

1 **Lagoon Pond Drawbridge Committee**
2 **Minutes of the Meeting held on November 1, 2005**
3 **At the Offices of the Martha's Vineyard Commission**
4

5 Present: Melinda Loberg (Chair), Steve Berlucchi, Richard Combra Jr., Tristan Israel, Fred
6 LaPiana, Mark London

7 Observers: Harriet Barrow, Lois Craine, Bob Ford, Chris Fried, Dan Greenbaum, Max Hart,
8 Srinivas Sattoor, Jo-Ann Taylor
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11 **1. Minutes**

12 The minutes of the meetings of October 5, 2005 and October 21, 2005 were adopted as
13 drafted.
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15 **2. Correspondence and Communications**

- 16 • Bob Ford reported that he had spoken to Ariane Ritz, responsible for permits for
17 MassHighway, who said that they expect the Coast Guard permit by the end of the
18 month.
- 19 • Tristan and Mark met with Mark Forest, from Bill Delahunt's office, and briefed him about
20 the status of the project. He raised the possibility of decommissioning channel as a federal
21 channel. This would have to go to Congress but, once done, would give the community
22 complete control over the operation of the drawbridge. We need to clarify what the
23 consequences would be, such as the responsibility and potential cost of dredging. Jo-Ann
24 will investigate the process after checking with John Bugbee to find out if he has already
25 found out anything.
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27 **3. Existing Bridge**

- 28 • There was a discussion of the present policy with respect to the bridge operation. Fred will
29 clarify as to whether it is on demand anytime of the day or on demand at one of the
30 scheduled times. He will also clarify what the current schedule is.
- 31 • Mark talked to Bob Gregory, Traffic Engineer with MassHighway District 5. He said that:
32 - Town police can enforce existing weight limits, even without a scale since the
33 weight of any given fully-loaded truck is known.
34 - It might be possible to lower the weight limit. The request would have to be
35 initiated by the MassHighway bridge section.
36 - It is not desirable to lower the speed limit too much if the result is that it will not be
37 respected.
- 38 • The Committee discussed the issue of weight and speed limits.

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- It might be desirable to reduce the speed to 30 mph. If the impact is a function of the square of the speed, this would be a reduction of almost half the impact compared to 40 mph.
 - Reducing the speed would also enhance safety at the entrance to Eastville Beach.
 - The lower weight and speed could be part of a campaign to "keep the bridge open".
 - We should clarify whether there is a way to limit large trucks, other than by limiting the weight.
 - Ideally, the weight limit would be set to allow buses, but nothing heavier.
 - The worst trucks in terms of weight per axle are dump trucks.
 - We should try to get the typical weight per truck from the SSA, the State Police, or from the State weight team.
 - Bridge tender Bob Maciel will be asked to observe which trucks seem to cause the greatest vibrations.
 - Trucks now make up about 2% of the bridge traffic.
 - It would be useful to put up a sign at Five Corners saying that heavy trucks should turn right. Information could also be distributed via the SSA.
 - The State should be invited to kick off the campaign, possibly bringing in a scale.

58 **4. Temporary Bridge**

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- Mark reported on a conversation he had with Steve McLaughlin, MassHighway's bridge engineer.
 - The RFP for the engineer for the permanent bridge is due on November 9. MassHighway intends to select three firms to submit technical proposals.
 - Plans for the temporary bridge are 100% complete. The current bridge is 30' wide and the temporary bridge will be 24' wide.
 - Steve has indicated that MassHighway has not changed the design of the bicycle and pedestrian facilities, namely a 5' path with two-way traffic in on one side of the bridge.
 - Mark asked that MassHighway give a clearer response in writing to the concerns that have been raised on many occasions.
 - Mark insisted on the need for direct communications between MassHighway and the Committee, either with direct meetings (on the Vineyard or in Boston) or at least receiving written responses to our written questions and comments.
 - Dan Greenbaum pointed out that this timetable for hiring a bridge designer is 4-6 months behind the preliminary schedule. He also commented that, even if it were possible to widen the path by a couple of feet on the bridge portion, widening it on the approaches might have environmental impacts that would like affect the permitting. These might be easily resolved, but could also cause significant delays.
 - Tisbury has been researching the "right of way" in order to respond to the State's request for an easement. The records are unclear and it is not known whether the Selectmen can issue an easement or whether they must take it to Town Meeting. They will continue to research the issue.

83 **5. Other**

84 • It was agree to set up a meeting with District 5 to discuss the report on the existing
85 drawbridge.

86 • Mark will write to MassHighway asking them to reply in writing to the Committee's
87 requests and suggestions.

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89 **6. Next Meeting**

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91 Wednesday, November 9, 2005 at 9:00 a.m.

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94 *Minutes prepared by Mark London.*

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