

Newburyport Harbor Commission
Online Meeting
May 6, 2020
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 Adam Armstrong, Andrew Casson, Bob Dow, Justin Dutcher, Chris Kealey, Jamie Knapp, George Sass and Ron Thurlow. Jay Lesynski was absent. Harbormaster Paul Hogg was also in attendance.

2. Minutes

Jamie Knapp moved to approve the minutes of the April 14, 2020, meeting as submitted. Justin Dutcher seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

3. Harbormaster's Report

Paul Hogg reported:

- The docks have been installed at Cashman Park. An assistant harbormaster has been on duty instead of a dockhand. There has been much activity and things have gone smoothly. There were 35 season passes sold the first weekend. The State has put rules in place for social distancing on boats and ramps.
- Mayor Holaday decided to cancel the lifeguards for the entire season. It would not have been possible to handle trainings and certifications or to do effective saves. It is likely that Salisbury will not hire lifeguards as well. Newbury does not use lifeguards on its beaches. A discussion took place about how to best inform the public that lifeguards will not be on duty. Signage has been installed and a notice will be placed in the *Daily News* as Memorial Day approaches. A marquis could be installed on the Plum Island Turnpike for the summer. The parking lot remains closed. When it does open, a flyer will be given to all vehicles.
- The Health Department will most likely recommend that Yankee Homecoming be cancelled. The Hines road race has been cancelled.
- He has been receiving calls from marina managers about policies. He has recommended that the wearing of masks is mandatory while going to and from boats. Restrooms at the marinas will be closed, which will increase the demand for the pump out boat. Commercial charters are prohibited from operating at this time. They are under the jurisdiction of the Coast Guard.
- The docks have been installed at the Harbormaster's Facility. Two patrol boats will be in.

4. Committee Reports

A) Coast Guard City

Ron Thurlow distributed photos of a Coast Guard City sign that is similar to what he would like to have placed on the highway. He will contact the Coast Guard and Mass DOT about regulations and the process for installing signage. Andrew Casson asked at Station Merrimac River if any assistance is needed at this time and it is not.

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B) Dredging

Adam Armstrong made contact with a woman from the Army Corp. He, Jay Lesynski and Ron Thurlow will schedule a time to meet with her to discuss dredging.

C) Waterfront Trust

The Trustees submitted a draft lease to Mayor Holaday. They will forward it to the Harbor Commission after they have received her comments.

D) Public Relations/Community Outreach/Marketing

A letter with information on COVID-19 was sent out on Constant Contact and posted on Facebook. Updated information will be provided on Dockwa after the central waterfront docks have been installed.

5. Budget Discussion

The draft budget was reviewed. Currently it is three-month budget for the months of July, August and September only. Budgets will not be approved until after the end of July, when the level of State funding is determined. The department heads were asked to cut their budgets to the minimum amounts needed. Mayor Holaday made significant cuts in some area of the Harbormaster Department's budget. The annual budget was divided by 12 months, which is not effective for a seasonal department with the summer months being the busiest ones. The budget was reviewed one line item at a time. Increases were suggested for several line items, including supervisors, Cashman Park, boat maintenance, equipment, facility maintenance, pump out boat maintenance and float repair. Paul Hogg will review the changes with Ethan Manning. Andrew Casson pointed out that as an enterprise system, the department has funds available. Additional expenses could be met through a transfer from retained earnings.

6. General Discussion

- Justin Dutcher shared a photo showing failing parts in the embayment.
- Bob Dow recommended there be a Coast Guard float in the Yankee Homecoming parade next year.
- The next meeting of the Harbor Commission will be scheduled for May 19.

7. Adjournment

Jamie Knapp moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:29 p.m. Bob Dow seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.