

Town of Harwich
Real Estate & Open Space (REOS) Committee
Meeting Minutes
June 20, 2025

Members Present: David Callaghan, Chair, Katherine Green, Brad Hinote, Elaine Shovlin, Margo Fenn, Marcie Smith, Carol Porter. Guests: Mark Kelleher, Michael Lach.

8:33 A.M. Call to Order.

Kathy moved to accept March 21, 2025 meeting minutes with corrections and attachment from Affordable Housing Trust. Seconded, all in favor.

Old Business: Review of Parcels Assigned to Select Board: Dave spoke with Michael Lach, who volunteered to assemble an ad hoc committee to evaluate properties under the direction of the Harwich Select Board. The names of the ad hoc committee members were noted. Dave sees REOS partnering with this ad hoc group. Michael Lach presented several maps created by Mark Robinson and noted that the goal of the ad hoc committee is to facilitate the transfer of these properties, currently under the jurisdiction of the Select Board, to either the Water Department or the Conservation Commission. Michael suggested that REOS could act as a co-sponsor with HCT to cosponsor this transfer. Mike described the details of the maps shown. Some issues were raised and set aside for future discussion. The current focus is for the ad hoc committee to gain support from other groups, such as the Water Department and Conservation Commission, before presenting their plans to the Select Board. Margo expressed her support for the ad hoc committee's objective. Kathy suggested that a few members of REOS attend the ad hoc committee meetings, and Margo and Dave volunteered to do so. In response to a question from Dave regarding Article 97 of the Amendments to the Massachusetts Constitution, Michael indicated that this would be a topic for future presentation. Margo moved that the Real Estate and Open Space Committee work with the Harwich Conservation Trust and its ad hoc group to advance this project, parcels assigned to the select board, and that we will appoint a couple of members of our group to coordinate with them. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved. Kathy also suggested including on the HCT map/list, some of the parcels that had previously been researched and proposed to the Select Board by REOS. There was a discussion regarding the intent of the \$500,000 article for researching unknown property owners. Margo recommended that they reach out to the chair of the Select Board to inform them about the ad hoc committee. Mark Kelleher will bring this information to the Select Board.

New Business: none

Member Reports:

Kathy Green inquired about the status of the parcels currently with the assessor's department for research and clarification. Carly is currently busy but has managed to resolve some issues with a few parcels; however, there are still more that need attention. The discussion also touched on the timing of these matters in relation to the hiring of the town administrator.

Elaine mentioned that the Affordable Housing Trust has decided to sell properties located on Depot Street and Oak Street. The AHT is yet to determine whether to base the sale on appraised value or assessed value.

Kathy reported that the Community Preservation Committee held a public information session. The Harwich Conservation Trust expressed appreciation for Harwich's support and very few residents from Harwich attended the session.

In his chair report, Dave noted that he received an HCT brochure and highlighted some of the articles it contained.

Next REOS meeting scheduled for July 18, 2025 at 8:30.

9:48 Kathy made a motion to adjourn meeting. Seconded, all in favor, meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Porter, clerk.