

**Newburyport Harbor Commission**  
Harbormaster's Facility  
June 8, 2017  
Minutes

**1. Call to Order**

Chair Andrew Casson called a meeting of the Newburyport Harbor Commission to order at 7:17 p.m. In attendance were Andrew Casson, Chris Kealey, Jamie Knapp and Adam Armstrong. Dan May, Bob Dow, Justin Dutcher and Jay Lesynski. Harbormaster Paul Hogg was also present.

**2. Minutes**

Chris Kealey moved to approve the minutes of the May 11, 2017 meeting as submitted. Jamie Knapp seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

**3. House Float Discussion**

At previous meetings the Commission members discussed the need for an ordinance to govern houseboats. No real estate taxes are assessed to houseboats but they may consume city services. Their method of construction, height and utilities are of a concern to City officials. Andrew Casson moved that a subcommittee be formed to draft a houseboat ordinance. Jamie Knapp seconded the motion. Paul Hogg, Andrew Casson, Justin Dutcher and Bob Dow named as members of the subcommittee. The motion was unanimously approved.

**4. Joppa Flats Boat Ramp Discussion**

The Parks Department plans to replace the boat ramp at Joppa Flats as a part of its Joppa Park improvement project, for which State funds are being used. An article appeared in the *Daily News* about the State's proposal to reduce the width of the ramp due to the size of the parking lot. The ramp is under the jurisdiction of the Harbormaster. Lisë Reid was invited to attend the meeting to discuss the issue but was unable to do so. Paul Hogg read a letter sent to Doug Cameron of the Office of Fishing and Boat Access from local officials and residents who support the ramp remaining the same size. He said he is not concerned with the width of the ramp, although it might be beneficial to reduce the width if more parking could be achieved. The Commission members agreed with him that the ramp should be used for car-top access only. A sign stating this could be added.

**5. Group Mooring Discussion**

A group-mooring permit is referenced in the City ordinance, but there is no set form or fee. If a system were put in place, the Commission would require marinas to file a group mooring permit application annually. Each marina would provide an accurate list of users to the Harbormaster and would control the moorings in its group mooring area. If the moorings were not all used they would be added to the Harbormaster's list with the condition the user follow the rules of the club or marina. Andrew Casson recommended the moorings committee draft a group mooring permit application that coincides with the City ordinance and develop a fee schedule.

#### **6. Long-term Planning**

Jim Kelcourse has agreed to facilitate a discussion on dredging at the mouth of the river. Andrew Casson will coordinate a boat trip after the Merrimack River Beach Alliance meeting on June 30.

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

Paul Hogg reported:

- he was involved with the search for a missing person whose boat capsized on June 6. The conditions were so bad the first responders were not able to safely bring their boats back in. The incident speaks to the need for dredging and boating licenses. The lack of a rough bar light might have contributed to the situation.
- an in-house boating-under-the-influence refresher class was held with the environmental police.
- the assistant constables received their shellfish and lobster certifications.
- eight employees of Walsh Construction received certifications in a safe boating class.
- 18 children participated in a boating safety class that was conducted in conjunction with Youth Services.
- the tall ship event on Memorial Day weekend went very well. The pump alarm went off due to the failure of a coupling at the junction of the pump and the City sewer, resulting in the restrooms in the new facility being closed. The pump was repaired and the work was covered under the warranty.
- work to remove the pier at the Whittier Bridge has begun. The new completion date for the bridge is May 2018.
- he is anticipating a busy weekend. The Hines road race and a Touch-a-boat event will take place and a Back Hawk helicopter will land.

#### **8. General Discussion**

- an advertisement to fill the vacancy on the Commission will be place in the *Daily News*.
- Chris Kealey is working to build the website.
- Adam Armstrong met a lifeguard from Hampton who is interested in holding a joint training session. He will be advised to contact Paul Hogg.

#### **9. Adjournment**

Jamie Knapp moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:07 p.m. Chris Kealey seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. The next meeting of the Newburyport Harbor Commission will take place on Thursday, July 13, 2017.