

Newburyport Harbor Commission
Harbormaster's Facility
October 3, 2018
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, Adam Armstrong, Bob Dow, Jamie Knapp, Chris Kealey, Jay Lesynski and Justin Dutcher. Ron Thurlow and Dan May were absent. Harbormaster Paul Hogg was also in attendance.

2. Minutes

Justin Dutcher moved to approve the minutes of the July 11, 2018 meeting. Bob Dow seconded the motion. The motion was approved. Bob Dow moved to approve the minutes of the September 5, 2018 meeting. Justin Dutcher seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

3. Waterfront Trust Discussion

Steve Hines said the NRA has been informed it would be possible to transfer its land to the Waterfront Trust without being required to issue an RFP. He said this might make it possible for the Trust to be the sole owner of the submerged tidelands rather than sharing ownership with the City. The Harbor Commission would not be in favor of this approach. One concern is that the ability to obtain grant money could be negatively impacted. The members asked that joint ownership be pursued.

The Waterfront Trust wants to continue receiving the income from the tour boats at its current level at a minimum. The Harbor Commission is in agreement with this. The amount of dock space allocated for tour boats should neither increase nor decrease. It is not clear if an RFP would be necessary for the tour boats if they were under the control of the Harbor Commission.

The Trustees want to increase their income in order to build and maintain an expanded park. They see sharing the revenue of the Harbor Commission as a way of achieving this goal. The embayment is owned by the Waterfront Trust and could be one area in which additional income is generated. The Harbor Commission could enter into a 99-year lease with the Waterfront Trust for the embayment. A mechanism could be devised for determining the revenue it generates. Information will be collected over the next boating season and the discussion will resume at its conclusion for action the next fiscal year.

The Trustees also wish to claim a portion of the revenue generated by the transient boats. The Harbor Commission members would be agreeable to the Harbormaster managing the entire waterfront and would be willing to do this without a charging a fee to the Waterfront Trust, but they would not be in favor of sharing a percentage of the revenue from this source with the Trust.

The ownership issue must be resolved before other decisions can be made. Bob Dow and Justin Dutcher will represent the Harbor Commission on a subcommittee that will meet with members of the Waterfront Trust. The focus of the Harbor Commission is the needs of boaters. If some portion of its income were to be distributed to the Waterfront Trust, the

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Commission members would want the use of these funds to be restricted to the waterfront. They should not be used for the maintenance of the park.

4. House Float Ordinance

The members reviewed the proposed changes to the ordinance and made suggestions to simplify the language. The references to floating home marinas will be deleted. The ordinance will state that no floating home or house barge shall be moored or docked in the city of Newburyport. It will also indicate that the docking or mooring of houseboats is permitted in the city provided such vessels are built to meet the minimum requirements and standards set forth by U.S. Coast Guard Boatbuilder's Handbook. They must also have a valid hull identification number and an annual waterways permit issued by the City of Newburyport.

5. Subcommittee Reports

Regulations, Safety and Moorings

No report

Finance

No report

Ordinance

Chris Kealey has attended City Council subcommittee meetings and answered questions about the need for changes to the ordinance with regards to dinghies.

6. Harbormaster's Report

Paul Hogg reported:

- he expects the Columbus Day weekend to be the last busy one of the season.
- the docks will be taken out on October 25 and 26.
- the State is interested in developing another fish pier. He is not in favor of the suggested location in the Whittier Bridge area. He would prefer it be situated near the old Coast Guard station.
- the construction at the Whittier Bridge is concluding. Final surveys are being done to make sure nothing has been left in the channel.
- the data base is being reviewed and excise tax bills will be sent out next month.
- the tuna season reopened on October 1.

7. General Business

The Commission members would like to learn more about upstream sewage releases. Paul Hogg said the waters in the area the Harbor Commission oversees are tested regularly between Memorial Day and Labor Day and did not fail Commonwealth standards in 2018. He will invite Chris Pratt, Tony Furnari, Jamie Tucculo and Frank Giacalone to attend the next meeting to provide information to the Commission members about the issue.

8. Adjournment

Bob Dow moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m. Jamie Knapp seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.