

Newburyport Harbor Commission
City Hall Conference Room
February 5, 2015
Minutes

1. Call to Order

Chair Brad Duffin called a meeting of the Newburyport Harbor Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. In attendance were Brad Duffin, Bob Dow, Justin Dutcher, Paul Dahn and Jamie Knapp. Also in attendance was Harbormaster Paul Hogg.

2. Minutes

Justin Dutcher moved to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2015 meeting as submitted. Jamie Knapp seconded the motion. The motion was approved with Paul Dahn abstaining.

3. Dock Fee Proposal

Jamie Knapp said the subcommittee has received figures on docking fees in other communities from the Harbormasters Association of Massachusetts and is expecting to receive others from the Southern New Hampshire and Maine groups. The current fees have been in place for seven years and are well below market rate. Paul Hogg suggested the fees charged for day use by large boats and overnight rates be increased slightly. For example, boats between 20 and 39 feet in length would be charged \$45 for an overnight stay rather than the current rate of \$30. He also suggested a minimum fee of \$10 be charged for a stay of one to two hours and the hourly rate employed beyond that. A separate charge could be added if utilities were used. A package that includes the proposed rate increases and the rates in other communities will be developed for presentation to the City Council in March.

The Commission members might also consider increasing the cost of Waterways permits for non-residents while leaving the rate for residents unchanged. These fees are also below market rate. The transient boaters would benefit most from the proposed new facility. The fees could be raised and still remain below those charged in other communities. The members wish the waterfront to be welcoming to boaters. They also wish to avoid large increases in fees. They might consider proposing a gradual increase over five years.

Paul Hogg said Mayor Holaday suggested to him that for-profit groups be charged a fee for the use of Cashman Park. Currently no fee is charged. He will obtain information on the fee structure used by the Waterfront Trust. The money collected would be used for maintenance and improvements at Cashman Park. The activities of these groups should not prevent the use of the facilities by the general public.

4. Harbormaster's Budget

Paul Hogg distributed a spreadsheet showing the revised FY2015 budget and the proposed budget for FY2016. The budget categories include personal services, the purchase of services, supplies, capital outlay, bond payments and miscellaneous expenses such as travel, training, dues, boat insurance and memberships. The increase in the budget is 2.1% over the previous year. Jamie Knapp moved to approve the draft budget. Bob Dow seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

5. Subcommittee Reports

Budget and Finance Committee

No report.

Regulations, Safety and Moorings Committee

The subcommittee has been working on the dock fee proposal.

Coast Guard City Liaison and Community Outreach Committee

No report.

6. Harbormaster's Report

Paul Hogg reported that:

- the bulk of his time lately has been spent on preparing the budget.
- he met with Jack Shepard and Doug Cameron of the State and the Building Commissioner about plans for the new pier at Cashman Park. Benches will be added at the end of the pier, along with a bait table with a water pump. The project has been put out to bid. He will ask Lisë Reed to attend the next meeting to discuss the problem with adult softball players hitting balls over the net into the parking lot.
- the excise tax bills have been sent out.
- he and his assistants are attending Tuesday evening training sessions.
- a good response was received on the survey about the removal of the rough bar light. Brad Duffin read a letter he sent to Captain O'Connor. Two letters were also sent from the City Council. A response from the Coast Guard has not yet been received.
- work on the Whittier Bridge has slowed due safety concerns with respect to the weather. He described the training that was given to the employees in case of an accident in the river. The northbound lane will be demolished by crane rather than being taken down into the river, as had been previously proposed.

7. Open Harbor Commissioner Position

Justin Dutcher said the two candidates from the previous vacancy are no longer interested in serving on the Commission. One applicant would be available to be interviewed at the next meeting. The members decided they wish to interview more than one potential candidate. Timing is not a consideration, as the new member would be the second alternate. An advertisement will be placed in the *Daily News* on February 9. Responses must be received by February 23. The resumes received would be distributed at the March meeting. Those respondents deemed to be a good fit would be interviewed at the April meeting.

8. Harbormaster's Facility

Bob Dow said the design team met with representatives from GGD about security for the facility and Wi-Fi availability. The specs are in the process of being designed for putting the project out to bid.

7. Adjournment

Jamie Knapp moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m. Justin Dutcher seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.