

**Newburyport Harbor Commission**  
Harbormaster's Facility  
September 1, 2021  
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 Andrew Casson, Bob Dow, Jamie Knapp, Adam Armstrong and Justin Dutcher, Ron Thurlow, Jay Lesynski and George Sass were absent.

**2. Minutes**

Jamie Knapp moved to approve the minutes of the July 7, 2021, meeting. Justin Dutcher seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-0 vote (Andrew Casson, yes; Bob Dow, yes; Justin Dutcher, abstain; Jamie Knapp, yes; Adam Armstrong, yes).

**3. Committee Reports**

**a) Coast Guard City**

The Commission members previously decided to present the George Cashman Award for 2020 to the Station Merrimack River as a whole. A stone with a plaque commemorating the Station will be placed near the river or along the Rail Trail. Geordie Vining will assist with obtaining the memorial and determining its location. An event will be held at the Black Cow in the fall for the presentation of both the 2020 and 2021 awards.

**b) Waterfront Trust Lease**

Andrew Casson and Justin Dutcher met with Mayor Holaday and two members of the Waterfront Trust. It was made clear at the meeting that the Commission is not in favor of participating in the maintenance of a bulkhead that it does not own. Despite this, the three-year lease to tie the docks to the bulkhead for the amount of \$5,000 annually was signed. The City has hired an engineering firm to assess the condition of the bulkhead. It has been found that the bulkhead has degraded and the heads of nine bolts that hold the panels in place have sheared off. The City is seeking funding for the repair of the bulkhead next fall. The approach would be the same as was used for the bulkhead to the west of the embayment, which involved the installation of polymer sheets that are backfilled with concrete. This would result in the loss of three feet on each side of the embayment. The cost of the project is estimated at \$4 million. The Harbormaster agreed to inspect the remaining bolts monthly. It might be necessary to implement an interim plan if additional bolt heads are lost before the repair project can be scheduled. Jamie Knapp suggested that a letter be drafted reiterating the Commission's concern that grant money might not be available because of the Trust's ownership of the bulkhead and expressing that the Harbormaster's inspection would not make him liable for a failure of the bulkhead.

**c) Dredging**

The dredging project that is expected to take place this fall will not include the area outside of the Federal channel. It would be necessary to obtain funding for a project that is bid

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separately. A fee could be charged to boaters that would be used for a fund to hire a private company.

**d) Finance**

No updates.

**e) Public Relations/Community Outreach/Marketing**

The revisions to the website will be completed during the off season.

**4. Harbormaster's Report**

Paul Hogg submitted a written report that included the following:

- He received a \$190,000 grant for a new SAFE boat. Insurance is paying \$85,000 for the boat that was lost. A decision has not yet been made about the engines.
- There were many large boats on the docks this season. They are anchoring and tying to the pilings, which puts very little pressure on the bulkhead. Many of these boats are running generators. They are not now being charged for electricity. It would be necessary to change the fee schedule if the power were to be upgraded.
- Some staff members are returning to school at this time and schedules are being adjusted.

**5. Other Business**

**a) Vacancy**

The open position on the Commission will be advertised shortly. One candidate is in the process of sending his resume to Paul Hogg. George Sass has informed the Commission that he will be busy with professional obligations during the upcoming months and he would be willing to step down from his position. The members agreed that he is an asset and that his resignation would not leave the Commission in a better position.

**b) Salary Increase**

Mayor Holaday was opposed to the proposed salary increase for the Harbormaster.

**c) Kayak Safety**

The statistics on rescues should be reviewed at the next meeting.

**6. Adjournment**

Justin Dutcher moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:03 p.m. Jamie Knapp seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-0 vote (Andrew Casson, yes; Bob Dow, yes; Justin Dutcher, yes; Jamie Knapp, yes; Adam Armstrong, yes).