

Town of Stonington, CT
Stonington Harbor Management Commission
Regular Meeting
September 14, 2009
7:00 PM
Stonington Police Public Meeting Hall

The regular meeting of the Stonington Harbor Management Commission was held on Monday, September 14, 2009 at the Stonington Police Public Meeting Hall. In attendance were Chairman Peter Vermilya, Harbormaster Eric Donch, Deputy Harbormaster Charles Estabrooks, Jack Gorby, William Abt, Ed Smith, Alan Banister, Jean Dixon, Rodney Johnstone and Jesse Diggs. George Kenyon was not in attendance.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00PM by Chairman Vermilya.

Minutes

Mr. Banister motioned to accept the minutes of the August 10, 2009, meeting as written and Mr. Smith seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

Correspondence

Chairman Vermilya reported the following correspondence:

Out of Jurisdiction

None

In Jurisdiction

- 1) Notice of CT Harbor Management Association Annual Meeting on September 24, 2009.
- 2) Chairman Vermilya spoke by telephone with the CHMA Treasurer, Lou Allyn about membership benefits for SHMC. SHMC will not continue membership (\$200 annual) but will pay for Harbormaster and Assistant Harbormaster memberships (\$40 each).
- 3) Letter from Gerwick Merein informing SHMC of a legal ad placed in "The Day" on 8/26/09 re East Grand St. Homeowners retention project and winter stakes left in during the summer.
- 4) Letter from Thomas Jones protesting unused moorings and winter stakes left in during the summer. Harbormaster Donch will respond to Mr. Jones to request more specific information about his objections.
- 5) Letter from Matthew J. Coudert to contest being dropped from the mooring wait list. He stated his continued interest in having a mooring and provided information for reinstatement to the list. The

Spring mailing of the SHMC Wait List Update letter spring was returned as undeliverable for Mr. Coudert. Discussion ensued about whether Mr. Coudert should go through the Appeals Process because of historical address discrepancies and lack of notification or whether his letter provided sufficient information and explanation.

Mr. Johnstone motioned to reinstate Mr. Coudert immediately to the wait list at his former position on the list and Mr. Gorby seconded. Voting for the motion were Mr. Smith, Mr. Diggs, Mr. Gorby, Mr. Johnstone and Ms. Dixon. Voting against were Mr. Banister and Mr. Vermilya. Mr. Abt abstained.

Bills Paid/Outstanding

- Payment to Eric Donch for \$177.90 for Harbormaster expenses.
- Payment to Finish Line Signs for \$368.64 for 4 "Slow No Wake" signs.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Abt reported (amounts rounded to nearest dollar):

- August Mooring Fees: \$50
- August Expenses: \$0

- Jan-August, 2009, Mooring Fees Received: \$7370
- Jan-August, 2009, Expenses: \$4816

- Cash Available: \$19,078
- Harbor Boat Cash Reserve: \$200
- Harbormaster Dock Cash Reserve: \$9840
- Total Funds Available: \$29,118

The motion to accept the Treasurer's Report of September 14, 2009, as written was approved unanimously.

Harbormaster's Report

The Harbormaster's Report, September 14, 2009, was presented by Harbormaster Donch (Attachment A).

- Harbormaster Donch reported that Spike Lobdell will present information about the Watch Hill tour boat venture and the Sailing Foundation Program at the SHMC October meeting.
- The commission will invite Mr. Millette of Research Aviation to the SHMC October meeting to present information on aerial photography as a facility to map mooring locations and other uses requiring precise measurement criteria.

Old Business

Diver Appreciation

- The commission restated its interest in giving gift certificates of appreciation to the divers who removed a sunken vessel from the harbor in the spring. Mr. Gorby motioned to authorize Chairman Vermilya to purchase and distribute three \$25 gift certificates to the divers and Mr. Banister seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

Insurance Issues for ROBERT G Fire Fighting Function

- Chairman Vermilya reported that George Sylvester, Town Administrative Director, was of the opinion that there would be no additional insurance issues if the ROBERT G is used to assist in fire fighting activities with equipment mounted on its deck.

Discussion followed about jeopardizing the structural and operational integrity of the boat because of high stress imposed by the equipment during its use; the relatively small size of the boat to support the congestion and high activity level on the boat during a fire with equipment, firefighters and harbormaster; the additional responsibility and hazards for the harbormaster acting in this capacity and the issues impacting the timeliness of getting the boat to the scene.

Recognizing that the ROBERT G fire support function would contribute to community well-being and safety but would potentially present additional safety hazards and liability to the boat and staff, the commission requested more information before authorizing ROBERT G to support fire fighting activities.

Mr. Gorby motioned to invite the Stonington Borough fire officials to present the fire department's plan for addressing marine and shore side fires to the commission and Mr. Johnstone seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

Harbormaster Donch will coordinate a November meeting presentation with the fire department.

Stonington Borough Ordinance Approval for SHMC

- Chairman Vermilya has unsuccessfully tried to contact Borough Warden Maranell to resolve the status of the SHMC ordinance. Mr. Gorby, a SHMC Borough commissioner, will follow up with Mr. Maranell for resolution.

Dodson Temporary Dinghy Docks

- Chairman Vermilya and Mr. Smith met with Mr. Robert Snyder of Dodson's who said that the dinghy docks attached to the

work docks had not been permitted or approved. The commission will advise Mr. Snyder via letter that the docks must be properly permitted through the DEP. Mr. Smith will correspond for the commission.

SHMC October Meeting and Location, Veterans' Day

- The SHMC October 19, 2009, meeting location is yet to be determined by Chairman Vermilya.
- Veterans' Day will be observed by the Town on a Wednesday.

Publication of Mooring Holder Address List

- Mr. Gorby reported that the Town of Stonington has no established policy on releasing address information to outside parties.

Mr. Abt motioned that the SHMC not publish address information from its records to outside parties. Mr. Vermilya, Mr. Gorby, Mr. Abt, Ed Smith, Mr. Banister, Ms. Dixon, Mr. Johnstone and Mr. Diggs voted for the motion; Mr. Smith voted against the motion.

As "public comment" Ms. Fedderson, requestor of the information, noted that Pawcatuck and Mystic commissions do release information.

Transient Mooring Area Buoys

- Mr. Gorby will investigate the renewal requirement of the buoy permits.

New Mooring Locations

- No new mooring locations were reported.

SHMC Computer and Records

- No information was reported.

No-Wake Buoy Proposal

- Mr. Banister reported that the sub-committee had sited five buoy locations: two on the east side of the harbor channel, two on the west side and one at the west breakwater entrance off Wamphassuc Point.
- Mr. Gorby will initiate the permit application process for the buoys and Mr. Banister will continue to coordinate the project with the private group who is funding it.
- The no-wake buoy installations are intended to educate and encourage boaters to slow down in the waters from the breakwater entrances into the harbor proper.

New Business

No new business was reported.

Public Comment

Reported under "Publication of Mooring Holder Address List".

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:48PM.

Attachment A
Harbormaster Report
September 14, 2009

New Mooring permits issued: 3
Additions to Waiting List: 13 Total: 144
Mooring being given up (this month): 0
New Mooring assignments offered: 3
Deposits to SHMC account since last report: \$ 0 (2009 YTD = \$ 7220)
(Includes \$100 donation)

Discussed the idea of a tour boat based out of Watch Hill that would make regular stops in Stonington Harbor with one of the principles in the venture. Options for where the vessel would land were discussed. The M/V Gansett is currently sailing in Newport Harbor and is expected to be moved to Watch Hill next season. (www.gansettcruises.com) A more comprehensive presentation is expected at the October SHMC meeting.

Had meeting with Thomas Millette of Research Aviation about aerial photography of Stonington harbor and areas within our jurisdiction. He can provide detail photographs with overlays (lat – long) for determining mooring positions. This would be a new area of information for his company and would like us to give him ideas of how it may be useful to ourselves and other harbors. Alan Banister has also had discussion with Mr. Millette.

The Special Olympics Sailing Regatta was held September 12-13 in Stonington Harbor. The weekend was event free with support provided by Stonington Police boat, Westerly Ambulance boat and DEP Boating Safety RIB.

Robert G.:

Met with Deputy Chief Bill Teixeira of Stonington Fire Dept. We placed the fire fighting deck gun on the “Robert G.” to get an idea of how it could be set up. Bill will work with Shipman’s Fire Equipment Co. to get 3 fire hoses made if SHMC approves the project.

A hailer / siren was donated for the boat by an anonymous donor and installed on the boat.

Respectfully Submitted

Eric Donch
Stonington Harbormaster