

Newburyport Harbor Commission
Harbormaster's Facility
March 1, 2023
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, Bob Dow, Jay Lesynski, Adam Armstrong, Ron Thurlow, Justin Dutcher and Chris Charos. George Sass and Jamie Knapp were absent. Harbormaster Paul Hogg was also in attendance.

2. Minutes

Bob Dow moved to approve the minutes of the February 1, 2023, meeting. Chris Charos seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

3. Dredging

The Commission members discussed at length the delay with the dredging of the river. H & L Contracting was the only bidder on the project and does not have the right equipment for the conditions at the mouth of the river. The crew was moved to another job after the dredging of the nine-foot channel was completed with the explanation that the weather was not favorable for additional work at the time. The contractor is seeking an extension to the end of April for the completion of the work. The Army Corp. has reported that if the extension is granted, H & L will subcontract with another firm to employ a hydraulic pipeline dredge that will work offshore and will be better able to handle the higher sea conditions at the entrance of the channel. The contractor is in the process of demobilizing the existing equipment.

The dredging project is being overseen by the Mayor's Office and the focus has been on helping the homeowners along Reservation Terrace by replenishing the sand on the beach. The Commission members want to have a louder voice in providing education and expressing the importance of dredging for the safety of boaters. The Commission members have the needed knowledge and experience and must step forward to offer their leadership.

The dredging subcommittee will arrange a meeting with a small group that includes representatives from Senator Tarr's office, the Army Corp and the Coast Guard. The focus of the discussion would be the vision for the future of dredging at the mouth of the river. It might be possible to hold the gathering at the conclusion of the Merrimack River Beach Alliance meeting on March 3.

Adam Armstrong will begin the preparation of a written document on local insights on the dredging of the river. The contents will include the short and long-term history of dredging, the state of current conditions, the stakeholders and impacted parties, beach nourishment, the relocation of the federal channel and maintenance dredging.

A third action item is the development of a long-term initiative for changing the location of the federal channel and maintenance dredging.

4. Committee Reports

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a) Coast Guard City

The ceremony for the Cashman Award will now take place sometime in April.

b) Marketing

No report.

c) Docks, Moorings and Infrastructure

No report.

d) Public Safety and Regulations

A meeting for stakeholders will be scheduled for April 26 or 27 at 7:00 p.m. at the North End Boat Club. In past years, only marina operators and members of the Harbormaster's Department attended, but the list of invitees could be expanded to include the Salisbury Harbormaster, members of the fire and police departments, Coast Guard personnel and the owner of Plum Island Kayakers. The topics of dredging and safety will be included on the agenda.

e) Finance

The City will be adding a \$6,000 line item to the budget to pay for the department's portion of Munis.

4. Harbormaster's Report

Paul Hogg reported that:

- Due to a broken water main, there has been no water at the Coast Guard Station for over a month. The Harbormaster's facility is being used.
- The new patrol boat has arrived and is being stored at Cashman Park.
- The new system for the Plum Island parking lot should be in place at the end of April.
- He has acquired throw rings and has set up a chart of locations for coordinating dispatches with other departments.
- The mooring management system will cost \$1,500 for the first year. He has purchased three iPads for \$500 each.
- The bulkhead repair and park expansion projects will be put out to bid next week.
- The docks will be installed during the first week in April.

5. Other Business

The next kayak safety class is scheduled for May 10. The class on February 15 was well attended.

6. Adjournment

Bob Dow moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:48 p.m. Andrew Casson seconded the motion. The motion was approved.