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## Coastal Hazards Adaptation Team (CHAT) Work Session #58

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Tuesday, January 16, 2023

**1:00-3:00PM**

VIRTUAL MEETING

### **1. Introductions**

#### CHAT Members

Jason Bachand – Hampton Town Planner  
Tori Bamford – Hampton Coastal Resilience Coordinator  
Kate Bashline – Hampton Resident  
Jay Diener - Hampton Conservation Commission  
Brianna O'Brien – Hampton Conservation Coordinator  
Ward Galanis – Hampton Planning Board  
Tom Bassett – Resident Representative  
Barbara Kravitz – Hampton Beach Area Commission  
Stephen LaBranche – Resident Representative  
Bob Ladd – Hampton Beach Village District  
Jennifer Hale – Department of Public Works  
Eric Sunderlin – Hampton Department of Public Works

#### CHAT Support Staff

Lucy Perkins – NH Coastal Program  
Jen Gilbert – Coastal Program  
Michaela Heming – Flood Ready Neighborhoods Program, NH Sea Grant  
Liz Durfee – Planning Consultant and CHAT Coordinator  
Rayann Dionne - Seabrook-Hampton Estuary Alliance (SHEA)

#### Guests

Gary Bashline – Hampton Resident  
Sara Gagnon – Coastal Conservation Coordinator (SHEA)  
Jamie Sullivan – Town Manager (~1:10-1:45pm)  
Jackson Kaspari - Dover Resilience Program Manager (~2:00-2:30pm)

### **2. Approve meeting notes from October and December 2023**

#### October Minutes

Motion: Mr. LaBranche moved to approve the October meeting minutes

Second: Mr. Diener

Vote: 5 in favor, 3 Abstained: Ms. O'Brien, Mr. Galanis, Mr. Ladd abstained

#### December Minutes

Ms. Durfee noted a slight amendment for the December minutes. The minutes should have been titled Work Session 57, not 56.

Mr. Bassett clarified on page 4, the storm drains are backing up into streets, not the pond. Ms. Durfee corrected the December minutes.

Motion: Ms. O'Brien moved to approve the amended December meeting minutes

Second: Mr. Bachand

Vote: 8 in favor, 1 Abstained, Mr. LaBranche

### 3. Relevant Flood Updates

Mr. Ladd

- The flooding in the district was excessive. Areas that previously weren't under water were underwater during the recent flooding. The beach couldn't be accessed, all roads were shut down. Water came up Church Street, which was shut down. From North Hampton down to Seabrook, the road was closed. There was more water coming from the ocean than previously experienced, with flooding from both the marsh and from the ocean. There were rocks on the road. North Hampton and Rye are still working on opening Ocean Blvd due to the amount of damage experienced.

Mr. Bassett

- Provided an update from the previous meeting, with an update on chronic flooding. Typically, chronic high tide flooding will be deeper at the intersection of Greene and Gentian Roads and extends up all of Gentian. But it typically stops about 2/3 of the way up Greene Street.
- During the January 10, 2024 storm, a lot of water came over the walls. The Hampton Tide Gauge Graph measures the actual versus the predicted tide. The predicted tide was 9.4 feet, and the actual tide was 13.67 feet.
- A photo of storm surge at Plaice Cove illustrates a major driver of the "historic flooding."
- In side-by-side pictures taken during the January 10 storm, the advancing tide floods the entire road and advances up toward Meadow Pond Road. Another picture taken the same day shows the flooding on Gentian Road and Meadow Pond Road. The water level is above the garage doors.
- Another graphic shows the repeat flooding due to high tides over the period of January 11 – 14.
- Mr. Bassett created a data table comparing predicted tide, recorded tide, rainfall, and incidence of flooding from January 9-14.
- Subsequent pictures showed five days of flooding in Hampton neighborhoods. When the weather drops below freezing, the leftover water turns to ice.
- A drone photo of Mr. Bassett's neighborhood shows road flooding as well as flooding in the marsh and High Street areas.
- Pictures show ocean foam in the roads. The waterline on Mr. Bassett's house is marked at 15 inches.
- The flooding appears to be worse than it has ever been.
- These slides were sent to the Board of Selectmen for a special meeting focusing on the flood. The images in the slide compare flood images from November 28, 2023 to January 13, 2024.
- The flooding is getting worse and causing concern for the neighborhood. There will be a Flood Ready Neighborhood meeting on January 25. One of the agenda topics is to discuss the possibility of building a berm to stop the overflow of water from the pond into the streets.

- This information was also shared with Town Manager Jamie Sullivan who said the town is committed to mitigating flooding issues.

Mr. Bachand

- Floodplain Management Ordinance Update
  - The ordinance will be on the March 3<sup>rd</sup> ballot for the town meeting.
- The Master Plan Implementation Committee did not meet in December, they will meet January 24. Mr. Bachand will provide updates to CHAT after the Committee meeting.

Ms. Bashline

- Showed a picture from the view looking west from Route 1A. It shows the beach west of the bridge. The pole in the picture is the last pole of rope fencing. There used to be grass covered dunes and a ramp to the beach in the picture. But everything is gone as of Saturday's storm. There is now an approximately six-foot cliff down to the beach where the ramp used to be.
- The next picture shows the beach on the east of the bridge. The dune in the front is something that they have been trying to protect, but there isn't much left. It was four times wider but the picture shows all that is left now. The picture shows Thornton Street, which is an east-west street. The ocean water flooded halfway up the street.
- The next picture shows a view looking onto Portsmouth Avenue, which is a north-south street. It shows a little more of the dune. To the right of the white house, there is a narrow pole. This shows the amount of dune that was lost, from the pole back to the existing dune. A lot of the sand is now in the street. This was a significant and unusual event for this area.

Ms. O'Brien

- Shared a picture and stated that some residents of Plaice Cove organized some dune planting several months ago. The dune was entirely covered by the ocean on Saturday, but a lot of the plants survived. The ocean deposited some additional sand and plants.

Ms. Hale

- Update regarding last Wednesday and Saturday. Significant damage occurred along with the snow, rain, wind, and storm surge.
  - A culvert was lost out of Towle Farm Road out of Batchelder Pond which will need to be repaired.
  - Part of Bicentennial Wall was also destroyed as well as the parking lot.
  - Plaice Cove stairs were destroyed.
  - Severe flooding throughout town, resulting in the opening of the Emergency Operations Center on Wednesday and Saturday.
  - Roads were closed prior to high tide. From 10 am to 5 pm, parts of High Street were still inaccessible.

Ms. Dionne

- Asked how many people ended up using the shelter in place during the storm.

Mr. Sullivan

- About ten people on Wednesday and between eight and twelve people on Saturday used the shelter. The stays were relatively short.

Ms. Durfee

- Stated that she, Ms. Dionne, and Mr. Diener discussed holding a public discussion session to discuss the impacts from recent storm events. Emergency preparedness and emergency response could also be part of the public discussion. This would be a good opportunity to provide community members with the opportunity to share flood impacts, data, and photos. Would members of this

group be interested in attending and is that the type of outreach and engagement that this group be interested in?

Ms. Dionne

- Stated that typically every other year SHEA connects with Emergency Management Directors in Hampton, Hampton Falls, and Seabrook both in person and virtually. This will occur again this March during Flood Awareness Month.

Ms. Perkins

- Stated that there is a tentative plan for the Rising Tides Photo Campaign in March this year. It would be good to collaborate and overlap both events to improve engagement opportunities. The planning has been delayed awaiting the NOAA grant, but the press releases and coordination should start soon. They are considering some site visits during high tides.

Ms. Durfee

- Stated that Ms. Bamford and Ms. O'Brien have been compiling flood photos, and the public can contribute flood photos as well. It might be a good idea to build on this existing resource.
- Ms. Durfee did an informal poll asking CHAT members if they would be interested in attending a public discussion meeting. Responses indicate further discussion is warranted due to some interest.

#### **4. Draft Flood Risk Disclosure Bill ([HB 1320](#))**

Ms. Durfee

- Provided an update. Rep Muns was unable to attend today. He passed on a few items regarding the Disclosure Bill.
  - No hearing date set for HB 1320. The Bill is still being fine-tuned with updates from drafters of the Bill.
  - Ms. Durfee will forward the current marked up version of the Bill to meeting attendees after this meeting. As soon as there is a hearing date, everyone will be notified.

#### **5. Review of 2023 Year in Review draft 1**

Mr. Diener

- Reviewed the Year in Review draft and thanked the CHAT members for all they accomplished in a year. The Year in Review can be used to look back over the past year and as a launching pad for the upcoming year.

Ms. Durfee

- The third page of the review has a list of Next Steps.
- Ms. Heming and Ms. Gilbert will be added as non-member participants.
- Contact Ms. Durfee for any items to be added to the Year in Review. Once it is finalized it will be posted digitally and will be available in print upon request.

#### **6. Parking Placard Program Discussion**

Ms. Durfee

- Background: One of CHAT's recommendations is to reduce the high tide threshold at which residents can use the town lots to park their cars during very high tides. Currently, the town allows

permitted residents to park in town lots when the tide is ten feet or greater. One suggestion was to lower the threshold to 9.7 feet. Additional discussions suggested lowering the threshold to 9.5 feet or higher.

- Ms. Durfee previously drafted a letter with action items for CHAT.
  - Goal would be to pass along a letter to the Selectmen with a recommendation from CHAT to amend the code.
  - Details for the letter would include the tide threshold and the source of tide level information.
- Ongoing discussion items include:
  - Outreach: to help residents learn about the program
  - Administrative piece

Ms. Dionne

- Suggested adding language to the effect of “if tide is within X range, use Y parking lots, but if tide is over X range, consider parking outside of the beach area.”

Mr. Bassett

- Learned recently that not all town parking lots are part of this program. The town needs to clarify which lots are options for this program.

Ms. Durfee

- Agreed that which lots are included needs to be clarified. Her reading of the code is that all town lots are included because there is not a list of associated lots.

Ms. Bashline

- Stated that Ms. Gilbert explained in a prior meeting that beach parking at the beach is at a premium and sometimes people’s behavior isn’t always accommodating. Ms. Bashline recommended learning from them how to make it work best at the implementation level. Because sometimes there are complications.

Mr. Sullivan

- Suggested that the reasoning behind the change in ordinance should be written down and sent to his office. His staff will work out the details and the board will adjust the ordinance as necessary based on code.

Ms. Durfee

- Agreed with Mr. Sullivan’s idea.

Ms. O’Brien

- Has some questions about logistics such as when the town lots become available and how long people can park there. The conversation should include logistics based on how the Town is preparing for flood management.

Mr. Ladd

- Concerned because the anticipated and actual tides have been very different and feels this may cause difficulty when setting the threshold for the parking placard.

Ms. Durfee

- Listed several discussion items from today’s placard discussion:
  - adding language “if the tide is in x range, then consider parking in Y lots, but if tide is projected over a certain height, those locations may not be safe.”
  - Need to clarify which town lots are included
  - Communicate with town staff for the easiest way to implement the placard plan.

- CHAT can provide recommendations on flood thresholds to send to the Town Manager's office or the office of the selectmen for their staff to work out implementation details.

Ms. Bashline

- Stated that when residents need to move their car the parking lot is already flooded. Is there a way to address how this is explained to people. Additionally, in the last storm, the police were proactive in closing the street, but that affects people moving their cars.

Ms. Durfee

- Stated this is a valid concern. The parking lots at the beach are in the 100-year floodplain. This needs to be addressed in planning.

Mr. Ladd

- In the past people parked on Ocean Blvd., but the last storm showed that isn't feasible.

Ms. Durfee

- Stated that perhaps safe places to park resident cars needs to be reevaluated. This may require more mapping.

Mr. Diener

- Asked if schools are emergency parking areas.

Ms. Durfee

- Stated she reads the ordinance as the ability to park in any town owned lot. She will dig deeper for clarification.

Mr. Labranche

- Stated that the placard should have a disclaimer on the back that says parking is at your own risk. The town can't guarantee safety or imply certain lots are "safe". Also, the school lots aren't town property. The schools would have to give permission for parking.

Ms. Durfee

- Asked if this committee is comfortable putting forth a recommendation to lower the threshold for now, even though it isn't a long-term solution and there may be disclaimers added to the program.

Ms. O'Brien

- Recommended additional language clarifying the other logistics discussed in this meeting and adding the disclaimer on the back of the placard.

Ms. Dionne

- The placard plan has highlighted the need to have broader discussions regarding evacuation routes and thresholds. When flooding is more severe, the placards won't be enough and more safeguards need to be in place.

Ms. Durfee

- Emergency evacuation route discussions could be planned for a future CHAT meeting.

Mr. LaBranche

- The Town of Hampton sends out emergency alerts. How many people knew that emergency plans had been enacted because not everyone signs up for the emergency alerts? He stated Seabrook has loudspeakers at the beach for emergency warnings.

Ms. O'Brien

- Collaboration with Emergency Management team is necessary to improve emergency communication with residents. This way people can have the information to successfully plan.

Ms. Durfee

- Asked is there a CHAT member who can work with her to connect with the Emergency Management Director? Perhaps hearing from residents will be a catalyst for the Emergency Management Director to attend a CHAT meeting.
- Let Ms. Durfee know if you can help coordinate a guest speaker.

Ms. Bashline

- Wanted clarification of the parking placard program goals. She stated that the crews clearing the roads need the cars moved so it is safe for them. The parking program should keep resident cars safe and keep the road crews safe.

Ms. Durfee

- Stated there is low capacity to send out alerts based on anticipated tide level. Prior discussions covered whether there is an easier way to let residents know the anticipated high tide and provide education about where to find projected high tide information. This way residents can seek the information themselves and alleviate DPWs burden for multiple announcements.
- Education and alerts are two key components.
- The original intent of the placard program was to lower threshold for when residents can move the cars.

Mr. Ladd

- Recommended contacting the Town Manager to coordinate with the Emergency Management Director to guest at a CHAT meeting.

Mr. Bassett

- His neighbor couldn't reach her home because of the road closures. She suggested that cameras be installed in high flood areas so residents can check them online and plan.

Ms. Bashline

- If you are on the South side of Hampton, where are residents supposed to park?

Ms. Durfee

- Residents with a placard are free to park in any town lot. Currently there are no specific lots assigned to specific parts of town.

Ms. Durfee

- Addressing projected lower threshold of 9.5 feet, this is based in part on the NHDES study that looked at differences between actual and projected tides.
- The original recommendation was to lower the threshold to 9.7 feet, but CHAT later changed the recommendation to 9.5 feet. The original 9.7-foot threshold was included in the Master Plan. Is there a concern with moving forward with the recommendation of 9.5 feet?

Mr. Bachand

- Stated that a broader discussion needs to occur, but 9.5 meets the intent of the 9.7 recommendation.

Mr. Diener

- Agrees with Mr. Bachand that the change is minor and meets the intent of the Master Plan. The Master Plan is a guiding document and slight variations are acceptable.

Ms. Durfee

- Will proceed with 9.5 feet for the draft recommendation.
- Stated there is discussion about which source of tide data should be used. Also, what are the logistics about alerting the public about tides.

- CHAT can provide input to the town about which types of tide data can be used to help identify anticipated events requiring residents to relocate cars.

Ms. Bassett

- Stated that it is important to specify (MLLW) for tide. This is the metric used by the Hampton Tide Gauge and NOAA.

Ms. Durfee

- The two tide sources CHAT has discussed using are the Hampton Harbor Tide Gauge and the NOAA Tide Prediction Tables.
- Either or both sources could be used if the town enforcement agencies know what is being used.

Mr. Ladd

- Stated language could be added to the 9.5-foot threshold “or whenever Emergency Management directs.”

Mr. Bassett

- Stated he could see using both tide sources in tandem and that the Hampton Gauge is most accurate. The NOAA tide predictions are based on past data.

Ms. Durfee

- Stated that it may not be possible for DPW to monitor the tide gauges and issue warnings as often as needed. Also, not all residents will be able to read and understand the more accurate data. These are the considerations when determining if both tide sources should be used.
- Mentioned that she had asked Kirsten Howard whether it was appropriate to use both sources she responded that using either source works fine as long so long as the town enforcement agents know that.
- Suggested contacting the Town Manager to determine how realistic it is for the town to issue notices in accordance with the tide gauge.

Ms. Heming

- Suggested that Ms. Howard was thinking that it doesn’t matter which tide source meets the threshold, as long as one reaches threshold, that is enough to trigger the parking placard program.
- Does agree that having two tide sources that possibly conflict could cause confusion and issues for residents.

Ms. Durfee

- There will be more discussion about the placard program based on the broader concerns from today’s meeting.
- Look for announcements for the Flood Risk Disclosure Bill hearing date.

## 7. **Agenda Change:** Jackson Kaspari the head of the Resilience Program in Dover

Liz Durfee

- Introduced Mr. Kaspari and explained the make up of CHAT attendees.
- Several years ago, CHAT recommended the Town of Hampton to incorporate resilience into the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). This was also included in the town’s master plan. Mr. Kaspari is here from Dover to share details of their plan.

Mr. Kaspari

- Supports energy initiatives, conservation land acquisition, monitoring and environmental project reviews.

- Dover CIP is a public document and drives the fiscal outlook for five fiscal years on how the city will budget and appropriate for large projects throughout the city, to include infrastructure and considers expenditures exceeding \$250K.
- This plan ensures department heads are communicating across various sectors in the municipality about pressing issues.
- The goal is connecting CIP projects with the goals of the city council and the community that have been identified in either council goals or the master plan chapters.
- The description section of the CIP in section 8 says “including incorporating resiliency”. This is an indicator for planning personnel to question how their project connects to the city’s overall resiliency strategies.
- The master plan was updated recently with a Facilities and Utilities chapter. This allows the city to take a broad look when assessing the city for future upgrades regarding major infrastructure projects or building improvements.
  - Assessed all major buildings, stormwater drainage, bridges, etc.
  - These would require documentation and forming a strategy to use as a guide for the CIP process.
  - Some resiliency measures would require a higher level of detail than allowed in the Facilities and Utilities chapter.
  - The Energy Commission is working on bringing in Siemens as a potential partner for an IRS grid energy audit to develop a stand-alone document to allow department heads to work out resiliency plans in their facilities. This would allow a more detailed level of engineering expertise.

Ms. Kravitz

- Asked if public outreach is built into the plans discussed above.

Mr. Kaspari

- Public outreach is part of the plan. Dover has a dedicated Media Services team and Outreach Coordinator, and they perform outreach. The public outreach plan includes requesting public input as well as alerting the public about upcoming projects.

Ms. Bashline

- Requested information about how Dover is dealing with the changing weather, storms and recent storms.

Mr. Kaspari

- Stated that Dover is a little more sheltered than other communities. Dover Point is the most vulnerable to coastal flooding. There has been some downtown flooding affecting businesses and flooding on key evacuation routes during past storm surges.
- Dover is working with the Coastal Adaptation Working Group to address one of the bridges and adequately size the culvert to deal with future storm events.
- Addressing resiliency and infrastructure, the biggest message is that it is much less expensive to plan and accomplish projects before they become emergent must fix issues. It is important to stay ahead of aging infrastructure.

Ms. Durfee

- Asked if the way Dover is managing resiliency resonates with staff in Hampton involved in the CIP and planning long term projects.

Mr. Bachand

- Would like to review Dover’s CIP after this meeting to compare processes.

- Hampton's current process:
  - Receive CIP updates annually from department heads
  - Distribute updates to the entire committee
  - Receives updates from school districts, SAU 90 and SAU 21.

Ms. Gilbert

- Would like to know if Dover CIP has a connection with the Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Mr. Kaspari

- There is an ongoing effort to have the Emergency Management Director coordinate more with community services. Currently, critical infrastructure identified in the Hazard Mitigation Plan has made its way into the CIP. There is room for improvement, but there has been progress in using the Hazard Mitigation Plan as an informative document in the CIP process.
- Mr. Kaspari is happy to connect with CHAT members for further discussion.
- Dover created a stand-alone city-wide resilience plan that operates tangentially with the master planning process. This plan has a large energy focus. He recommends considering this type of guiding document.

Ms. Durfee

- Will send out a link to Dover's CIP.

**8. Next meeting: February 20, 2024**

**9. Adjourn**

**Meeting adjourned at 3:03pm**