

## MINUTES OF THE WATERWAYS MANAGEMENT COMMISSION MEETING

Thursday April 30, 2020 - 1:00 p.m. Remote Zoom Meeting 935 4350 1547

A meeting of the Waterways Management Commission was duly scheduled for Thursday, April 30, 2020 at 1:00 p.m. remotely through zoom meeting 935 4350 1547, pw: 015934, due to the closure of all municipal office buildings under the Governor's COVID-19 ban on public gatherings. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Hickey. Present and participating were members: Gerald Hickey, Roger Race, Andy Herlihy, Warren Hathaway, Kevin Murphy, and Patty Sweriduk. Also present was Steven Melo, Harbormaster.

Mr. Hickey reviewed the Agenda for the meeting. It was moved by Andy Herlihy and seconded by Patty Sweriduk to accept the Agenda as posted. The motion to accept the Agenda was approved unanimously. The minutes of the last meeting of January 21, 2020 were reviewed and discussed. It was moved by patty Sweriduk and seconded by Kevin Murphy to accept and post the minutes as presented. All approved.

- A. Requested local guidance for boating during COVID-19:** Upon receipt of a request from NBYC and local marinas, Harbormaster Melo prepared a guide to assist boaters returning to Dartmouth from distant areas, transient visitors, local boaters, and others interested in local facilities and services. Following discussions of the contents of the guide, it was moved (Patty Sweriduk) and seconded (Kevin Murphy) to endorse and adopt the guidance published. It was suggested that we publish and pass along to local media any guidance put out by the State DMF regarding salt water fishing under Covid-19.
- B. Roger Street Waterways Access Facility:** Kevin Murphy reported that construction of the pre-fab concrete boat ramp is scheduled to begin after May 1<sup>st</sup>. No request for access has been received yet. CBC has removed all dock floats stored over the winter. It is unknown how long the construction might last, but it was recommended that the parking lot facility should remain closed to the public during construction for safety and security reasons. Tools and equipment needed for the installation are expected to be staged and stored in the lot and road.
- C. Grants Activity:**
  - a.** The Maritime Center SEC grant fund balance is reportedly \$14,500. That fund must be closed out by June of 2020 to close the project. Harbormaster Melo submitted a response to each denial of additional equipment in Deborah Wender's memo. Replacement of the waste extraction pump at the head of the dock remains the highest priority in terms of "change orders" for the project. The current pump is not strong enough for the additional dock length, rise and bends, an issue that was unexpected based upon initial information. Mr. Melo also argued for additional beach mats to make better use of the beach launch on Water Street. Supplemental CVA funding was requested last year for an upgraded pump, but no award was made. Kevin Murphy motioned, and Patty Sweriduk seconded that waterways vote to endorse and advise acceptance of the Harbormaster's recommendations relative to the remaining funds.
  - b.** Dias Landing Marina Feasibility Study SEC grant: UHI has been asked to provide a proposal and scope of services for performing that project.
  - c.** SEC Dredging feasibility Grant Application: Application would be due by June 1<sup>st</sup>. The application required identification of available funds for the 20% feasibility study grant, or approximately \$30,000.00 of the \$150K project. It is also required that the applicant (us) identify available funds for the full dredge project match. That amount would be in the hundreds of thousands range. The Town has recently issued a "non-essential spending freeze" due to COVID-19 revenue loss. Based on those realities, Roger Race Moved, and Patty Sweriduk seconded that waterways advise the application be "tabled" until at least the end of summer when it could be re-evaluated. That motion was unanimously voted. Harbormaster Melo will send a message to Mr. MacInnes and Ms. Wender of that vote.
  - d.** SNEP water-quality grant: Roger Race has been working with the Coalition for Buzzards Bay and others to bring better water quality testing to Dartmouth waters. This project is in-line with the goals and objectives of the adopted Harbor Management Plan. It is reported that the labor and expense will have no impact on Waterways staff or budget, and this will

address another goal of the Management Plan. Roger Race reports that Environmental Affairs Coordinator O'Reilly will write a letter of support for this project.

- D. Financial Status FY 2020:** Based upon receipts to date, Mr. Melo anticipates a 15-20% downturn in budgeted revenue for the current fiscal year. Delays in processing returned funds due to COVID-19 have made exact projections difficult. With minimal staff working on deposits in the closed Town Hall, Mr. Melo hopes to have a clearer estimate of revenue and retained earnings by the next meeting.
- E. Seasonal Assistant Hiring Status:** The Town has posted the seasonal Assistant HM positions. Several applications have been received with few promising the required credentials. Mr. Melo has asked by email for direction on how to proceed with interviews and hiring protocol while the Town Offices are closed to the public. No answer has been received yet. The Town Administrator has made hiring of additional staff a goal imposed upon the Harbormaster. Compliance with that goal will require direction and assistance from outside of the Department. He will continue to work toward that. The anticipated decline in revenue coupled with the unknown expectations of the season under COVID-19 should require some adjustment of the staffing schedule.
- F. Public comment/additional unknown issues:** None raised.
- G. Next Meeting:** another Zoom meeting of the Waterways Management Commission was scheduled for 4 p.m. on Tuesday, May 19, 2020. DCTV will send a link for the Zoom access.

**The meeting was adjourned at 2:16 p.m.**