

Final - JMC

Minutes: Stonington Harbor Management Commission

Stonington Police Headquarters • April 8, 2013

Attending: Jay Spalding, Chairman; Sherman Crites, Jesse Diggs, Rodney Johnstone, George Kenyon, Bruce McKinnon, Edward Smith, Peter Tacy, Peter Vermilya. Also present: Eric Donch, Harbormaster; Charles Estabrooks, Dep. Harbormaster

1. Chairman Spalding called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.
2. Minutes were reviewed; approval was moved by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Diggs. Approval was unanimous.
3. Mr. Spalding noted that out-of-jurisdiction correspondence relating to proposed projects on Latimer Point and Greenhaven had been received, and was available for review by Commissioners.
4. In-jurisdiction correspondence from Stonington Commons relating to proposed seawall and walkway repairs was presented. Mr. Joseph H. Boucher, of Towne Engineering, described the proposed work (see attached sheet). The project responds to damage from storm Sandy in 2012 and Mr. Boucher said it would have "no harbor impact." He anticipates completion of the walkway repairs within six weeks after approval and of the seawall restoration in 2014. Mr. Crites moved approval, seconded by Mr. Diggs. Approval was unanimous.
5. Mr. Crites presented the Financial report (attached). New revenues are largely the result of payments by commercial mooring companies. About one half of the anticipated bill for Harbormaster boat repairs has been paid; the balance will be due upon delivery later this month. A net surplus for 2013 of about \$4000 is currently anticipated. Mr. Johnstone moved approval of the report, seconded by Mr. Smith. Approval was unanimous.
6. Mr. Crites then presented a long-range financial plan and worksheets (see attached documents) projected to 2018. The revenue assumptions are based on an increase in Private Mooring fee to \$50 starting in 2014. Mr. Diggs asked if this might result in an eventual surplus that would be "too much?" Mr. Tacy responded that, given the mandate that the Commission fund all operating and capital expenditures on the basis of user fees received, and has no way of meeting sudden or unanticipated expenses unless there is a sum of unexpended cash on hand, the development of an appropriate cash reserve seems prudent. Mr. Donch suggested that in his view a "contingency reserve" really is vital. Mr. Spalding then suggested that since Town Meeting approval will be necessary, there is no room for further delay in setting a 2014 fee before the September cut-off date for fee announcement. Mr. Spalding then asked Mr. Diggs to comment on whether possible action regarding a BIG-grant matching obligation might impact this planning? Mr. Diggs said "probably not, but we are talking" with the Stonington Selectmen, and there may be a need "to find \$15,000." Mr. Spalding then asked that the Commission take action regarding the 2014 fee level. Mr. Diggs proposed a

\$50 Private Mooring fee, seconded by Mr. McKinnon. Approval was unanimous.

7. Mr. Donch asked whether a waiting list fee should also be instituted at this time, so as to avoid making too many Town Meeting proposals. He believes that the present no-fee situation invites "abuse" and causes unreimbursed costs; he estimates that "sixty to seventy percent" of CT harbors charge an "initial" (not annual) waiting list fee. A member of the public in attendance, Mr. Phil Behney, asked to speak and suggested that instituting a waiting list fee might invite criticism from those who "pay but then don't get a mooring." Mr. Johnstone added that at present many appreciate the good will and effort of the Harbormaster and Commissioners in "chasing them down" to keep them informed and active in the waiting list, so perhaps this situation meets the public's expectations and should be left as it is.
8. Mr. Donch presented the Harbormaster's report (see attached sheet). Progress on repairing the "Robert G" is very satisfactory; completion around April 20 is expected. A new engine has been ordered. There was discussion of whether, now that this boat is renewed and seven or more years of additional service may be expected, the "boat replacement fund" should be dissolved? Discussion followed, but no formal action was taken. Mr. Donch anticipates up to 45 non-renewals of mooring permits. Acceptance of the report was moved by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Diggs. Approval was unanimous.
9. Under Old Business. (First item) Mr. Diggs updated the Commission regarding possible BIG grant action re. dock expansion. The Borough "is not interested" so "it is Town support or nothing." He has spoken at length with Mr. Haberek who will meet with his staff to discuss this possibility. If action is to be taken, "we will have to write the grant" but NESS will "need to brief DEEP" in advance. The summary: "we are still pursuing" this option. (Second item) Mr. McKinnon proposed that the Commission authorize the purchase of two new, larger buoys to replace one lost during the prior season, and the re-labeling of another old buoy, as first steps in the progressive replacement / enlargement of all Slow-no-wake and Anchorage markers. Mr. Smith seconded the motion. Approval was unanimous.
10. New Business: (first item): Mr. Spalding noted that there we do not have a policy regarding Special Purpose mooring assignments, but the NESS request has been received and requires action. Extended discussion followed, which included the idea that "temporary" (i.e., off-grid) spaces for small-boat moorings might be located in the space off of NESS and that will temporarily be opened up by the demolition of the outer portion of the Skippers Dock wharf, and that the location might thus be suitable pro tem for the small craft NESS hopes to put on moorings. Then Mr. Diggs proposed, seconded by Mr. Johnstone, that the Harbormaster be authorized to assign up to three Special Purpose moorings "near NESS" and one Special Purpose mooring "on the grid," with the stated proviso that all Special Purpose mooring assignments are reviewed annually and must continually meet the Harbor Management Plan's criteria regarding purpose and access. Approval was unanimous.

(Second item): Mr. Johnstone proposed that this may be an appropriate time to ask the Harbormaster to assure the Commission that "at least five new moorings, beyond those provided via normal turnover" be offered to those on the Waiting List each year. Mr. Donch asked that "no fixed number" be mandated, since there will be special concern for safety present as long as we are in a period of transition between "old system" mooring locations and "grid" locations. This transitional situation will require the Harbormaster's "on the water" assessment prior to action on every new mooring, lest boats be sited too close to each other. After considerable discussion, the Commission and the Harbormaster agreed that there is a "sense of the Commission" that we should now begin to "maximize the expansion of the total number of moorings that will be made available, consonant with safety."

11. Mr. Spalding reported that there are now two Commission vacancies, caused by the resignations of Mr. Vermilya and Ms. Dixon. Both are "Town" members and thus the places must be filled by the Stonington Selectmen. The name of one interested candidate (Mr. Paul O'Neill) will be suggested to the Selectmen by Mr. Spalding. Mr. O'Neill was present and was introduced to the Commissioners.
12. At 9:05 Mr. Smith moved adjournment, seconded by Mr. Diggs. Approval was unanimous.

Submitted by Peter Tacy, acting secretary

Approved 5/13/13
J. Jones
chair

Treasurers report:

Report Date: 3/31/2013						
	Plan	Jan	Feb	Mar	YTD	Probable
Funds Generated:						
Balance Brought Forward:	18,828.75	18,828.75	17,488.75	16,734.35	18,828.75	18,828.75
Mooring Fees:	18,600.00			12,900.00	12,900.00	18,600.00
Miscellaneous Income:	200.00				0.00	200.00
Total Generated Funds:	37,628.75	18,828.75	17,488.75	29,634.35	31,728.75	37,628.75
Operating Expense:						
Mooring Admin:						
Mailings:	500.00				0.00	500.00
Telephone:	600.00				0.00	600.00
Computer Sftwr:	150.00				0.00	150.00
Miscellaneous:	100.00				0.00	100.00
Sub-Total:	1,350.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,350.00
Boat:						
Fuel & Oil:	800.00				0.00	800.00
Commissioning:	1,300.00	835.00			835.00	1,300.00
Storage:	600.00				0.00	600.00
Maintenance/Repairs:	1,000.00				0.00	1,000.00
Equipment:	500.00				0.00	500.00
Sub-Total:	4,200.00	835.00	0.00	0.00	835.00	4,200.00
Harbor Maintenance:						
Buoys Haul/Store:	600.00	525.00			525.00	600.00
Buoy/Mooring Service:	1,000.00				0.00	1,000.00
Signage:	200.00				0.00	200.00
Sub-Total:	1,800.00	525.00	0.00	0.00	525.00	1,800.00
Dock/Pumpout:						
Dock Eqpt./Maintenance:	100.00				0.00	100.00
Pumpout Eqpt./Maintenance:	100.00				0.00	100.00
Miscellaneous:	100.00				0.00	100.00
Sub-Total:	300.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	300.00
Administrative:						
Supplies:	100.00				0.00	100.00
Professional Services:	900.00				0.00	900.00
Sub-Total:	1,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,000.00
Total Operating Expense:	8,650.00	1,360.00	0.00	0.00	1,360.00	8,650.00
Approved Projects/Capital						
Ordinance Update:	1,000.00				0.00	1,000.00
Admin Eqpt, Web Page (Charles):	500.00				0.00	500.00
Newsletter:	1,500.00		734.40		734.40	800.00
Robert G (Major Refit):	7,000.00			3,394.87	3,394.87	7,500.00
New Motor:	11,200.00				0.00	11,200.00
New SNW Buoys (5):	0.00				0.00	3,000.00
New Boat Fund:	540.00				0.00	540.00
Mooring Field Grid:	1,000.00				0.00	250.00
Total Project/Capital	22,740.00	0.00	734.40	3,394.87	4,129.27	24,790.00
Total Designated Funds	31,390.00	1,360.00	734.40	3,394.87	5,489.27	33,440.00
Undesignated Funds:	6,238.75	17,468.75	16,734.35	26,239.48	26,239.48	4,188.75
Notes:						
Petty Cash Advance - 300.00	Spending - April	602.89 - HM exp	10,200 - motor	4,200 - boat, final		
Harbor Boat Reserve - 540.00		20.64 - parts	1,000 - labor			

Harbormaster Report

April 8, 2013

New Mooring permits issued: 0 Moorings being given up (this month): 0
New Mooring assignments offered: 0 Additions to Waiting List: 0 Total: 231
Deposits to SHMC account since last report: \$13,640 (2013 YTD = \$13,640)

Mooring renewals:

285 renewals sent
240 received
34 Approved
4 Pending

I expect to have all of the received mooring renewals processed by the end of this week.

Robert G

The boat repairs are going well. The new deck is installed, leaning posts and deck fittings are installed.

Builder is awaiting the new windows. Transom "cap" is yet to be completed. We hope to take delivery on 4/20.

PMW has ordered the new 115hp Yamaha engine.

PMW (Don's Dock) will paint boat bottom once we get it back.

Respectfully Submitted

Eric Donch
Stonington Harbormaster