

Newburyport Harbor Commission
Harbormaster's Facility
September 21, 2017
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, Chris Kealey, Jamie Knapp, Adam Armstrong, Bob Dow, Justin Dutcher and Jay Lesynski. Dan May was absent. Harbormaster Paul Hogg was also present.

2. Minutes

Justin Dutcher moved to approve the minutes of the July 13, 2017 meeting as submitted. Jamie Knapp seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

3. House Float Discussion

Bob Dow spoke with the planning director in Key West, Florida, about the way in which the city governs house floats. He was advised to email his questions to the service director at the Port Marina. Key West has a rate of growth ordinance and a restrictive policy that limits the number of days transient boats may be rented.

In Newburyport four or five floating homes with deeded dockage have been installed at the Yankee Landing Marina. The location of the floats appears to be correct but has not been compared to the watersheet application. When the ownership of the marina changed a new Chapter 91 license should have been obtained.

The house floats were constructed without a building permit or safety inspection and no taxes are being paid on them. It is not known if the sewerage is being handled properly. The sewerage connection should be inspected annually. A building permit should be required and a fire, safety and electrical inspection should be conducted. The parameters of where they may be located should be defined. Two ordinances governing house floats should be adopted, one for anything under the purview of the Harbor Commission and a second by the City. The members must decide what the Harbor Commission should be responsible for. They will also create a list of the items the City should consider when drafting its ordinance. Jamie Knapp and Bob Dow will develop a list of questions for the port director in Key West and will arrange to speak with him from the Harbormaster's facility.

4. Rough Bar Light

Paul Hogg received a letter from Mark Cutter of Waterways Management in the Boston Sector indicating the Coast Guard does not intend to install a rough bar light because there is no data indicating it would be useful. The Commission members did not agree with this assessment but would be concerned about liability if they were to install a light on their own. They discussed flying flags at marinas or installing signage at Cashman Park indicating the Coast Guard should be contacted about conditions if they appear to be rough. It was decided the most useful step would be to educate boaters at Cashman Park.

5. Group Mooring Permit

Jamie Knapp is preparing a draft group mooring permit applicant using Salisbury's permit as a guide.

6. Long-term Planning

Instituting a house float ordinance is a priority for the Commission in the short term. Another priority item is dredging. The costs of maintaining the new facility should be evaluated at the end of its first year of operation. This would be necessary to create a budget for long-term projects, such as the replacement of the docks or roof on the facility.

Andrew Casson reported on proposed transfer of NRA property to the Waterfront Trust. The NRA owns the submerged tidelands while the Waterfront Trust owns the embayment. In 1992 the Declaration of Public Trust was amended to give the Waterfront Trust the right to lease and collect revenue from the floats and docks. An attorney hired by the NRA stated the fair market value of the submerged tidelands should be determined before they are transferred to the Waterfront Trust. The Waterfront Trust intends to enter into a revenue sharing agreement with the Harbor Commission when the ownership of the submerged tidelands has been transferred. The Commission members said they have been satisfied with the current operation of the waterfront. The Commission's revenue is needed to maintain the boating infrastructure and the new facility. An additional area of concern is the need to continue the practice of storing the floats on the central waterfront in the winter. The members were encouraged to attend the meetings of the Waterfront Trust and the NRA.

7. Harbormaster's Report

Paul Hogg reported:

- he has been busy preparing for the remnants of the hurricanes that hit Florida and the islands. While 35 to 50 knot winds and 10 to 14 foot seas were experienced, there have not been any real issues or damage. The patrol and commercial boats were secured in the embayment.
- on September 29 he will host a first aid and CPR class through Fishing Partnerships.
- he will host a National Association of State Boating Laws Boat Crew Member Course with the Environmental Police and other harbormaster departments. The 35-hour course prepares participants to become qualified in the tasks necessary to response to maritime safety, security, response and recovery operations. Topics to be covered include: 1) crew efficiency factors, team coordination and risk management; 2) physical fitness, first aid and survival; 3) marlinspike seamanship, boat nomenclature, nautical terminology and stability; 4) boat handling; 5) navigation; 6) mission-orientated operations; and 7) water survival and close-quarter maneuvering.
- he donated a ride with the Harbormaster to the auction held as a part of the recent tuna and shark tournament. The tournament was a huge success and raised \$1,500 for the Newburyport Educational Foundation. The docks were full and 48 boats participated.
- he forwarded to the Commission members a letter from a resident on the professionalism of the lifeguard staff.
- on September 27 the department escorted veterans on a whale watch out of the river as a part of the Home Base Adventure Series. Home Base is a program of the Red Sox

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Foundation and Massachusetts General Hospital that is dedicated to healing the invisible wounds of veteran service members and their families.

- the visit of the tall ship *Gundalow* between September 5 and 10 was very successful and drew many visitors to the waterfront.

8. Website

Chris Kealey sent members a link to the newly developed Newburyport Harbormaster website, which was positively received.

9. Adjournment

Justin Dutcher moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 p.m. Jamie Knapp seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. The next meeting of the Newburyport Harbor Commission will take place on Thursday, October 12, 2017.