

Meeting Minutes

Waterways Management Commission

Date: September 9, 2025

Time: 12:00 PM

Meeting called to order by: Dana Dornbusch

[DCTV Recording of Meeting: Waterways Management Commission Meeting September 9, 2025](#)

1. **Attendance:** Members present: Dana Dornbusch, TJ Salvidio, Andy Herlihy, Roger Race, Harbormaster Steve Melo. Absent: Eli Powell, Andrea Langhauser
2. **Approval of Minutes.** The minutes from the August 12, 2025, meeting were moved to be accepted (Roger) seconded (TJ), and unanimously approved.
3. **Candidate Interviews for Open Slot** Two candidates, Jamie Simmons and Keith Murphy, expressed interest in joining the committee. The committee clarified that they advise and consent, with the town's select board being the appointing body, though the committee can make recommendations.

- **Jamie Simmons**

- **Background:** Grew up in Dartmouth, with family deeply involved in the local waterways (commercial fishing, sailing, yacht club, harbormaster). Currently works in the marine industry in New Bedford and uses the harbor often for lobstering, fishing, and family cruising around New England and beyond.
- **Skills/Experience:** Offers a broad background in various uses of the harbor, from commercial fishing to recreational activities and transient boating. Has observed operations in other harbors which could be beneficial for Dartmouth's future.
- **Challenges/Suggestions:**
 - Improve facilities and ease of access for transient boaters.
 - Enhance water access for all town residents, including non-boaters (e.g., fishing piers, walking paths).
 - Address environmental concerns such as water flushing and quality for shell fishing, as well as sediment buildup for dredging.

- **Keith Murphy**

- **Background:** Grew up in Dartmouth. Owns a Marshall catboat, grew up sailing, and worked at the yacht club. Actively uses local amenities like Anthony's Beach and Round Hill walking paths.
- **Skills/Experience:** Professionally works in strategy development and deployment for a healthcare company, offering skills in strategic planning, consensus building, and project execution to the committee.
- **Challenges/Suggestions:**
 - Prioritizes access for people to all waterways for recreation and boating, noting difficulty for small boat owners north of the bridge to access areas south of the bridge without private marina membership.
 - Praised the new pier system for increasing access.
- **Committee Priorities:** Candidates asked about the committee's main priorities.
 - The committee's role is to support the harbormaster and manage Dartmouth's waterways, focusing on long-term planning.
 - Ongoing projects include the Dias Landing project and Roger Street, with a key focus on increasing public access to the harbor's resources.
 - Significant effort is being directed towards water quality, including a grant with the Coalition for Buzzards Bay for monitoring the Slocum River, Apponagansett Bay, and other estuaries.
 - Ongoing general "housekeeping" tasks include evolving the Harbor Master website and the new town mooring site.
- **Discussion on Candidates**
 - Both candidates were deemed highly qualified.
 - Jamie Simmons was particularly noted for his commercial marine industry background, offering a different perspective to the committee.
 - The committee discussed the possibility of appointing the non-selected candidate as an "ex officio" (non-voting) member to maintain a "deep bench" of interested individuals, as done previously with Eli
 - **Motion:** Roger made a motion was made for the chair to write a letter recommending Jamie Simmons for the full-time position and proposing Keith Murphy as a non-voting ex officio member. Andy seconded. The motion passed unanimously via rollcall vote.
- 4. **Clerk Appointment** The town handbook requires a clerk. Andrea, who was absent, was nominated by TJ to fill this role. The nomination was seconded by Roger and passed unanimously.

5. **Clean Water Group Update** Andrea, the primary point person, was not present for an update. Roger confirmed that the clean water group is holding meetings and moving forward, albeit slowly. He also mentioned a new grant for studying and sampling in Clark's Cove, which will build upon existing shell fishing testing, focusing on the impact of combined sewer overflow.
6. **Database and Website Update** Steve reported ongoing struggles with the database conversion. There are also plans to integrate the Harbormaster website into the town's site to eliminate individual maintenance costs (GoDaddy, etc.) and leverage the improved town website. This integration is expected to be a year-long process.
 - **Excise Billing Report:** The office is working on generating a report for excise billing from the new town moorings database for fiscal year 2026, aiming for more regular and rapid billing compared to previous years.
 - **Email Addresses:** A minor issue with the "town moorings" email address is being addressed to create a more precise and less confusing email (e.g., clerk@DartmouthHarborMaster)
 - **Waiting Lists:** Lori in the office has established waiting lists for dinghy racks, dinghy dock spaces, and linear float spaces. These lists will have a \$15 annual fee to establish priorities and provide residents with clear expectations of their position on the list
 - **Discussion on Dinghy Storage:** The committee discussed potentially replacing dinghy racks with kayak trees due to increased kayak use but also considered the need for dinghy storage for mooring access. Steve is exploring an alternative similar to the Cuttyhunk float, where dinghies are tied to a floating dock in the water. Two existing 4'x30' long floats from the old pier are being considered for this purpose.
7. **Waterways Happenings**
 - **Finger Piers Installation:** The final two sets of finger piers for the marina are scheduled for installation in mid-to-late October.
 - **Seawall Deterioration at Boat Ramp:** The committee contacted the state's facilities coordinator for fishing and boating access regarding the deteriorating corrugated steel seawall at the boat ramp. Pictures were sent, and the committee is awaiting a response for maintenance. The failure of this wall would render both ramps unusable. The committee wants to understand the solution and cost before seeking funding.
 - **Retained Earnings Update** An update on retained earnings was provided, noting that collections occur before the fiscal year ends to cover deficits.
8. **Next Meeting** The next meeting was rescheduled from October 14th to **October 16th at noon.**