

Newburyport Harbor Commission
Harbormaster's Facility
November 6, 2019
Minutes

1. Call to Order

Chair Andrew Casson called a meeting of the Newburyport Harbor Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. In attendance were Adam Armstrong, Andrew Casson, Bob Dow, Ron Thurlow, Jamie Knapp, Justin Dutcher and Jay Lesynski. Chris Kealey was absent. Harbormaster Paul Hogg was also in attendance.

2. Minutes

Justin Dutcher moved to approve the minutes of the October 2, 2019, meeting as amended. Adam Armstrong seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

3. Ordinances and Fees

Justin Dutcher distributed graphics showing historical revenue and expenses, along with expenditures on personnel and services. He summarized that the costs of Worker's Compensation increased due to the details at the Whittier Bridge. It was necessary to raise the pay of lifeguards and assistant harbormasters in order to be competitive with other communities. The cost of heat and electricity increased for the new facility and the cost of equipment maintenance has risen because there are more boats. The revenue figures were obtained from the City Auditor and are lower than expected based on the deposit sheets. One explanation could be that the City accidentally allocated some deposits to an incorrect account.

The fees charged at the docks was compared to those at Prescott Park, where a different rate is applied to non-residents than residents. The Commission members would like to increase revenue and institute a simpler model that is more in keeping with those used by other municipal marinas. They discussed changing to a per-foot rate for overnight stays and an hourly rate for daily use. Increasing the rates during peak events would be logical because more staff is needed during those times. It might be preferable to charge different rates for weekends and weekdays. Rates could be higher for boats over 50 feet. In order for an informed decision on rates to be made, a better understanding is needed on the number of boats, their lengths and the amount of revenue that has been generated.

4. George Cashman Award

The presentation of the Cashman award will take place upstairs at the Black Cow on Sunday November 17.

5. Action Committees

A) Dredging

Ron Thurlow said a member of the Army Corp. should be invited to attend a meeting to discuss the risk rating for the Merrimack River. Elevating the risk rating for the river would help move it up the ladder for funding for dredging.

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B) Public Relations/Community Outreach

Colin Cody has added music to the short videos he created for use on the Dockwa and Harbor Commission's websites. The videos will be available for the December meeting.

C) Coast Guard City

Ron Thurlow created a new log book. He will contact Dan May and Paul Rooney for help in filling out past events. He distributed a list of activities that could be undertaken to support the Coast Guard. This list will be discussed further at the January meeting and includes items such as the sponsorship of community patriotic events, partnerships with civic organizations for community-based projects, support for scholarship programs and the establishment of monuments or memorials.

6. Harbormaster's Report

Paul Hogg said:

- Consideration should be given to raising the fee for waterways and mooring permits in addition to those for the docks. An increase of \$1 each would be reasonable. Rates should be consistent with the fees in Salisbury, which are currently higher. The rate at the fish pier is low and could be increased incrementally. Finally, the rate structure at the Plum Island parking lot could be changed. Currently the rate is \$10 for weekdays and \$12 for weekends and holidays. This could be changed to \$12 for residents and \$15 for non-residents with no distinction to the day of the week.
- He provided feedback on a draft memorandum of understanding he received from Georgie Vining for the maintenance of restrooms. The restrooms were installed to provide facilities for non-boaters on the waterfront and the City had agreed to maintain them.
- He took out the docks belonging to the Waterfront Trust this year.
- Three boats broke free in a recent storm. All three ended up in the embayment. One of the docks was damaged.
- Excise tax bills will be sent out on November 18.

7. Other Business

An advertisement was posted in the *Daily News* for the vacancy on the Commission and no responses were received. George Sass had previously submitted a letter of interest. He will be asked to attend the next meeting for an interview.

8. Adjournment

Jamie Knapp moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m. Bob Dow seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. The next meeting of the Harbor Commission will take place on Wednesday, December 4.