

Newburyport Harbor Commission

City Council Chambers

November 14, 2013

Minutes

1. Call to Order

A meeting of the Newburyport Harbor Commission was called to order by Chair Brad Duffin at 7:00 p.m. In attendance were Paul Rooney, Brad Duffin, Bob Dow, Andrew Casson, Dan May, Steve Hines, Justin Dutcher and Jamie Knapp. Also in attendance was Harbormaster Paul Hogg.

2. Minutes

Jamie Knapp moved to approve the minutes of the October 10, 2013 meeting as amended. Paul Rooney seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

3. Transient Boaters' and Harbormaster's Facility Update

Andrew Casson said the request to the City Council for the transfer of funds from retained earnings was delayed because he and the Department of Revenue evaluated the annual income from different perspectives, but the Harbor Commission and City Auditor had come to the same conclusion. He is scheduled to meet with the City Auditor on November 15 to finalize the figures, which he believes will be more favorable than he anticipated. The figures would be used to verify that the Commission's historical revenues would prove sufficient to cover the debt service on a bond for the new facility. After the figures have been finalized a letter would be sent from the Mayor to the City Council requesting the transfer of retained earnings.

4. Discussion on Dock Fees

Jamie Knapp said Paul Hogg advised him a lottery is not needed at this time for the commercial fishing boats. He distributed a comparison of the city's current dock fees to those charged in Portsmouth and at the Newburyport Basin and Wentworth by the Sea. He suggested it might not be an opportune time to raise the rates. Instead, a three-hour minimum might be imposed. The minimum would be in effect for the end of the day, when the staff is no longer on duty. A flat fee might be charged for power and water. Brad Duffin asked that the issue be discussed further at the December meeting.

5. Website Development and Mission Statement

Justin Dutcher described the content of the Commission's website and read the revised mission statement. The website would include a list of members and links to the watersheet and shellfish permit applications, the mooring waiting list, the City calendar and the Coast Guard City and Harbormaster's websites. Jamie Knapp moved to approve the revised mission statement. Paul Rooney seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

6. Subcommittee Reports

Finance Committee

Andrew Casson said the finance committee expects a draft budget to be completed by the next meeting. He asked Commission members identify any major expenses that would be anticipated in the next 10 to 20 years in order that a long-term capital improvement plan might be developed.

Moorings and Dockage Committee

Jamie Knapp said members of the subcommittee met to discuss the Waterfront Trust proposal and are scheduled to meet with the Waterfront Trust subcommittee on November 19. The committee will report on the discussion at the December meeting. Brad Duffin asked the committee to decide if it would be beneficial to schedule a joint meeting for all members of the Harbor Commission and Waterfront Trust.

Coast Guard Liaison/Communications Committee

Paul Rooney said he met with the Officer in Charge of Station Merrimack River and his executive officer to discuss the Cashman Award. They recommended the award be given to Scott Sjostrom, who is a member of the station honor guard and has been very involved in the community. The Mayor will assist in the organization of the ceremony. Paul Rooney moved to nominate Scott Sjostrom as the recipient of the Cashman Award. Bob Dow seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. The award will be presented in the beginning of December.

Paul Rooney also said work is being done on the station, resulting in the resources for hot meals being limited. Members of the Mothers' Club have been providing meals. The Commission members will provide a meal near the holidays. Jamie Knapp said it would be useful for the station to be provided with a one or two Crock Pots.

7. Harbormaster's Report

Paul Hogg reported that:

- work on bulkhead has begun. The RFP included the provision that the work includes the reinstallation of the docks. This would place the burden of making sure the docks fit correctly on the contractor.
- he met with Jack Shepard about the repair and expansion of the fish pier at Cashman Park. The work should take place next fall.
- joint training sessions on the new boat will be taking place before it is put away for the season.
- the shellfish program is off to a good start, with 22 shellfish permits sold to date. The City Council approved the first reading of the shellfish ordinance.
- the docks have been removed for the season and the bathrooms have been winterized.
- he is preparing approximately 30 citations for court.
- he is working on the database for 2014 Waterways Permits.
- the Boston Whaler is to be sent to Paul's Auto Body for maintenance.
- the lifesaving stands have been moved to the Crow Lane Recycling Center for winter storage and maintenance.

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8. General Business

Bill Harris said he was one of the creators of the Waterfront Trust. He said it might be desirable to amend the Declaration of Public Trust to eliminate the duty of the Trust to lease the area from the northeast end of embayment to the NRA property at full and fair market value. The Waterfront Trust has leasing authority but has not previously leased this 700 foot section. Mr. Harris said in order for the Harbor Commission to float a bond, the document would need to be revised. The change would allow the Harbor Commission to retain revenues for its capital projects.

Joe Brown, a current member of the Waterfront Trust, said he served on the Harbor Commission for ten years in early 1990s. He said he is member of the subcommittee that will be working with the Harbor Commission and he is looking forward to resolving the issues between the two boards that are outstanding.

Brad Duffin offered to contact the chairs of the Newburyport Redevelopment Authority and the Newburyport Waterfront Trust to organize a social gathering in January.

Bob Dow recommended a committee of whole of the Waterfront Trust and the Harbor Commission meet annually.

9. Adjournment

Paul Rooney moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m. Jamie Knapp seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.