

**CITY OF NORWALK
NORWALK HARBOR MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
MAY 27, 2015**

ATTENDANCE: Jose Cebrian, Chair; Tony Aitoro, Tony Mobilia, Richard Stumpf, Jan Schaefer, Dr. John Pinto, William Gardella, Dennis Santella, Michael Griffin, Harbormaster.

OTHER: Geoff Steadman, Consultant

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Cebrian called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. Members were in attendance as listed above and a quorum was present.

Chairman's Report

Mr. Cebrian stated that the Commission needs to get the Mooring rules approved by the Common Council. There was discussion, and it was noted this has been put out to public notice and although there is no change, Council approval is still required by charter.

Dr. Pinto stated that the on-going issue is there is no designated Common Council committee or department that the HMC comes under, and this presents administrative difficulty with putting items on the Council agenda. He added that Parks & Recreation was the department that had the HMC involvement with the Veteran's Park Master Plan and issues with vessels at the dock.

Mr. Cebrian stated that past practice was to channel general harbor and mooring items through Diane Beltz Jacobsen at Corporation Counsel or Ray Strauch at Planning & Zoning that involved Common Council approval.

Dr. Pinto stated that he will contact the Mayor's Office to get clarification on the HMC place in the hierarchy of the municipal organization.

Mr. Cebrian stated he wanted to clarify that Tony D'Andrea remains on the Mayor's Water Quality Committee as Chairman and reports should be sent to him.

There was mention of a report of an abandoned vessel. Dr. Pinto explained that past practice was to have an amount for disposition of abandoned vessels in the budget, but Finance Department removed that as part of their operating budget measures to reduce expenditures.

Mr. Cebrian reported (as part of the Finance Committee report for later in the agenda) that he is in receipt of a bill for \$48 reimbursement to the Harbormaster and this will be added to expenses for last year. He noted that they are in the process of closing out 2014 final books and a few bills remain outstanding.

STAFF REPORTS

Consultant – Mr. Steadman noted that there was no separate report and that his report would be comments as needed on topics listed on the agenda.

Waterfront Advisory

Harbor Master Griffin referred to his report as sent to the Commissioners by e-mail, as follows:

1: Skyline Cruises Inc. has received approval for commercial use of the Norwalk Visitors North Dock for a corporate event hosting 95 guests on Saturday May 30, 2015 vessel will be dockside at 1730 hours sailing 1830 to 2230 hours. NPD and NFD are notified.

2: US Fish and Wildlife have been approved for use of the Visitors Dock and overflow parking area for June 06, 2015 to help facilitate the annual Sheffield Island cleanup by approximately 35 volunteers.

2: The David S, Dunavan Boating Center opened up on a 7 day 12 hour plus bases for the 2015 boating season on Thursday May 21, 2010.

3: Random floating ramp boards continue to be removed from the launch ramp and Visitors Dock area.

4: Two sections of old floating docks, one wood structure approximately 60' long and one concrete floatation dock approximately 50' long were retrieved floating loose in Norwalk Harbor causing a hazard to navigation. They are secured at the Boating Center but will need to be properly disposed of at an unknown cost at this time.

5: Memorial Day brought extra boating traffic into the harbor and use of the Visitors Docks without incident.

Harbor Master Griffin provided the following report:

Norwalk Harbor Manager Report

Item # 1: May 26, 2015 Inner Harbor mooring inspection information forwarded by e-mail To the Mooring and Harbor Safety Committee and copied to the NHMC members.

Item # 2: Additional information forwarded to the NHMC members by e-mail regarding the proposed Walk Bridge borings project change of start date.

Item #3: Additional information forwarded to the NHMC members by email regarding the proposed Walk Bridge pre construction meeting next week.

Item #4: A noise complaint from a Harbor View water front resident, filed with the NPD Marine unit, has motivated a review of the moorings in said area on two occasions by the PD and myself. We will be investigating the area again this Saturday May 30, 2015 at 01030 hours.

Item # 5: An attempt on my part to fill the HM boat with fuel at Norwalk Cove Marina on April 25, 2015 was unsuccessful due to their no house charge policy.

Harbor Master Griffin presented his report and fielded questions and comments from the Commissioners. He noted that for item 1, inspections are very slow with only 23 done to date and very little activity, possibly due to the harsh winter.

He added that for item 3 there needs to be a pre-construction committee meeting to discuss placement of equipment for soil boards. He asked if June 2 or June 4 would work for the Commissioners, and Mr. Cebrian noted that this is an information meeting open to the public. Harbor Master Griffin noted that meeting details would follow.

Dredging

Dr. Pinto reported that he has not received confirmation of transferred funds based on the City's memorandum of agreement.

Application Review Committee

Dr. Pinto provided the following report from the Application Review Committee:

1. **11 Tonetta Circle, Norwalk CT: Permit application.** The proposed work involves installation of a 3'x 30' aluminum ramp, a 7'x 14' timber float, 4 timber float restraint pilings and a float stop system consisting of 3"x 10" timber planks attached to the 4 pilings which will keep the float at minimum 18" above the harbor bottom at all tides. This work will also require cutting out a 3'x 4' section of timber deck that overhangs the seawall so the ramp can be secured to the existing seawall. The pilings will be driven using a barge and crane with a hammer-type pile driver. The float will be installed and the ramp last to complete the project.

The project also entails bringing the overhang of the deck in compliance with current DEEP regulations. The overhang is part of an existing deck in existence since 1994 that overhangs a 1993 permitted seawall.

Submitted by James J. Bajek; LLC on behalf of applicants: Clifford St. John & Sons L.P., 5 Tonetta Circle, Norwalk.

2. Drawbridge Operation Regulations; Norwalk River, Norwalk, CT. AGENCY: Coast Guard, DHS, ACTION: Notice of temporary deviation from regulations. Request for comment on bridge openings and closings.

Dr. Pinto noted that item one was discussed in Committee and is tabled with pending comments. He explained that the COP is planned to be issued and signed.

It was noted that with violations reported to the DEEP, there should be to access to fines paid for funding projects.

Dr. Pinto extended an acknowledgement and thanks to Sgt. Lepak for his assistance with the meetings regarding the Norwalk River.

There was discussion on Drawbridge Operation Regulations and the inconvenience to mariners. Dr. Pinto reported that at issue is to request an extension of the restricted opening hours. He explained that The Coast Guard restricted weekday openings of the bridge to between 4:30 a.m. to 10 a.m. and between 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. The Connecticut Department of Transportation (CT DOT) has requested keeping the restricted hours even after the bridge is replaced.

Dr. Pinto explained that what CT-DOT has proposed is that after the construction period, they wanted to extend that deviation. He added that they had a meeting with the Coast Guard and many of the people that attended certainly disagreed.

Mr. Steadman explained that the temporary restricted hours should not be extended past the initiation of the construction project. He added that the bridge operating procedures or protocol during the construction process needs to be worked out beforehand with an opportunity for the HMC to review and comment on what is being proposed.

Mr. Mobilia suggested that the comments should include better coordination of bridge openings. There was discussion on the timing of the bridge openings that puts vessels in a waiting area between the Walk Bridge and the Stroffolino Bridge. Mr. Mobilia noted that the bridge is closed three times daily, sometimes trapping boats between the two bridges for a great length of time.

Mr. Steadman stated that he would draft a letter with the comments and suggested that there be a motion and vote.

**** DR. PINTO MOVED TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION REVIEW COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION TO SEND A LETTER TO THE COAST GUARD WITH COMMENTS AS FOLLOWS:**

Regarding proposed drawbridge operating regulations for the Metro-North WALK Bridge, the Harbor Management Commission approved a motion to transmit its comments and concerns to the Coast Guard and Connecticut Department of Transportation (DOT) and to recommend:

- 1. The temporary deviation from the bridge operating schedule should not be extended past the initiation of construction to replace the existing bridge as now being planned by the DOT.**
- 2. The WALK Bridge operating schedule during construction should be determined prior to the initiation of construction and following an appropriate opportunity for the Harbor Management Commission to review and comment on that schedule.**
- 3. Any changes to the WALK Bridge operating schedule should take into consideration the operating schedule of the DOT's downstream Washington Street Bridge. To the extent practical, the operating schedule of the Washington Street Bridge should be coordinated with the WALK Bridge operating schedule to facilitate the movement of waterborne traffic and avoid any significant adverse impacts on navigation associated with bridge operations.**

**** MR. SANTELLA SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mooring Committee - Mr. Santella provided his report as follows:

- Committee met on May 7, 2015 and continued to discuss the status and direction to move the revised Mooring Rules and Regulations to the Common Council for approval. The Committee has reached out to the Commission Chairman for help in moving this process forward.
- Committee continues to review and respond to applications that require additional submission of missing information and also continues to make improvements as required.

Harbor Safety – Mr. Santella provided his report as follows:

- Committee reviewed and discussed the proposal from G & C Marine to upgrade and maintain the speed buoys.
- Committee agreed the total cost proposed, is too much and is more than the NHMC approved budget of \$2,500, which only included cleaning the buoys.
- The Marine Police have been taking care of the buoys for a long time.
- The Committee suggests that there be a meeting with the Police, Harbor Master and the NHM Commission to discuss and find a solution to complete this work.

There was discussion on the costs and scope of work for buoy maintenance. Mr. Cebrian noted that there was \$2,500 put into the budget.

Mr. Santella reviewed a cost proposal and estimate from G&C Marina Services to clean/repair and maintain the buoys in the amount of \$3,325. There was discussion on the likely need for additional funds required for hardware and supplies.

- ** **MR. SANTELLA MOVED TO APPROVE TO FUND AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$4,000* TO CLEAN AND REPAIR THE BUOYS**
- ** **MR. STUMPF SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

*It was noted that amount represents an incremental \$1,500 to the original budget.

Mr. Cebrian left the meeting at 8:35 p.m. and asked Mr. Mobilia to serve as the Acting Chairman for the remainder of the meeting.

Finance – (as reported during the Chairman’s report)

Mr. Cebrian reported that there is no significant change to the account and noted that he is processing a few additional final expenses from last year.

Plans and Recommendations – No report.

Water Quality

Mr. Steadman suggested that the report be published and made available by putting it on the website for the Health Department. Ms. Schaefer noted that she would look into finding out the contact person for the City website and coordinate the information.

Shellfish Commission – No report.

Newsletter/Website –

Ms. Schaefer stated that the newsletter is in progress and there is no update to report. It was agreed to prepare articles for the next newsletter for the summer with updates on the Walk Bridge and water quality.

NEW BUSINESS

April 22, 2015 Minutes

There was discussion on portions of the minutes that were inaccurately listed under Plans and Recommendations. Dr. Pinto noted he would review pages 3-5 and provide his corrections to the secretary by e-mail.

- ** **MR. STUMPF MOVED TO TABLE APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES PENDING CORRECTIONS.**
- ** **DR. PINTO SECONDED.**
- ** **THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Old Business

Mr. Griffin noted that he will notify the Commissioners by e-mail on the details of the pre-construction meeting discussed in his Harbor Master Report, which is to be scheduled for June 4, 2015.

New Business

Dr. Pinto stated that he will be sending a letter to the state legislators on behalf of the CT HMC regarding recommendations on the DECD responsibilities. He read from a draft that included comments on issues relating to the CT Port Authority, grants-in aid program for ports and marinas, oversight of Harbor Masters, and the harbor infrastructure account for public projects. He noted that copies of the letter would be sent to the Commissioners by e-mail.

ADJOURNMENT

- ** **MR. SANTELLA MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** **MR. STUMPF SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** **THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Marilyn Knox;
Telesco Secretarial Services