

MINUTES OF WATERWAYS MANAGEMENT COMMISSION MEETING

May 7, 2015

A meeting of the Waterways Management Commission was duly called and held on Thursday, May 7, 2015 at 3:00 p.m. at Dartmouth Town Hall. The meeting was called to order by the Chairman, Roger Race. The following people were present: Gerald Hickey, Joseph Hannon, Warren Hathaway and Gerard Clark. Also present was Mr. Steven Melo, Harbormaster.

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

Mr. Race reviewed the minutes of the meeting of September 24, 2013. Mr. Clark corrected the spelling of his first name to Gerard. Mr. Clark moved to accept the minutes with the change. Mr. Hannon seconded. So Moved.

New Business.

Rogers Street: Mr. Melo said that DPW was requested and did today street-sweep the Rogers Street parking lot. Piles of debris remained after their snow storage piles melted. Larger items such as chairs, barrels, and even a large set of keys were removed by Mr. Melo from those piles. He delayed opening the lot until the sweepable debris could be cleaned up. Mr. Race will send a message of thanks to DPW for that cleaning. Lights will be turned on and the gates opened for the season this evening.

Park Board Meeting: Mr. Hannon requested clarification on the mention of a meeting between the Waterways Committee and the Dartmouth Park Board in the minutes. Mr. Race said that an invitation was extended to the Park Dept. to meet and discuss a fence and improvements between the landing and Beach properties. Mr. Race said the invitation was extended, but received no reply from the Park board regarding the requested joint meeting.

Summer Season Calendar of Events: Mr. Melo reviewed the summer 2015 calendar of waterways events and permits filed to date. Mr. Hickey wants to know if waterways personnel are able to charge for "detail" patrols of the privately permitted events? He will ask Mr. Cressman or Barnes regarding town policies on detail pay billing for Enterprise fund departments. Mr. Melo noted that no triathlon events have requested permits or been scheduled for this season so far. Marshall Catboat and Slocum River Regatta events have yet to announce details to his office yet. This year will find the Buzzards Bay Regatta in Dartmouth waters, along with the usual weekly and special NBYC events.

Deputy Assistant Harbormaster: Mr. Melo outlined the history of attempts to create a new position called Deputy Assistant Harbormaster. Currently only the Harbormaster position receives employee benefits in the Department. The former 20 hour clerical position was receiving health, pension and other benefits, but it has not been filled since Lisa Litos resumed part-time Assistant status last summer. Creating a full-time, year-round number two person has been the focus for staffing since last season. No new seasonal Assistants have been hired for the four people that left over the past year or so, leaving those funds available for a full-time Assistant. Select Board approval for creation of the Deputy position was "tabled" at the request of Administrator Cressman at the May 4, 2015 Board meeting. Mr. Melo noted that he is now facing the boating season with neither new seasonal hires, nor the new full-time assistance. Roger Race and Gerry Hickey announce that they will request a meeting with Mr. Cressman to get the full-time position back on track using the refined job description and identified, existing funds. Mr. Melo will attempt to plug the immediate seasonal needs of the boaters as soon as the Personnel Department will allow. New Seasonal hires will need Select Board approval under M.G.L. Chapter 102, section 19. Further discussion was made comparing what similar neighboring towns employed for harbor staff and the qualifications advertised by each Town. It was determined that the Dartmouth Harbormaster Office seriously lacks the level of staffing found in similarly-sized neighboring harbors. As noticed over the recent winter and spring, there is nobody available to provide back-up when the Harbormaster is out or unavailable. All present agreed that trained, qualified back-up is needed to protect the boaters and waterways in Dartmouth. One person cannot be expected to cover all 168 hours that the waterways are open for each and every week of the year. Gerry Hickey wants to see clerical support staff restored to keep the paperwork flowing and answer the boater calls and emails. Roger Race asked if a posting on the waterways website would suffice for job posting requirements in Town? Mr. Hannon answered that posting sufficiency should be determined by the personnel department to be fair and consistent for all departments. Mr. Hickey asked what the Harbormaster wanted the finished staff composition to look like? Mr. Melo thought that the current demands of boaters would ultimately warrant a three person year-round staff with the Harbormaster, Deputy Harbormaster, and full-time clerical Assistant. Mr. Race noted that some funding should be coming from the Shellfish budget to support waterways staff since all job descriptions and duties will include assisting with the Shellfish obligations of the Town.

Budget Update: Mr. Melo reported that current year, FY 2015 revenue, as of April 30, 2015 has reached \$315,151.00 despite the lack of permanent staff and his medical leave. He credits the dedication of several part-time Assistants willing to step-in and ensure continuity of the Enterprise. Based upon the filed FY 2016 budget, there should be \$74,000 available for Town overhead and the Deputy Assistant position salary without requiring any rate adjustments. FY 2016 Town overhead, or indirect costs taken from the Enterprise Fund into the Town's General Fund, was not available at budget formation time, but recently reported to be just about \$40,000. That would leave \$34,000 for a full-time position if no adjustments were made. Auction proceeds from the sale of the military surplus crane truck yielded \$51,000 for a piece of equipment obtained by the Harbormaster for his signature alone. The Harbormaster maintains his position with the federal DRMO program, although time constraints and dwindling federal surplus has recently curbed acquisitions. These funds will more than cover the cost for the new Harbormaster Department pickup truck. Initially, the proceeds of this crane auction were "mistakenly" deposited by the Town into their General Fund instead of into the Waterways Enterprise account. That mistake was corrected by the Town Treasurer upon discovery of the error by the Harbormaster.

2016 Boating Season Waterways Rates: Mr. Race brought up the need to re-visit waterways rates for the 2016 boating season. Some rate adjustment is necessitated by the need for increased staffing levels required to meet the increased boater demands. The Town Administrator previously indicated a need for a 25% increase in all waterways rates, but the Commission previously dismissed such a drastic increase as it would likely drive many from accessing the waterways. Mr. Melo believes that that high of a rate increase was perhaps intended to pay for conversion of existing DPW buildings to Park Dept., DCTV and waterways use for storage. The Park Dept. believes there might not be sufficient room in existing structures for waterways boats. Mr. Race proposed recommending 2016 waterways mooring permit rates of \$60 for individual and \$120 for commercial mooring permits. He suggested waterways use boat fees of \$4.00 per foot- residents and \$9.00 per foot- non-residents. Boat launch fees, currently set at \$5 daily, and \$50 seasonally, need approval by the State Public Access Board for changes. Mr. Race proposed \$10 for each daily pass, and \$60 per seasonal permit, subject to State approval. Mr. Hannon moved and Mr. Hickey seconded those proposed rates and to have Mr. Melo send a request to the State Public Access Board to approve those rates starting with the 2016 season. Mr. Melo also noted that planned causeway reconstruction will likely negatively impact launch ramp access, use and revenue for the 2016 season due to road closures and detours.

Pier Float Reconstruction: Pioneer submitted the lowest bid for reconstruction of the pier end float at \$5,700 installed. Winter weather destroyed the former float, estimated to be 20 years old, or more. The metal joints and all flotation were no longer serviceable or buoyant, and there was no value in making repairs. Mr. Muldoon of The Fence Company performed emergency response to remove, and later dispose of the old float. Mr. Muldoon has also been contracted to repair the hinges and other worn components on the Town pump-out floats which have been in service since at least 1991. Clean Vessel Grant funds will cover those repairs. Repairs to the floats along the south side of the Town pier have also been authorized to be done by Mr. Muldoon.

Bouchard Oil Spill Grant funding: Mr. Melo described the floating upweller shellfish grow-out float that will be installed as a "T" to the end of the pump-out dock. This floating upweller is one of the approved Bouchard grant projects that we have been waiting years to see delivered. Once that upweller is attached, the addition of a new aluminum gangway funded with Nonquitt project grant money will improve public access at this area.

Aquaculture: Mr. Melo updated the Commission on the progress of Mr. Caravana's Aquaculture project now licensed and installed in the outer harbor.

Nominations: Nominations were made regarding the Waterways Commission Officers. Mr. Gerry Hickey was nominated, seconded and voted unanimously to assume leadership as Chairman of the Commission. Further nominations were held-off until the next meeting. Mr. Race and Mr. Hickey will follow-up with Mr. Cressman regarding appointment of two new Commission members to replace those who have resigned.

Public Comment. None.

The next meeting is scheduled for July 16, 2015 at 3:00 pm in Town Hall.

It was moved and seconded to adjourn at 4:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Steven Melo, Harbormaster