

**Newburyport Harbor Commission**  
City Council Chambers  
March 12, 2015  
Minutes

**1. Call to Order**

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

**2. Minutes**

Bob Dow moved to approve the minutes of the February 5, 2015 meeting as submitted. Justin Dutcher seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

**3. Open Harbor Commissioner Position**

Five resumes have been submitted for the vacancy on the Commission. The five candidates will be interviewed at the next meeting and an executive session will take place after the interviews. The selection of the alternate member will be the only item on the agenda for the meeting. The candidates will be interviewed individually and 20 minutes will be allotted for each interview. The recommendation will be forwarded to Mayor Holaday, who will also interview the candidate. The City Council must approve the appointment.

**4. Harbormaster's Facility**

Geordie Vining provided an update on the Harbormaster's/transient boaters' facility. Meetings with the MEP engineer, the security and technology consultant and the City's IT Director have taken place and the design is at the 75% completion phase. Members of the DPS and the fire, police and building departments will review and comment on the plans, which might result in some design changes. The cost estimate should be received at the end of March. Mr. Vining expects to learn in the next month if the City was awarded a \$400,000 boating infrastructure grant. A site plan review hearing for the Planning Board is expected to take place in May. The goal is to put the project out to bid in the summer. The bid process would take 10 to 12 weeks. In the best case scenario construction would begin in September.

A meeting also took place with Energy Integration Partners about the solar roof that would be installed on the facility. The panels would provide 15% to 20% of the energy used in the building, which would result in a savings of \$900 to \$1,000 per year. Mr. Vining will request \$35,000 from the City's Green Initiative Fund to cover the cost of the design of the roof and its installation. The Solar Renewable Energy Certificate program could provide the City with a \$1,500 rebate, which would be used to replenish the fund.

**5. Subcommittee Reports**

**Budget and Finance Committee**

Andrew Casson said the budget has been reviewed and was submitted to the City Council.

**Regulations, Safety and Moorings Committee**

Jamie Knapp said the key element of the proposed new rate structure is a \$10 minimum fee for the docks. The docking fee would also be increased by \$1 across all categories. For

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example the fee for a boat under 20 feet would increase from \$2 to \$3 per hour after the minimum charge has been exceeded. Generally no charge is made for tie-ups of 20 minutes or less. The charge for an extended stay would be at the discretion of the Harbormaster. Rates for docking in neighboring communities range between \$5 and \$15.

The committee proposed other increases in addition to those for docking. Profit-making groups would be charged for the use of Cashman Park. The fee for parking at Plum Island would be increased from \$8 to \$10. The committee is proposing a dinghy dock fee of \$50 and an increase to \$1,200 from \$900 at the fish pier. A late fee for the payment of waterways permits after July 1 is also being proposed. The committee is considering increasing the waterways fees to be more consistent with those in neighboring communities, but is not proposing a change for this year. The current waterways fee is \$3 per foot, while most communities charge between \$4 and \$6.

The Commission members discussed the proposal to institute a \$10 minimum fee at length. Bob Dow said he would not be in favor of the \$10 minimum charge. He would instead support a utility fee for the washing of boats at the docks. Paul Hogg said the problem he encounters is that boaters often pay for one hour, come back after two or three hours and then leave without paying an additional amount.

Brad Duffin suggested the discussion be tabled. He said it might be June or July by the time the proposal comes out of a City Council subcommittee and the rates should not be changed in the middle of the season.

Jamie Knapp moved to submit the fee structure for the docks and the fee increases for the dinghy dock, the fish pier, Cashman Park and the Plum Island parking lot as proposed to the City Council for approval. Paul Rooney seconded the motion. The motion was approved with Commissioners Knapp, Rooney, May, Dutcher and Casson voting in favor and Commissioners Dow and Duffin being opposed.

### **Coast Guard City Liaison and Community Outreach Committee**

Paul Rooney said he and the senior chief at the Coast Guard station are working together to schedule a boating safety course and a gathering for members of the Harbor Commission and the station.

### **6. Harbormaster's Report**

Paul Hogg reported that:

- the waterways permits will be sent out at the end of the month.
- the contract for the work to reconstruct the north jetty has been awarded. He will meet with the contractor about his concerns, one of which is the temporary removal of the light on the jetty during the work.
- the survey about the rough bar light indicated more boaters are in favor of it being kept than not. Signage indicating boaters should call the Coast Guard for a bar report is being considered as an alternative.
- he met with Mayor Holaday to review the budget.
- the work on the Whittier Bridge is nine months behind schedule. The projected completion date is now July 2018. Boater safety classes have begun for new bridge employees.
- the new docks should be in place at Cashman Park by May 15.
- the work on the Cashman Park fishing pier should be completed by June 30.

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**7. Adjournment**

Jamie Knapp moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:22 p.m. Paul Rooney seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.