

Newburyport Harbor Commission
Newburyport Public Library
November 10, 2011
Minutes

1. Call to Order

A regular meeting of the Newburyport Harbor Commission was called to order by chair Brad Duffin at 7:05 p.m. In attendance were Brad Duffin, Neil Bleicken, Bob Dow, Paul Dahn, Andrew Casson, Paul Rooney, Jamie Knapp and Justin Dutcher.

2. Minutes

Jamie Knapp moved to approve the minutes of the October 13 meeting as amended. Paul Rooney seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

3. Update on the Winter Docking of Commercial Vessels at the Central Waterfront

Jamie Knapp said he spoke with David Smith, who wrote the report on the central waterfront pilings for Vine Associates. Mr. Smith said the pilings were not load tested, just visually inspected. He said in his opinion for the time being it would be acceptable for the boat to tie up to the pilings as long as it is held off with lines and fenders. Brad Duffin said he spoke with Mayor Holaday about the Commission's concerns with allowing the *Lisa Ann II* to tie up to the pilings through December. She plans to set up a meeting between herself, the Harbormaster, the Harbor Commission and the Waterfront Trust to discuss the issue and the ordinance. Jamie Knapp and Bob Dow volunteered to attend the meeting. Mr. Duffin said the ordinance should be enforced. According to the ordinance the Transportation Dock is not intended for berthing and the ordinance should be changed if another use is desired. He said there should be a section of dock available for picking up or discharging passengers or short-term docking. Paul Hogg said that the regular docks are used for this purpose and there have been no complaints. Mr. Duffin pointed out that there is an hourly fee charged at those docks, while there is no fee at the Transportation Dock under the ordinance.

4. Coast Guard City Designation

Brad Duffin thanked the Commissioners for their work on the Coast Guard City application. He said the Commission should assume Congress would approve the application and should proceed with plans for a celebration. The application has been sent to Congress and is currently in a 90-day waiting period. Mr. Duffin would like the December meeting to be dedicated to planning the festivities. He will invite the Mayor and Ann Ormond to attend the meeting. Paul Rooney said the Newburyport application was the only one accepted and the committee members in Washington reported it was the best application they have seen. He added that no cities have been denied after the application has been sent to Congress. Neil Bleicken moved that the subcommittee be transferred to a committee of the whole, with the chair of the committee being the chair of the Commission. Jamie Knapp seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

5. Committee Assignments

Paul Rooney, Paul Dahn and Justin Dutcher indicated they would like to be on the Coast Guard and long-range planning committees. Andrew Casson said he would like to be on the finance

and Coast Guard committees and Jamie Knapp and Bob Dow both said they would like to be on the regulations and long-range planning committees. Neil Bleicken would prefer the long-range planning and change management committees. Brad Duffin will make the committee assignments at the next meeting.

6. Election for Position of Secretary

Bob Dow moved to elect Neil Bleicken as secretary for the remainder of his term on the Commission. Paul Rooney seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

7. Harbormaster's Report

Paul Hogg reported that:

- the central waterfront docks have been taken out and the NRA has given permission for them to continue being stored in the parking lot. He plans to install “keep out” signs that indicate video surveillance is being used. It was suggested that the information be painted on the side of the docks, where it would not be visible when they are in the water, as signs have been stolen in the past. For this year the signs will be used.
- a crane was successfully used to remove the docks at Cashman Park. In the past a front-end loader was used, which caused damage and took twice as long as the crane.
- warranty work is being done on the patrol boat.
- he would like to make the pier at Cashman Park larger and handicapped accessible. Brad Duffin asked Bob Dow to determine if a watersheet application would be necessary for the change.
- he has sent out outstanding excise tax bills and has received approximately \$2,000.
- he has prepared 60 citations for court. Those in violation must pay both the citation and the waterways sticker.
- it is planned that the replication of the *Bounty* will visit the city from July 12–15. The organizers asked to be exempt from dock fee. The Institution for Savings is sponsoring the event. The bank will be asked to cover the fee.

8. General Discussion

Neil Bleicken asked about the next steps in the process of developing a transient boaters facility. The discussion was tabled until the January meeting.

An informal meeting is being held on November 18 to discuss the use of cameras for safety at the mouth of Merrimack.

Paul Hogg said he was asked to provide input on navigational issues for the steamboat channel during the construction of the Whittier Bridge. Brad Duffin said he should ask the Army Corp. for an opinion. The item will be discussed during the first half hour of the December meeting.

9. Executive Session

Commission members moved into an executive session to discuss and vote on a letter of support for a permanent increase in the Harbormaster's compensation. Neil Bleicken moved that a letter be sent to the Mayor pending research on comparable salaries that recommends the

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Harbormaster receive an increase in compensation and includes a recommended salary range. Jamie Knapp seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

10. Adjournment

Jamie Knapp moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 p.m. Bob Dow seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. The next regular meeting of the Harbor Commission is scheduled for December 8 at 7:00 p.m.