

Newburyport Harbor Commission

Online Meeting

May 19, 2020

Minutes

1. Call to Order

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

2. Minutes

Bob Dow moved to approve the minutes of the May 6, 2020, meeting as submitted. Jamie Knapp seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

3. Harbormaster's Report

Paul Hogg reported:

- he met with Ethan Manning, who did not have any issues with the proposed changes to the draft budget that were discussed at the last meeting.
- He will attend a meeting of department heads on May 20 and later Mayor Holaday will meet with his staff. Operating procedures for the central waterfront, Cashman Park and Plum Island will be discussed at these meetings.
- On May 25, the Plum Island parking lot will be opened at 50% capacity. Every other space will be blocked. It is not known if the restrooms will be open. Visitors to the beach must stay 12 feet apart and should be walking rather than sitting. Flyers will be distributed informing visitors that there are no lifeguards on duty. DPS has been asked to install signage to this effect on the Plum Island turnpike.
- The staff is working in the office but members of the public are not allowed to enter.
- The central waterfront docks are to be installed on May 22. He will begin taking reservations on May 25. Most of the reservations will be made through Dockwa, which will limit the amount of personal contact. Spaces will be left between boats on the docks.
- He expects that the ramp at Cashman Park will be busy on Memorial Day weekend and he will have two attendants on hand. To date 50 seasonal passes have been sold. The assistant harbormasters continue to be on duty instead of dockhands. The hiring freeze is still in place and the assistant harbormasters are better recognized as authority figures.
- Patrols will begin on Memorial Day weekend.
- He will begin taking water samples in preparation for the opening of the beach.
- The Salisbury patrol boats are tied up at his office.
- His staff is required to wear masks at all times. He has enough safety equipment to last for six to eight weeks.
- Some charter boats may begin operating on May 25 with social distancing guidelines.
- A 14-day quarantine period is mandatory for out-of-state visitors.
- DPS has purchased a cleaning machine for the public restrooms.

4. Committee Reports

A) Coast Guard City

Ron Thurlow is working to obtain design criteria for a Coast Guard City sign. The city's designation will renew in 2021.

B) Dredging

No report.

C) Waterfront Trust

Andrew Casson will circulate the draft lease the Waterfront Trust submitted to Mayor Holaday.

D) Public Relations/Community Outreach/Marketing

No report.

5. General Discussion

- A discussion took place about parking at Cashman Park. The lot is a busy one and not only used by boaters. The State has not issued any guidance on the spacing of cars. The area for trailer parking was not seen as presenting a problem.
- The office will reopen to the public at the same time as City Hall. Plexiglass partitions are being installed in both locations.
- Ron Thurlow said the restrooms are closed at the marinas, which prevents people from being able to wash their hands. He asked that Paul Hogg discuss this with the mayor.

6. Adjournment

Jamie Knapp moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 p.m. Bob Dow seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. The next meeting of the Harbor Commission will be scheduled for June 3.