

Newburyport Harbor Commission
City Hall Conference Room
July 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, Steve Hines, Andrew Casson, Paul Dahn, Justin Dutcher, Paul Rooney and Brad Duffin. Also in attendance was Harbormaster Paul Hogg. Bob Dow and Jamie Knapp were absent.

2. Minutes

Paul Rooney moved to approve the minutes of the June 7, 2012 meeting as amended. Justin Dutcher seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

3. Update on the Plans for the Clipper City Rail Trail

Geordie Vining presented the schematic design for the extension of the Rail Trail between Parker Street and the central waterfront. The multiuse pathway would connect with the completed first phase of the trail, creating a loop that includes the boardwalk. Mr. Vining also spoke of the plans to rebuild the bulkhead. It is expected the City will soon receive the \$1.98 million grant it was awarded by the Seaport Advisory Council. The funds would be used for the design and construction of the bulkhead. Mr. Vining is in the process of preparing the RFP documents that will be send to marine engineers. He is looking into alternative materials to steel for the bulkhead and pilings. Construction is expected to begin in the fall of 2013. A break in the work of approximately five months would be necessary during the boating season. Brad Duffin said the work must be stopped by March 1, 2014. He said a large enough company would be able to work on both ends of the bulkhead at the same time, which would make the project less expensive by eliminating the need for demobilizing and remobilizing. Paul Hogg said the State is planning to work on the Cashman Park Fish Pier in 2013 and suggested the City might contact Jack Shepard about obtaining the bid list. Mr. Vining said the design and permitting phases have been completed for dredging at the Fish Pier to make it usable during low tides, but there were no funds for construction, which is expected to cost \$.5 million. Mr. Duffin asked about the economies of scale of combining the bulkhead, Rail Trail, and Fish Pier work into one package. He said mobilization costs make up 20-25% of a project's construction budget. Mr. Vining said he is not sure this would be possible, as a transportation grant is being received for the Rail Trail, making it a different type of project. He said the scope of work for the bulkhead includes the dredging of the embayment and asked for the Commission's input on the importance the work. Mr. Duffin said that as the embayment would fill back in, the dredging would be a short-term solution and should not be a priority. The Fish Pier dredging might be added as an alternative to the scope of work for the bulkhead project.

4. Discussion of New Harbormaster's Facility

Paul Dahn said he, Bob Dow and Paul Hogg met with Everett Chandler to determine how zoning, flood zones and Chapter 91 regulations would influence what could be built on the site of the Harbormaster's shack. The shack is not in the high velocity zone, which means the new building would not have to be elevated above grade. A maximum height could be 35 feet would be allowed, although the Commission would probably not wish to construct a three-story structure. A one-story structure would be the most desirable, as this would eliminate the need for an elevator. The new structure would most likely extend further to the west than the existing one, in the direction of the Rosa rugosa. An expansion to the east would require the disruption of the memorial. Brad Duffin said NRA chair James Shanley is in favor of a water-related facility that would increase the public access to the waterfront. Fund raising would be required for the construction of the building. Neil Bleicken asked about funding the building partly through renting space to businesses. Brad Duffin said he would not be in favor of a public-private partnership and Geordie Vining said the building would not be large enough to generate enough income to make it worthwhile. He also said the City is wary of being a landlord. Andrew Casson said boaters require bathrooms and showers and the private sector should provide the remaining services. Paul Rooney asked about splitting up the facilities between the central waterfront and Cashman Park. This would allow the structure on the central waterfront to be smaller. Cashman Park is the largest revenue generator and bathrooms and storage are needed there. Other cities have extensive facilities to attract boaters but there is limited space along Newburyport's waterfront. The three architects have agreed to provide conceptual sketches based on program requirements and the constraints of the site and will be asked to provide proposals.

5. Yankee Homecoming

Paul Rooney said the lifesaving museum would provide a boat for the float. Bob Dow made arrangement for the use of a truck and flatbed. Brad Duffin asked Paul Hogg to confirm with Bill Squillace that would be acceptable to use Harbor Commission funds for float expenses.

6. Coast Guard City Celebration

Paul Rooney said the USO Belles would sing the national anthem Friday night and at the proclamation ceremony Saturday and would ride on the float during the parade. The fly by and the presence of two boats have been confirmed. Checks totaling approximately \$1,800 have been received and have been placed in the Mayor's gift account. A separate account is in the process of being set up but has not yet been approved by City Council. The funds will be used for the welcome kits, three brass plaques and the Cashman Spirit award. The recipient of the first annual award is to be Jason Holmes, but the amount he would legally be able to accept is not yet known. Any remaining funds would be used for the scholarship in upcoming years.

The Newburyport Mother's Club plans to deliver cookies to the Coast Guard station two weekends each month.

7. Harbormaster's Report

Paul Hogg reported that:

- the *Bounty* would be coming into port July 12 at 8:00 a.m. He dropped six moorings to aid in the navigation. A daily fee is being charged for the ship.
- stop signs have been installed at Cashman Park along the Rail Trail where it crosses the ramp. Signs about fees will soon be added at the docks.
- he has sold 1,357 stickers, which is more than last year, and he has begun ticketing. He said when observes a boat without a sticker he first checks the office computer to see if a sticker has been purchased. Brad Duffin said the Commission might purchase an iPad to assist him in determining more easily the boats for which stickers have not been purchased.
- the Riverfest was successful. The docks were full and there were no incidents.
- CVA paperwork has been completed for the State grant and he expects to receive \$12,500.
- he received a grant to locate a dumpster at the Fish Pier.

Brad Duffin asked about space for transient dinghies in the embayment. Paul Hogg said annual permits are available for \$175. There is space for 12 dinghies and the annual fee has been paid for six. He said there is plenty of space for transient dinghies and boaters often tie up elsewhere to avoid paying the fee.

8. Financial Committee Report

Andrew Casson said revenues appear to be positive at Plum Island, Cashman Park and the central waterfront. The figures have not yet been certified and he will provide a report at the September meeting.

9. Adjournment

Andrew Casson moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 p.m. Neil Bleicken seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.