

Frequently Asked Questions - Warrant # 13, 14, 15

Warrant #13 – Amendment to the South Bristol Harbor Ordinance

This warrant, to amend the South Bristol Coastal Water and Harbor Ordinance, arose because of a citizen petition that was developed to curtail the expansion of oyster farming on the Damariscotta River and John's Bay surrounding South Bristol.

The ordinance amendment would include an additional article establishing an Aquaculture Review Committee which would review and approve/not approve all aquaculture applications going forward. The review committee would prohibit large scale aquaculture farms (over ½ acre) when applying for a new application, renewing or changing an existing aquaculture application.

The proposed amendments would:

- Prohibit large-scale coastal waters aquaculture operations (occupying greater than ½ acre of coastal waters).
- Allow community-scale coastal waters aquaculture operations (occupying ½ acre or less) with a permit from a newly-established Aquaculture Review Committee. Before issuing a permit, the Aquaculture Review Committee would need to determine that:
 - (1) The applicant has the technical and financial capacity to carry out the operation in compliance with applicable law;
 - (2) The operation will not unreasonably interfere with recreational, fishing, navigational, or conservation uses;
 - (3) The operation will have no unreasonable visual impact on scenic resources;
 - (4) The operation will not unreasonably harm marine habitats; and
- For finfish aquaculture, the operation will not discharge more than 25 metric tons of dissolved nitrogen in any rolling 12-month period and will not cause a concentration of total nitrogen to exceed 0.32 mg/L in eelgrass beds. Finfish aquaculture operations would need to monitor water quality to ensure these standards continue to be met during the commercial life of the operation.
- Traditional and heritage fisheries, such as lobstering, and land-based aquaculture operations are not regulated by the proposed ordinance amendments.
- Coastal waters aquaculture operations that are legally existing as of November 4, 2025 would be exempt from regulation until such time that the operation is modified or expanded, or the state lease for the operation expires or is extended, renewed, or converted to a standard aquaculture lease. After that, the operation would be regulated.

Warrant #14 – Updated Shellfish Ordinance

This warrant is to update the current Shellfish ordinance with an amendment to improve the license allocation procedure and to clarify requirements for the 7 categories of licenses issued by the Town.

Warrant #15 – Land Donation

The owners of an undeveloped lot on Rutherford Island, James & Deborah Warner, would like to donate their property to the town with the stipulation that it will never be sold by the town. This is a 1.19 acre lot with shorefront in Christmas Cove. It is very close to the Coastal Rivers Conservation Trust property off Atlantic Ave. Currently there is minimal access via a walking path and undeveloped vehicle path. At this time the town does not propose any specific plans or use of the property. The Select Board, with the help of property lawyer Robert Gregory, have researched the property history, and the property has a clear title. A deed has been prepared for execution.