

Town of Stonington, CT
Stonington Harbor Management Commission
Regular Meeting
May 12, 2008
7:00 PM
Stonington Police Headquarters
Final minutes

Stonington Harbor Management Commission held a Regular Meeting on May 12, 2008 at the Stonington Police Station. Present for the meeting were: Rose Raffo, William Abt, Bill Geary, Alan Banister, Jack Gorby, and Peter Vermilya presiding. Harbormaster Eric Donch, and Deputy Harbormaster Charles Estabrooks were also in attendance.

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Vermilya called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Minutes:

Mr. Gorby motioned to approve the minutes of the April 16, 2008 meeting and Mr. Geary seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Out-of-Jurisdiction: Chairman Vermilya received notice of approval for shorefront modifications on Latimer Point, tentative approval for a new fixed pier and float on Mason's Island, and approval for existing marina modifications for Shaffer Marine on Mason's Island.

In-Jurisdiction: Chairman Vermilya received notice from the DEP of its approval of the Stonington Shellfish Commission's Scallop Enhancement project in Little Narragansett Bay.

Bills Paid / Outstanding: None

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Mr. Abt stated that there were no changes the SHMC's financial position since the April 16 report, which was: Commission has received \$6020.00 in mooring fees YTD, \$225.00 was paid out to the Secretary for the first quarter, and \$230.00 for Harbormaster expenses. Cash available is \$17,203.00 with a cash reserve of \$100.00 for the Robert G, and \$8,420.00 for the dock.

HARBORMASTER'S REPORT:

Mr. Donch reported no new mooring permits were issued and no names added to the waiting list, which remains at 209. One mooring was given up this month, and no new mooring assignments were offered. No deposits were made to the SHMC account, which stands at \$6340.00 YTD. Mr. Donch explained the mooring applications were being processed to the best of his ability as he was on a different work schedule which would continue for a few more days. The Robert G will be launched within the next two weeks. Finally, Mr. Donch introduced Charles Estabrooks, who has been recommended by the Commission to Governor Rell to fill the position of Deputy Harbormaster.

OLD BUSINESS:

Barnaby Blatch presented the SHYC Hurricane Preparation Plan. Mr. Blatch stated the plan has not been approved by the SHYC board yet, but that when it is he will give the final plan to the Commission. Commission members suggested a few minor changes to the plan.

Chairman Vermilya reported he had sent letters to the two candidates for Deputy Harbormaster, and a letter to Governor Rell with the Commission's recommendations for Harbormaster and Deputy Harbormaster.

Pumpout boat facility & Fixed dock: Chairman Vermilya stated he had written to the Town Board of Finance requesting a bid-waiver in the matter of choosing a contractor for construction of the dock. The Town usually requires three bidders on jobs costing over \$5000.00. There are only two firms capable of building the dock.

Proposed Text Change to Borough Zoning "Marine use" language: Michael Blair contacted Mr. Vermilya to say the application for a text change amendment had been withdrawn on April 23, 2008, explaining further that a new plan would be submitted, maybe as early as June.

Mooring Inspection compliance: Mr. Donch stated all scheduled inspections were in compliance.

Town Dock Overnight tie-up Ordinance extension: No action has been taken by the Town.

Dodson dock expansion/ wharfing out policy: Bob Snyder asked Chairman Vermilya what the Commission would like to see included in a 10 year plan for Dodsons Boatyard. Harbormaster Donch stated he would like to see dock and dredging plans.

Mr. Banister suggested the Commission should have a wharfing out policy. Chairman Vermilya will contact the Connecticut Harbor Management Association to gather information and get some ideas of what other towns have adopted as policy. Mr. Geary will get in touch with the DEP to ask if they could provide information.

Winter stake removal/mooring locations (GIS): Mr. Banister stated the Shellfish Commission has put together a project to identify mooring areas in Stonington Harbor. With information from Steve at Dodson's Boatyard, and Ian at Don's Dock, Mr. Banister distributed a list of possible Non-compliant Mooring Holders. Mr. Donch will ask Dodson's if they have GPS equipment.

Chairman Vermilya spoke with Town Attorney Thomas Londregan about a mooring permittee's property rights in the event that the SHMC has removed his mooring gear when it is not in compliance with Harbor Management Plan.

Mr. Banister drafted a letter and Attorney Londregan added a paragraph stating a non-compliant mooring holder is given 30 days to respond to the Commission's notification that he is not in compliance and should inform the Commission of his intentions for his gear. If the Commission does not receive a response, the Harbormaster will reassign the mooring location, and he, or his agent, will remove and store the gear for 30 days. If the gear is not reclaimed during this time, it will be sold and any excess funds beyond removal and storage fees will be sent to the address of record on the mooring application.

Commission members discussed how they would handle removing the mooring gear. Questions such as who would pay for the removal of gear were discussed. Mr. Banister said he would talk to Dodson's Boatyard, Don's Dock, and Cardinal Cove Marina to ascertain the cost of pulling the moorings. Mr. Geary will put together a draft rewrite of the third paragraph of the Londregan letter so that the onus of removing the mooring falls on the person who is assigned the now-vacant mooring location.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

Harbormaster Donch stated the Stonington Harbor Yacht Club asked if there were any regulations about swimming near the floating docks leased by the SHYC from the Mohegan Tribal Nation. Although some areas are designated "no swimming," the area in question is not included, and there should be no problem.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Abt motioned to adjourn and Ms. Raffo seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Next meeting: June 9, 2008.