society found it’s home in the year 2000, in the community square near they ferry, in a building that holds the community hall and island post office.

It is a non-profit; a great group of volunteers who work on summer projects, including hosting a summer intern.

They work on having an event every summer. Some of the past events include:

An island art show, a wine and cheese party (where they make food from 1950’s cookbook that was republished by Historical Society and is sold there), an auction, and a 25th anniversary of Whales of August film celebration.

Displays include: Old houses, island inns and hotels, special events, Crotch island...

Books are published and sold at the Historical Society.

Last summer, there was an event for kids complete with a pirate tour (including digging up treasure and a guest appearance of Captain Kid!).

There is an Intern hired every summer to greet guests and show them around.

Side note: Cliff Island used to be called Crotch Island; name changed due to a competing island and a general dislike of the name.

Matinicus- Suzanne Rankin

Each year, Matinicus Plantation appoints a historian; Suzanne is the appointed historian. Because of the work of an island fellow, they are now a 501c(3) and have cataloged artifacts. Historical ‘things’ are dumped on Suzanne’s lawn.

They now have a collection of artifacts, documents and photographs!

The work of a volunteer brought photographs online- and they have a website that you can visit and view them. Comments left online have helped to identify people and places. Summer residents are collecting oral histories, beginning with the oldest residents.

The Historical Society has a storage unit but no display space at this time. They are hoping that the old school, used by the assessors now, can eventually be used as a space.

Maine State Librarian, Adam Fisher is helping to scan artifacts. Suzanne is looking for a viable cataloging program for a very small society. “I know nothing, I do a lot!”

There is a resident building a collection of buoys that washed up in the 1930’s right now. There is lots of interest and generosity on the island; but no home for the artifacts yet!

The question was asked- do they own the photos that are online? Yes! They do, and careful of keeping copies, even if they are online.

Note: Adam Fisher from the Maine State Library has a lot of resources available if you can get to the Maine State Library. He has a lot of technology, and is willing to help.

Frenchboro- Vivian and Lillian Lunt built the Historical Society. It was moved from a cellar to a fish house to an abandoned store, to a gift shop. In 1979, they moved into a building on schoolhouse hill, in a beautiful building with the library. Things are running smoothly. Their major concern is the aging of the volunteers, not sure who
is going to come up the line and keep it going. They have lots of pictures that haven’t been scanned yet. The Historical Society is open July-August; 12:30-4:00 is a safe bet; 7 days a week. They recommended a book about the history of Frenchboro; “Hauling by Hand”.

Great Cranberry Island Historical Society- GCIHS was established in 1993 by summer people. For the first seven years, there was no place to display artifacts. In 2000, a museum was established in the schoolhouse when the Longfellow school closed. The sale of a store house and donated acreage, in 2004, allowed for the creation of The Cranberry House, including archiving center in the basement. They opened doors in June 2008. There are many subcommittees under the Board of Trustees, including publications, events, and cemetery restoration. Archiving meetings in the basement take place throughout the winter. They are now developing an information technology subcommittee
The Cranberry Isles Explorer (8 seat golf cart) runs all summer and brings a lot of people to the museum.
Jessi Duma is an Island Institute fellow working with the College of the Atlantic, and the Great Cranberry Historical Society to research the history of agriculture. She has a publication coming out this summer, paired with a documentary. Many events are happening this summer. They would love to host other historical societies at their events- so let Jessi know. Jessi would also love some thoughts about development and fundraising.
Suggestion was made to apply to the Maine Community Foundation; Hancock County Fund, for funding.

Todd Little-Siebold- College of the Atlantic- The Island Institute and the College of the Atlantic has a collaborative project. Todd would love to set up a Island Historical Collaborative through Fund for Maine Islands and would love to talk about how to host events together. He would love to be a part of the collaborative and talked about the potential of traveling exhibits. Todd also serves on Woodlawn Board of Directors. He would love to connect with people around old apple trees, which is his area of expertise.

Chebeague Island Historical Society- Donna Damon would like to thank the Island Institute for hosting the ILEAD Nonprofits Conference- it was a huge help and people should participate if it happens again! ‘Chebeague Island Historical Society came out of the dump and ended up in the town garage.’ It started with enthusiasm to help the community understand what has happened in the past. Their tagline is: Preserve the past to understand today to help plan for the future. Without a building, they started with programs, (including a civil war re-enactment), senior lunches, a house tour, oral histories, and making mainland connections to get information and resources. Years ago, Island Institute hosted a historical society conference at Maine Maritime. The Island Institute also offered teacher professional development courses for credit and allowed people to share their historical stories.
They also created a newsletter (which Donna brought to share today!). They acquired 1871 schoolhouse (that used to be a town garage), and built a public restroom as part of the project, which demonstrated the interest in supporting the community as a whole. This year is the 12th exhibit; Island Architecture from Settlement-1890. The gift shop at the Historical Society sells enough to pay utilities and overhead. 15,000 photos were scanned into iPhoto (thanks to fellows and interns!). They also got a fireproof vault funded through a grant. They also have memorial funds to fund acquisitions. Donna suggests having an annual meeting or a Maine Island History Conference to continue the dialogue! They also have a special events committee; it is a committee, but has no meetings. It is all about gathering people around events, and it is joyful and fun. Part of the house tour includes contacting potential sponsors and selling sponsorship. Requests for funds from both locals and off island businesses that serve Chebeague. They also use local art to raise money- cards and reproductions are made and sold.

Great Diamond Island Association History Committee- There is no historical society, instead there is a history committee of the Diamond Island Association. 2007 was the beginning of the group, as a celebration of the 150 years of the cottage community. They are an informal group with an exhibit space - a wall on the community center. Archiving is done on the dining room tables of volunteers! There are lots of artifacts found throughout the community. They created cookbooks and cottage calendars as one of the first projects. Starting in 2011, they hold an annual exhibit, which is a series of framed pieces around a theme. Topics include: History of the store at Ellwall Hall, 4th of July, Ellwall Hall Centennial Celebration, History of the farmhouse, growing up on Great Diamond (tracing family roots), Celebrating Island Porches- including a picture of every porch on Great Diamond! One history related activity happens every summer including speakers, cottage history scavenger hunts- (10 houses at a time). They also hold a progressive piazza potluck picnic (a history tour- meet at the hall for a potluck picnic).

Peaks Island- Kim MacIsaac has retired as the Long Term Coordinator at The Fifth Maine Museum. It was a building built by Veterans of the fifth regime. A nonprofit group acquired the building and had to make it inhabitable and restore it. In the 1990’s, it was expanded to include Peaks Island History. Exhibits, educational programs, walking tours, and ongoing restoration of the building are major programs. Information should be on the website. www.fifthmainemuseum.org Two other museums are on Peaks:
One is Eighth Maine Regiment building, which has an exhibit area and tours in the afternoon. They actually rent rooms and have ‘living history’ stays to have an authentic experience.
The other is The Umbrella Cover museum- over 1000 umbrella covers (no two sheaths alike!). Docents and interns are there to give tours, and if the owner is there, she wears a hat and plays the accordion. She is in the Guinness Book of World Records!
**Casco Bay Islands Development Association-CBIDA**- They are a group committed to preserving life on Casco Bay Islands. They give small grants to organizations that are working on the Bay. For example, last year money was given to Peaks Island Environmental Action Team for the 'Bay-Scaping.'

**Long Island Historical Society**- Katharine Stewart, President of the Long Island Historical Society, went to the ILEAD conference and brought back a series of tools to engage younger people in the Historical Society. She changed the name of her members from “Chairs” to “Coordinators”, which has helped motivate people. Matching tasks to the interests of the committee members has also been a huge in keeping momentum going. Before beginning of the Long Island Historical Society, there was no historical documentation of the island. Succession brought people together to work towards a common goal and united the East End and the West End of the Island. During this time, there was a movement to capture some of the history. Thanks to the help of Chebeague Island Historical Society and Donna Damon, they created a historical society! At first, they created exhibits in the hall, had a four-hour display-and everything went to the dump because there was no storage. The town gave space in WWII fire station in 1996, shared with Recreation Department. There was no climate control so things had to be brought into and out of exhibit space. The new Community building will be a new place to have summer exhibits, which will be great. There will be no exhibit this summer for only the second time, but once the space is done, it will be fantastic. They have plenty of volunteers but are still having issues with getting people who want to take on responsibility.

**Islesboro Historical Society**- Patrick O'Bannon is a historian who is working to track deeds on Islesboro all they way back to the origin. Islesboro Historical Society celebrated 50 years as an organization in 2014. They have 150-200 members. It is currently housed in town hall. There is a hall in the first floor. The second floor holds a museum and the third floor holds a storage area. They are open Wed-Sun, 12-4, seasonally. There is also a weekly art show, with speakers, in summer. They finished cataloging using Past Perfect last year, through the help of volunteers. Issues include a lack climate controlled storage (they have had to turn down artifacts due to inappropriate storage). There is also no handicapped access on upper floors. Currently working on family geology program, starting with year round residents, will be working towards summer. They have a Facebook page. They post images from the collection and get lots of feedback. They are looking to redo website in the coming years.

**Isle Au Haut Historical Society** The Isle Au Haut Historical Society has been around for over 25 years, and is an official 501c3. They do not have an official space; they housed here and there around the town hall, which isn't ideal because it gets both hot and cold.
Island fellow, Meghan Cooper, is working to organize and catalog the collection. They have done some oral histories and are working on starting on those again. They have questions about grants and workshops for historical society.

Grant Suggestions from the group: Davis Family Foundation, Maine Community Foundation (donor advised grants), University of Southern Maine Grants Library, and Maine Humanities Council.

Training Suggestions: Past Perfect Webinars and Classes are available

Other suggestions: Route 1 in Belfast- PC Medix- Re-purpose and Recycle computers from corporate streams to be resold to non-profits.

Update from Steve Bromage at the Maine Historical Society to be shared with the group: (written to Roger Berle via e-mail):

Roger,

One of the visions we have as we plot the continued development of MHS’s statewide work and next steps on our campus/with our museum building in Portland is the major presence of non-profit/community partners (across discipline, across sector) in our physical space on Congress Street—in a sense replicating Maine Memory Network dynamics in physical space. We see our “museum” (we’re not sure if that’s the right word) becoming a key, prominent place to learn about, explore, and get connected to Maine, its special sense of place, and issues of contemporary relevance (much like our current “400 Years of New Mainers” exhibit). Our campus will become a jumping off point for visitors, highlighting the stories and experiences of Maine communities through their voices, collections, and the presence of local/regional/other statewide organizations. The telling of Maine history would be much richer through the inclusion of those partners, and they would gain a prominent space here in Portland. Building on our Maine Memory work, we are also experimenting with expanded services and support for our partners locally (e.g. we are working with the new Biddeford Mills Museum to help them build a physical exhibition at the Peppered Mills Campus—very interesting dynamics).

A good if small example of these principles is the integration of our upcoming programs related to the Acadia Centennial in the months ahead: there is focused integration between our upcoming physical exhibit Designing Acadia here on campus which features a part of the state/community we have worked very closely with through Maine Memory (MDI); we are taking our annual meeting to that community (e.g. taking MHS people/members THERE) and highlighting local partners prominently (MDI Historical Society, Abbe, etc.), and tying our Olmsted lecture to the theme.

In any case (!), I have always thought that the Island Institute, coalition, and island communities/historical societies would be wonderful, essential partners in all of this.

Have a great day. I am so sorry to miss it.

Best,
Steve

Melissa Klemt from The University of New England is looking to do a research project this summer in food security and public health on islands in Maine. She will write a letter to MIC and Karen will disseminate it to the group.
Island Updates:

**Frenchboro-** Beverly Roxby: Prepared written report- see below. Please let Beverly know if you have any ‘aha’s and would like to follow up with her via e-mail.

**Frenchboro Town Report, May 6, 2016**

**Mail: “LJ” (Louis Hopkins) had been delivering mail to Swans Island from Bass Harbor on the days there was no Frenchboro ferry, and Paul Joy from Swans Island brought it here, sometimes bringing other essentials to islanders as need arose. New restrictions have been imposed on process of mail delivery and up till recently the Town could only receive mail on Wednesday and Thursday (ferry days). For now though, the boat that delivers mail to Gotts Island is delivering our mail as well, every day but Wednesday, so the Town’s delivery service is back on track, but that will only last until Oct. when LJ may come back on board but that may not happen. Stay tuned.**

**Town government personnel revisions:** For approval at Town meeting, Select Board proposes several revisions for personnel positions: Town administrator position to be replaced by two new positions: Administrative assistant to Town officials, and assistant to Select Board. Town’s current treasurer, who has also been tax collector, will be resigning as of Town meeting on June 23. In addition to hiring a new treasurer, the Town will create a new position—tax collector. Town’s maintenance position salary will be raised, for understandable reasons.

**Harbor management:** Army Corps of Engineers mandates 5 requirements be completed before dredging can occur. 2 of those have been met; others are being worked on. Dredging expected to be scheduled soon.

**Infrastructure repair:** Town obtained a low interest bond from MMA for road repair. (Last road repair 2 years ago.) Guardrails have been installed in several places and a dry hydrant put into place at the fire pond. Town is getting a new estimate on paving repairs, which will begin shortly.

**Electricity supplier:** Emera has a draft contract with Swans Island. Town is hoping to receive more input from Frenchboro residents and property owners.

**Broadband:** A user survey was completed last year, but no new action has been taken.

**Comprehensive plan:** Zain, our Island Fellow, received 11 surveys from the island community, mostly from year around residents, some from couples/families. Survey results are available for perusal from the community at large, which hopefully will provide more feedback for the meeting he’ll be setting up in July. Travis Pryor from Wright-Pierce in Freeport will help to ensure that the Town meets state requirements.

**Goal:** To complete preliminary plan by December for subsequent community review and approval in June 2017.

**Solid Waste:** Once/month trash takeoffs are burdening the town. Some residents are just storing trash in their homes. No one has volunteered lately for returnables or cardboard take off, and cardboard storage is completely full. One of the town warrants for Town meeting proposes eliminating cardboard recycling. Should the Town agree to contract with Fiberight for solid waste disposal, cardboard would be picked up with trash, but concern is that adding cardboard directly to trash dumpsters causes tremendously more bulk, especially given the town’s once/month pickup. The crows may be pleased, but most residents won’t be.

**Municipal Advisory Council:** Formed in Oct./2015, this group is made up primarily of island residents and chaired by a part time resident who is a Massachusetts attorney. The Frenchboro Community Fund received a $25K initial donation from FFDC late in the year. Primary purpose of the Council-- to assist in providing a means of tax relief for the town
through fundraising efforts which will start this summer. Immediate goal: To help reduce the cost of the school budget. Shey Conover will help coordinate efforts.

Frenchboro School:
Lindsay is stepping up Frenchboro’s involvement with MDIRSS activities, establishing more collaborative projects with MDI schools. Doug McMullen, current steward with MCHT, is working with the students on nontraditional physical education, leading geology hikes, and he did an astronomy program for students and residents. Music programming has been especially successful; but overall arts program is seen as lagging. Plans are starting for the inter-island school event the third week in Sept. but Sunbeam repairs during Sept./Oct. may present challenges in some transportation of students and families. School will be painted this summer along with the parsonage.

General good news:
School committee member and mother of one of our students, Brianna Ransom, delivered Ethan Ransom this March. Another coming in mid June. (Sarah Brake, as a select board member, has been granted special dispensation from usual requirement that she be present in order be voted to remain on select board. She can now state her intentions beforehand via letter, then go off and have the baby. Whew.) Zain’s chili cook-off in March was a big hit. Next up: Community barbeque and steel drum band on May 20.

Matinicus- Eva Murray: Matinicus is getting work done on the telephone and internet at this moment. TDS islands are all getting upgrades this morning. Eva did some training around Emergency Management (she just got home!). Emergency Management is an idea for a future MIC meeting.
Starting Maine’s newest library in an updated ‘shack’. They are hooking up internet and electricity soon! It is a 501c3, and all funding for the nonprofit license ($400) came from bottle back money. The rest of the money to renovate the building was small donations from many residents. This is a very exciting development in small community.

Swan’s Island- Donna Wiegle: Donna is really happy to be here, as she has been struggling with health problems. “It is really good to be back on my feet and to be doing something normal”. There is no mail contract yet on Swan’s and Frenchboro. LJ Hopkins has been delivering freight/postage to the island for over 40 years and his contract wasn’t renewed. Without mail contract, his whole freight business, which serves the islands, could go under. It’s been a big hassle and stressful. Swan’s Island is now opening its roads to ATV’s. Swan’s Island is also hiring an administrative assistant for the first time, which is a move in the right direction.

Isle Au Haut- Kendra Chubbuck: They had a town meeting! And another one will happen soon. It was quite a meeting; 2 hours in they were still on article 2. But, they did it! Kendra has some questions for the MIC reps from Comprehensive Plan committee- she will send out an e-mail to gather information from the group. Keep an eye out for it. They have to do with junk cars, large waste and purchase of town land. On a personal note, Kendra has a flushing toilet in her new house!
Vinalhaven-Andy Dorr: There is a historical society on Vinalhaven housed in a town hall, that was originally moved from Rockland. Vinalhaven also has a historic Gallamander (granite mover) that is on the National Registry. Town meeting is the week of June 20th. Andy is hoping to get a town planner position passed to look at Downstreet plan and sea level rise. The Tick study is on the town website; the medical center is trying to get a handle on Lyme Disease, which is a huge problem on the islands. There is a new veterans memorial in the works. Lobster Boats are in the water and the season is beginning!

Long Island-Mark Greene: Town meeting is next week. Mark’s prediction is that the discussion about maximum lot coverage and farm animals will be colorful. Aging in place is the topic for the new Island Fellow. Long Island just spent time and energy to improve boat schedule to help reduce the 5-hour layover in the middle of the day. Community center isn’t quite done- but we’ll get there! School kids are involved in Aquaculture program at school; they have a lease to grow kelp. The town really appreciates the support of the Island Institute with the development of broadband.

Peaks Island- Mary Anne Mitchell: The City of Portland budget includes renovation of library and community center. The community raised $200K and there was a private donation of $200K from Kevin Carter and his family. The City Council unanimously approved, through the CIP budget, another $250,00 needed to complete the project. There is money for a new furnace for the school, thanks to the efforts of Sam Saltonstall, PEAT, and the Island Institute.

The Peaks Island Council is paying for ½ of a cadet, the City is paying for other half; this will help with traffic down front during the summer. A Transportation engineer came out to look at traffic down front; hopefully something will come from his recommendations. There are ongoing issues with traffic and crowds in the summer! Students on Peaks are focused on the theme: reduce, reuse, and recycle! Students had to carry around their own trash for a week and learned a great deal from the experience.

The City arborist is helping to replant street trees. Peaks Environmental Action Team is working with Maine Sierra Club to get solar panels for the capped landfill. There are still huge issues with plastics and garbage on beaches that continue to pollute Casco Bay. Casco Bay Lines is no longer shipping Clink bottles which impacts the bottle and can recycling program the Peaks Environmental Action Team does every summer to help visitors have the opportunity to recycle their cans and bottles. Volunteers would like to continue but there are questions: Can we handle the volume as volunteers? What if we don’t have enough space to store the bags and how do we then get the bottles and cans to town.

Pesticide ordinances are being considered by Portland (they are currently happening in Ogunquit). PEAT got yard signs to help people realize the impact of pesticides. If you are interested in getting signs for your island, let Mary Anne know.

Chebeague- Donna Damon: Marjorie Stratton just completed her first year as a town manager. The school just got back from a three-day trip to Plymouth, MA.
Big news on broadband: Axiom just bought Chebeague.net! Axiom is offering a bundle deal- making a presentation today. The purchase has increased Internet speeds already.

Toll of the Sea Memorial Fund is going to create a plaque for those who have been lost at sea. Fundraising for the last $1000. The planning for annual Memorial Day program is underway- this year will celebrate over 200 veterans!

The committee studying the use of Sunset property is going to public for ideas about use. Chebeague Fire and Rescue is waiting for a new fire truck. The stone wharf is being improved. The town is also talking about developing parking areas down by the ferry. Paper streets are finally being dealt with, as the deadline is in September.

Committee in the town is looking at overall health issues. The town meeting is coming up in early June. The new bakery lunchroom is opening in Slow Bell Café! There have been 24 deaths on Chebeague since September (12 year round; 12 seasonal). It’s been really hard on the community. It is the most negative impact in recent history.

*Cliff*: Sustainable Cliff Island is hoping to get into telemedicine, and to use part of their property to house a physician’s assistant. The goal is to be able to get routine health care on island. It’s great to have Long Island looking at the same things. They have written a grant and waiting to hear back about funding. Broadband continues to develop, with the help of Island Institute. Their postal carrier, Chester, was honored by the city of Portland on his 80th birthday! School is holding tight… all seems well.

Next Meeting- Tourism Education and Etiquette
Friday, August 12th