

MINUTES OF WATERWAYS MANAGEMENT COMMISSION MEETING
October 27, 2015

A meeting of the Waterways Management Commission was duly called and held on Tuesday, October 27,, 2015 at 4:00 p.m. in Room 314 of Dartmouth Town Hall. The meeting was called to order by the Chairman, Gerald Hickey. The following people were also present: Roger Race, Joseph Hannon, and newest appointee Andrew Herlihy. Also present was Mr. Steven Melo, Harbormaster.

Mr. Hickey reviewed the agenda. Mr. Hannon moved to accept the agenda. Mr. Herlihy seconded. So Moved.

Mr. Hickey reviewed the notes of the discussions from the September 17, 2015 scheduled meeting which lacked a quorum of members. Mr. Hannon moved to simply file those notes in lieu of minutes where no quorum was present. No binding votes were recorded and CLE presentation was made to the people present, so record of those informal discussions should be made public. So Moved.

South Side Mooring Re-grid: In a follow-up to the presentation by Susan Nilsen of CLE Engineering, Mr. Race reports that he has not yet received a written proposal from CLE Engineering for a small-scale evaluation of the current south side mooring fields. He cites the importance of not losing currently-existing mooring sites due to changes made in areas that may contain eel grass. General consensus of members present was to contract with CLE for this first step regarding any process regarding changes to t south side moorings, if that contract price is reasonable and within budget.

Deputy Assistant Harbormaster Position: Mr. Melo reports that the Select Board unanimously approved, upon motion of Select Board Vice-Chair Mickelson, creation of the full-time, year-round Deputy Assistant Harbormaster position at their June 15, 2015 meeting. Assistant Harbormaster Robert Miller was chosen to fill that position in an objective, multi-step process that included members of multiple town boards. That selection was endorsed by Harbormaster Melo who presented the results to the Select Board in September for a 3 to 1 vote for appointment, subject to funding which had been previously confirmed by Treasurer Barnes and Administrator Cressman. Town Meeting unanimously voted to release collected waterways funds into the waterways FY2016 salaries budget at their October 20, 2015 meeting. Mr. Melo believes that the hiring process is completed with the exception of any final personnel actions required from Town Hall. He suggested that a discussion and recommendation from the Waterways Commission regarding starting salary structure might facilitate movement toward getting Mr. Miller on board. Following discussion of Mr. Miller's current qualifications, and remaining certifications, Mr. Race moved to recommend a starting hourly rate of \$24.00 per hour, with increases of \$.50 per hour for the completion of USCG licensure and the State shellfish course. Seconded and voted unanimously to so recommend. Questions then were raised as to whether the Deputy contract is signed by the Harbormaster, Administrator, Select Board or Personnel Director? Mr. Hickey will ask Mr. Cressman for resolution.

Seasonal Assistant Harbormaster Pay: In light of changing minimum wage laws, and since no change has been made in the town-set hourly wage schedule for seasonal assistant harbormasters, the Commission seeks to make sure that the hourly rate of pay is equitable. Mr. Melo announced that he could take no position or action regarding an increase in the rate of pay to avoid any appearance of conflict. Mr. Hickey wants to know how and to whom the Commission could recommend a change in the hourly rate, if warranted. He will ask Mr. Cressman when and how it would be appropriate. Mr. Race suggested that Mr. Melo make inquiry of other municipalities around the Bay for comparison. He stressed that if a data-driven need for an increase is shown, it would be difficult to argue against such, especially in light of the state-imposed training requirements now upon seasonal assistants.

Harbormaster Physical Office: Mr. Hickey stated that several plans have been proposed from outside of waterways to find another office for the Harbormaster: Park Department plans for renting us space in a Water Street house they are pursuing; one of the temporary buildings behind the police station upon rebuilding of their station; and in prior years, part of the DPW highway garage. Each of those carried unknown costs from the

waterways fund. Funds for the property acquired to complete the Rogers Street waterways access facility will drop to a final payment of \$10,200 in FY2025. Following lengthy discussion, it was unanimously voted to keep the Harbormaster operations in the current location at Davis and Tripp Boatyard, supplemented by established, limited office hours at the existing shack at the Dias Town Landing. Improvements to the exterior, and over the winter to the interior of that shack, should continue within existing budget funds. It was unanimously recommended that scheduled, limited occupancy of that shack for increased public access would become more important due to the anticipated 2016 causeway reconstruction. The current location at Davis and Tripp is important as an operation center for the functions required of the Harbormaster Staff.

Allen Street Garage Construction: After a brief description of plans and meeting discussions on the subject, with drawings shown and breakdown of costs, it was unanimously voted “no way” to sign-on to this scheme. The \$320,000 estimated full price, with \$240,000 to be allocated against Waterways use fees, was discussed as being more than double the industry standard for similar construction. It was also discussed at length that we would have no assurances of continued exclusive use of the building that would require substantial increases (initially \$20,000/year) in waterways rates for 20 years. Current commercial seasonal storage at less than \$4,000/year) was looked at as far more economical than the proposed construction on DPW property. Mr. Hickey stated that he will discuss the Commission’s concerns regarding such proposals for waterways funds with Mr. Cressman. He will expressly ask for an accounting for the Sprung Structures that Mr. Melo acquired through military surplus and were once planned as boat storage shelters.

Purchase of New Bedford Police Whaler: New Bedford is still not ready to sell. Internal issues within the city are being resolved on their end. Funds are in place and HM Melo is ready when the city is. All voted unanimously to continue.

Bouchard Grant Funds: Mr. Melo reports that Bouchard funds for the roll-out boat ramp at the foot of Rogers Street are available. A delay in installation may now be required due to a storm water scrubber system being sought by Conservation just west of the intended ramp. Waterways grant funds are also being looked at for planning, permitting and integration with the storm water project. Mr. Melo announced that he applied for and received funding suited to purchase and installation of a 100’ pre-cast ramp pad. Any deductions for drawings, permits and other projects will diminish the overall length of the ramp.

Waterways Commission Membership Applicants: With one position on the Commission remaining open, The Commission is asked for a recommendation regarding the two applicants. It was unanimously voted to report back to the Select Board that both candidates are deemed suitable to serve.

Aquaculture Update: Mr. Hickey reported a successful field trip to the licensed area. Stock has thrived beyond expectations, and by all appearances it appears to be a clear win-win situation for the Town, the waterways and the grant holder. The oysters are putting our waterways on a national culinary map.

Public Comment: None.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday November 19, 2015 at 4:00 pm in Town Hall.

It was moved and seconded to adjourn at 5:40 p.m.