

Harbor Commission Minutes

September 10, 2013

6:30 PM

Present: Richard Whitman, Sam Ladley, Howard Edwards Jr., Captain Richard Spear, Melissa Maker, Louise MacLellan-Ruf, Al Gourde, Dale O'Neal.

Absent: Guy Polyblank

Approval of Minutes: The minutes were amended to add Adam Philbrook as an attendee, and to remove Dale O'Neal. They were unanimously approved as amended. (Edwards, MacLellan-Ruf).

Fish Pier Report: Capt. Adam Philbrook attended the last meeting of the Fish Pier Advisory Committee to discuss and answer any questions the fishermen had about the arrival of the large cruise ships this fall.

There were only 3 of the 6 members present, so there were no votes taken, but they also discussed new signage to discourage long term dockage in the short-term spaces. There was input on size, process, placement and rules.

Mr. Gourde also reported on the permit process, he sends out renewals in October, and the applications are due in after Thanksgiving, so that decisions can be made before the end of December. He doesn't expect any real changes in the permits for next year, and all of the permit fees are current.

The discussion then moved on to Maine Coast Petroleum's plan to apply for a space at the Fish Pier. They would like to lease a year-round space to operate their tankers and a parking place for their trucks. They offered to help with any dredging, oil service at the pier and necessary maintenance in exchange for a long-term agreement. They have two boats but with the change in USCG rules, they may only be able to operate one of them next year. They could move into the old spot that had been leased to Coastal Tankers, but the access is limited and a spot on the south-side, closer in would present fewer problems, and it wouldn't interfere with small boat traffic.

The preferred spot has been used as a lobster buying station, but is currently leased to a group that is buying lobsters on the islands, not at the pier, and they are already leasing two spots that they aren't really using. The Commission thought it made sense to try to keep it simple and just let Maine Coast Petroleum apply for that spot to see if the city manager could make it work within the permit framework that's already in place. Captain O'Neal was asked to send a letter of intent to the manager to try to work something out. Fishing is the first priority at the pier, but this is a good year-round use of the pier, might bring in added income, and helps to keep jobs in Rockland.

Harbormaster's Report:

Support for Dredging in WRDA Legislation: The Harbormaster presented a letter that has been circulated in support of the Water Resource Development Act that is before Congress. It especially asks for congressional support for more funding for dredging projects by the Army Corps of Engineers, and specifically for more funding for dredging in small harbors. The HMC discussed the process, but offered that it made sense for the city council to support it, rather than just the commission. The process should include a resolve in support of the bill and the funding, to be presented to our congressional delegation.

Grant applications - progress: The Harbormaster told the commission about the applications that John Holden, the city's community Development Director is working on. There are two due shortly, one is a SHIP grant for an ADA compliant ramp at the Public Landing that will cost in the neighborhood of \$45,000, and the other is for about \$6,000 for design work at Snow Marine Park for the rebuilt boat launching ramp. Both need to go to the city council for approval before the applications can be sent. Matches for both projects could come from the modified TIF funds that the city has collected.

Old Business:

Re-visit Cruise Ship Fees: The HMC wanted to revisit the fees for cruise ships at the Public Landing for their annual review. The discussion turned quickly from the city's fee structure to a discussion of a meeting that the City Manager and the Community Development Director had with representatives of the cruise ships and the Chamber of Commerce. As in the past, the commission members wanted to know why they hadn't been invited to attend; they feel that their exclusion makes it impossible to know what's going on, and therefore makes it impossible to act as effective advisors to the city council.

New Business:

Regular HMC Meeting Date: At the request of the city manager, the commission discussed their regular meeting date. It is currently the 2nd Tuesday of the month, but that's a long way until the next city council meeting. As an advisory committee, it might make more sense for the HMC to meet closer to the next date of the council and they all agreed that Tuesdays worked for everyone. Most everyone agreed to try a new date to see if it worked and they picked the third Tuesday of the month, making the next meeting October 15th.

Ferry North Haven: the HMC asked about the North Haven and why she was tied up at the Middle Pier, in the M/V Monhegan's old berth. The Harbormaster explained that the new owner was planning on taking her south to North Carolina as a step off before heading to St Martin where he hopes to operate as a cargo vessel. He has some work to do on the boat, and some paperwork to complete before he heads south, so he is paying for dockage while he's there.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 pm.

Submitted by Ed Glaser, Harbormaster