

**Newburyport Harbor Commission**  
City Hall Conference Room  
April 12, 2012  
Minutes

**1. Call to Order**

A regular meeting of the Newburyport Harbor Commission was called to order by Chairman Brad Duffin at 7:00 p.m. In attendance were Neil Bleicken, Andrew Casson, Steve Hines, Paul Rooney, Justin Dutcher, Jamie Knapp, Bob Dow and Brad Duffin. Also in attendance was Harbormaster Paul Hogg. Paul Dahn was absent.

**2. Minutes**

Paul Rooney moved to approve the minutes of the March 8, 2012 meeting as amended. Jamie Knapp seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

**3. Potential Watersheet Application**

Jamie Knapp recused himself from the discussion. Jay Knapp discussed a potential water sheet application on behalf of Dr. William Stuart. An application had previously been submitted for the property in 1999. The configuration of the docks currently being considered is different from what had originally been proposed. It was explained that a 30-day notice must be given for a watersheet hearing and the current abutters must be notified of the proposal. An updated set of plans that has been stamped by an engineer must be submitted with the application. A document must also be submitted with the application that indicates Mr. Knapp has the legal authority to act for Dr. Stuart.

**4. Raising Seasonal Berthing Rates for Commercial Vessels on the Fish Pier**

Jamie Knapp said because the City Council must approve of any change in the rates for seasonal berthing, there is not enough time to take any action for this season. A letter will be sent to the commercial fisherman indicating an increase in rates and a different system for determining which vessels will be allowed to use the docks should be expected in 2013. The letter will not be sent until the City Council has approved the rate increase. A presentation must be prepared for the City Council that would support the rationale for determining the fees.

The Waterfront Trust's contract for the transportation dock was used as the basis for current year leases for vessels that tie up at the Fish Pier. The amount of insurance that will be required has not yet been decided. The agreement states that no material or spare gear shall be stored on the Fish Pier. Andy Casson said the agreement should stipulate that in the event of a default no fees would be refunded for any remaining months. Either Richard Jones or the City Solicitor will be asked to review the document, which should be done promptly in order to protect the new docks and the City.

**5. Update on the Discussion with the NRA about the Expansion of the Harbormaster's Facility**

Andrew Casson said he spoke with James Shanley, who would like increased communication between the Harbor Commission and the NRA. Mr. Shanley said the NRA supports the expansion of the Harbormaster's facility, which might be accomplished at its current location without NRA approval. A portion of the next meeting will be devoted to a discussion of the desired functions of the facility and restrictions such as Chapter 91 requirements.

**6. Update on the Discussion with the Commonwealth Concerning the Construction of a Multi-use Facility at Cashman Park**

Paul Hogg said he spoke with Jack Sheppard, who said it is not the best time to consider the development of a multi-use facility at Cashman Park, as funds have already been expended at that location and for the Joppa Park boat ramp. Brad Duffin commended Paul Hogg for the initiative he took to have the boat ramp repaired.

**7. Report on the Proposed New Harbor Commission Web Site**

Neil Bleicken said he, Paul Hogg and Paul Dahn met with James Waldron about developing a new website and discussions are ongoing. He asked Commission members to consider the ways in which they would like the website to function.

**8. Coast Guard City Celebration**

Paul Rooney said approximately 75 guests from the Coast Guard and Coast Guard Auxiliary would attend the ball. The Admiral, the Chief of Staff and the Chief of Public Affairs are all expected to be in attendance. The following items are being considered for the celebration: borrowing a boat from the Hull Life Saving Museum for the parade; bringing in the Coast Guard 36500, an old motor life boat; a fly by; an open house at the Coast Guard Station; displaying old photographs at local establishments to publicize the event; showing Coast Guard movies and locating an information booth outside of the Custom House.

Funds have been committed for the scholarships, which must be used for an education-related purpose. The Commission must determine the legal procedure for accepting donations. The members discussed the idea of creating a George Cashman Coast Guard award. Brad Duffin asked Steve Hines, Andrew Casson and Paul Dahn to move the plans for the scholarship forward.

**9. Discussion of the Harbormaster's Policies and Procedures**

Neil Bleicken said Councilor Bob Cronin has expressed concern that the Harbormaster's Department does not have stated policies and procedures and this would expose the City to liability. Paul Hogg said there are policies and procedures in place for the Harbormaster, the Assistant Harbormasters and the lifeguards. The employees review and sign the document each season. Brad Duffin asked Paul Hogg to discuss the issue with Councilor Cronin, who had helped develop a policy on the use of force for the department. It was voted on and approved by the City Council but was not adopted by the previous Harbormaster.

**10. Harbormaster's Report**

Paul Hogg reported that:

- he sold 220 waterways permits in three days.
- both docks will be put in between April 13 and 14.
- he instructed 16 people on the use of flares.
- the work to repair the ramp at Joppa Park has been completed.
- one of his assistants held a boater safety course for 20 participants.
- he and Andrew Casson attended a mooring seminar sponsored by the North Shore Harbormaster's Association. They discussed the legality of group moorings with the Assistant Attorney General. They learned it is not illegal for a harbormaster to permit a marina or yacht club to have group moorings and hold its list, provided the permits are renewed each year.
- because the mooring is not a designated one that appears on charts, all of the boats must have anchor lights when they are on the moorings. Brad Duffin said he should speak with Bob Cronin about the issue.

**11. Other Business**

Brad Duffin said the proposed FY 2013 budget would be reviewed at the next meeting. The members of the Commission are to vote on the budget that is submitted to the City Council.

**12. Adjournment**

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