

**Newburyport Harbor Commission**  
Newburyport Public Library Program Room  
December 10, 2015  
Minutes

**1. Call to Order**

Chair Brad Duffin called a meeting of the Newburyport Harbor Commission to order at 7:05 p.m. In attendance were Brad Duffin, Andrew Casson, Jamie Knapp, Justin Dutcher, Bob Dow and Chris Kealey. Dan May, Paul Dahn, and Paul Rooney were absent. Harbormaster Paul Hogg was also in attendance.

**2. Minutes**

Jamie Knapp moved to approve the minutes of the November 12, 2015 meeting as submitted. Justin Dutcher seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

**3. Capital Expenses for Long-term Strategic Plan**

Jamie Knapp said nothing has changed since the last meeting, when the figures were updated.

**4. Subcommittee Reports**

**Budget and Finance Committee**

The committee will begin to work on the budget after the beginning of the year.

**Ad Hoc Central Waterfront Committee**

The members discussed the seeming lack of progress that has been made in the meetings of the Ad Hoc Central Waterfront Committee. The Committee is comprised of five City Councilors and six non-voting members, including the Chairs of the Harbor Commission, the Committee for an Open Waterfront, the Newburyport Waterfront Trust and the Newburyport Redevelopment Authority. The Committee was charged with developing policies and objectives pertaining to a long-term vision for the central waterfront. The members have been considering parking, land ownership and operational and maintenance responsibilities. The City's master plans were reviewed and stakeholders have presented their position papers. Focus has been on the elements that would be included in an expanded waterfront park and the means of achieving this expansion. Attention has not been yet been paid to the revenue needed to support the park. The Committee expects the cost of the park to be between \$2 million and \$7 million. Maintenance would be funded through parking revenue, although the expansion of the park would reduce this income.

The work of the Committee has stalled because of the uncertainty surrounding the proposed parking garage. The cost of the garage in its proposed location has been questioned. The number of spaces that would be removed from the waterfront with the construction of the garage is relatively small, making the cost difficult to justify. Additional sites for the location of the garage might be explored. While this development might not impact the long-term vision for the waterfront, it might slow down the process. The Ad Hoc Committee has decided to continue meeting. The membership will change with the addition of newly elected Councilors in January.

During the meetings it was revealed that the NRA, as owner of the submerged tidelands, wishes to receive a portion of the revenue from the central waterfront docks.

### **5. Harbormaster and Transient Boaters' Facility Update**

Geordie Vining and David Keery reviewed the changes to the plans for the Harbormaster Facility at a recent Planning Board meeting. The bids received were higher than the budget and the project has been redesigned to reduce costs. The footprint of the building has been made smaller, some materials have been changed and the size of the plaza has been reduced. The project will now include two unisex bathrooms. The revised package should be put out to bid at the beginning of January.

The Commission was copied on a letter from Attorney Lisa Mead to Mayor Holaday indicating the NRA and Custom House are concerned about damage being caused to the Custom House by vibrations from the installation of the utility corridor associated with the proposed Harbormaster facility. The utility corridor was originally to have been located to along the public way to the west of the Custom House. New England Development has recently agreed to grant an easement to the area within ten feet of the east side of the structure. In addition research revealed public rights exist on the east side of the Custom House. While the public way does not cover the entire distance to the water, it does extend beyond the Custom House. The existence of this public rights allows the utility corridor to be located 15 feet from the Custom House. At the point the public way terminates, the corridor would shift to be within the 10-foot easement from New England Development.

### **6. General Discussion**

Newburyport.com has not yet provided the written proposal and letters of support the Commission requested at the November meeting. This material would be necessary for the approval of the installation of two cameras on the Coast Guard Auxiliary building on Plum Island.

The members discussed adopting a policy of cancelling the December meeting. Instead the decision shall be made each November. Justin Dutcher will book the room at the library for the 2016 meetings.

### **7. Harbormaster's Report**

Paul Hogg reported that:

- he intends to receive a 23-foot Dusty with a trailer with 225 Honda motor the Salisbury Harbormaster has deemed surplus. The boat appears to be in good condition, but if it is not, the trailer is of value and the motor could be used for parts.
- the Fire Department has acquired a 41-foot fire/rescue vessel at no cost. He would be willing to assist with training, but the vessel will be owned solely by the Fire Department, which will be responsible for all maintenance and operational expenses.
- a sign that had been installed by Ralph Steele is in conflict with the ordinance with regards to dinghies and inflatables. The on-line version of the ordinance does not include any amendments that have been made. The regulations committee will review this.
- the submerged rocks in the channel near the Whittier Bridge are a safety hazard. Signage could be added.

### **8. Adjournment**

Jamie Knapp moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m. Bob Dow seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. The next meeting of the Newburyport Harbor Commission will take place on Thursday, January 14, 2016.