

Newburyport Harbor Commission

Online Meeting

January 6, 2021

Minutes

1. Call to Order

Chair Andrew Casson called an on-line meeting of the Newburyport Harbor Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. In attendance were Andrew Casson, Bob Dow, Justin Dutcher, Jamie Knapp, George Sass, Adam Armstrong, Jay Lesynski and Ron Thurlow. Chris Kealey was absent.

2. Minutes

Jamie Knapp moved to approve the minutes of the December 5, 2020, meeting as submitted. Bob Dow seconded the motion. The motion was approved by an 8-0 vote (Ron Thurlow, yes; Andrew Casson, yes; Bob Dow, yes; Justin Dutcher, yes; Jamie Knapp, yes; Adam Armstrong, yes; George Sass, yes; Jay Lesynski, yes).

3. Watersheet Application

6 Bayne Lane

Jamie Knapp recused himself from the discussion. Nicole Nadeau said she is requesting approval for the expansion of a dock to accommodate a larger boat. The dock would extend ten feet further into the river and would be ten feet longer. The application indicates that a 60-foot boat would be docked on a 50-foot float. Ms. Nadeau explained the application was submitted before the boat was purchased. The longest boat that would be tied up to the dock would be 45 feet in length. The Commission members did not find it necessary for the application to be amended. The applicant must provide the date of the publication of the legal notice and return the green cards to prove that the abutter notifications were made by certified mail.

Bob Dow commented that the extension would not interfere with the channel. Ron Thurlow asked if an allowance has been made for the inside passage of small vessels. The applicant responded that at low tide there is very little water under the gangway. Allowing small vessels to pass beneath it would require that the dock be lengthened, which would possibly create interference with the channel.

The hearing was opened to comments from the public. Rob Ciampitti, 552 Merrimac Street, said he supports the proposal. He said there is ample room between Eagle Island and proposed dock and it would not impede navigation.

Ron Thurlow moved to approve the watersheet application pending the receipt of proof of abutter notification by the Chair. Bob Dow seconded the motion. The motion was approved by an 7-0 vote (Ron Thurlow, yes; Andrew Casson, yes; Bob Dow, yes; Justin Dutcher, yes; Adam Armstrong, yes; George Sass, yes; Jay Lesynski, yes).

4. Ordinance and Fees

The draft ordinance to regulate kayaking has been revised based on comments made at the previous meeting. Letters should be sent to the parties that would potentially be impacted by

Newburyport Harbor Commission
January 6, 2021

the proposed ordinance, such as Plum Island Kayak, New England Development and the American Yacht Club. Justin Dutcher suggested that all of the marinas should be notified. The Commission members discussed ways in which the public might be notified about the appropriate ramps to use and the areas in which paddling is prohibited. They also discussed the need to accommodate the increased traffic at the ramps at Joppa and Cashman Park that might occur when the central waterfront has been closed to kayakers. It should be ensured that adequate parking is available in these areas. The parking at Joppa is limited and often used by neighbors. There is one car-top space at Cashman Park. Paul Hogg will be asked if the Commission would be able to redesignate spaces on State property.

The proposed house float ordinance stalled last year in the City Council public safety subcommittee. The approval of the draft ordinance should be a priority for the off-season.

5. Committee Reports

A) Coast Guard City

Andrew Casson contacted the Senior Chief about a location at the Coast Guard Station for a library of books with a nautical theme. The Cashman Award should be made by letter and the recipient should be recognized at the clambake, which should be scheduled for a date in September. The Coast Guard City designation is to be renewed in 2021. The application materials must be submitted by June 30. The Senior Chief will be asked to attend the next meeting to discuss ways in which the Commission could support the Coast Guard. Jamie Knapp has provided information about a Coast Guard City highway sign to Representative Kelcourse, who will contact MassDOT.

B) Dredging

Adam Armstrong reported on the most recent MRBA meeting. He said most of the discussion was focused on the erosion near Reservation Terrace and no new information was presented on dredging. Paul Hogg sent out an updated questionnaire.

C) Waterfront Trust

No update.

D) Public Relations/Community Outreach/Marketing

Andrew Casson said he now owns Newburyport Harbor domain name and will transfer it back to the City. George Sass said the committee will make a presentation on the revisions to the website at the February meeting. His goal is for the work to be completed by April. A page on the website should be devoted to the Coast Guard City designation.

6. Other Business

Merrimack River Alliance

The Alliance is looking for volunteers to take samples of water from the river for testing. The Commission members would like to receive an update on the CSOs.

Newburyport Harbor Commission
January 6, 2021

End of the Season Pump Outs

Andrew Casson said he wants to ensure the pump out service available at the end of the season is adequate. Some boats were not able to be pumped out this year and discharged into the river.

7. Harbormaster's Report

Paul Hogg submitted a report that included the following:

- the Newburyport Municipal Marina was named as a Boaters' Choice 2020 Elite Fleet winner by marinas.com.
- he has begun looking for a new patrol boat.

8. Adjournment

Bow Dow moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:02 p.m. Jamie Knapp seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. The next meeting of the Harbor Commission will be scheduled for January 6, 2021.