

Final
Town of Stonington, CT
Stonington Harbor Management Commission
Regular Meeting
May 13, 2013
7:00 PM
Stonington Police Public Meeting Hall

A regular meeting of the Stonington Harbor Management Commission was held on Monday, May 13, 2013 at the Stonington Police Public Meeting Hall. Attending were Chairman Jay Spalding, Sherman Crites, Jesse Diggs, Rodney Johnstone, George Kenyon, Bruce MacKinnon, Paul O'Neill, Ed Smith, Peter Tacy and Assistant Harbormaster Charles Estabrooks. Harbormaster Erich Donch did not attend.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Spalding called the meeting to order at 7:00PM

II. Recognition and Seat New Member

Paul O'Neill, a new Commissioner from the Town of Stonington, was seated. There remains one Town vacancy to be filled.

Former Commissioner and Chairman Peter Vermilya was recognized for his 19 years of service to Stonington Harbor, and presented by the Commissioners and Harbormasters with a current Google Earth photo of the Harbor, and a gift certificate, in appreciation for his leadership.

Also recognized was Harbormaster Donch for his outstanding service on behalf of the Special Olympics as reported in the recent issue of Wind Check magazine. Mr. Johnstone moved to extend the Commission's congratulations to Mr. Donch. The motion was seconded by Mr. Crites and approved by all.

III. Minutes

Mr. Diggs moved to accept the minutes of the April 8, 2013 meeting as written, and was seconded by Mr. Johnstone. The motion was approved unanimously.

IV. Correspondence

Chairman Spalding reported the following correspondence:

- A) Out of Jurisdiction – the Greenhaven Marina permit was approved.
- B) In Jurisdiction – Mr. Spike Lobdell, 8 Water St in the Borough outlined his pending request for a permit to remove to the adjacent Du Bois beach, sand deposited around his existing dock by Hurricane Sandy. The Commission had no objection to the proposal.

Mr. John Hritz, 76 Water St. submitted a Pre-Application for a proposed dock extension, and was present to review it and answer questions from the Commission. A motion was made and seconded to move this discussion to New Business. The motion was approved with Mr. Diggs dissenting, stating that it should be addressed now since it represents "in jurisdiction correspondence", and not moved to the end of the meeting as "new business".

V. Treasurer's Report

Mr. Crites summarized the Treasurer's Report, which included receipts and spending for the period ending April 30, 2013. A copy is attached.

Mr. Tacy moved to accept the Treasurer's Report as written, Mr. MacKinnon seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

VI. Harbormaster Report

The Harbormaster's report dated May 13, 2013 was presented by Assistant Harbormaster Estabrooks and is attached to these minutes.

Particularly noteworthy is the statement that "5 NEW moorings are being assigned in the outer harbor as a result of the Gridding project. More new moorings in the northern harbor are to be assigned."

The new motor for the *Robert G* will be installed this weekend and the boat put in service. It was noted that the refit of the boat and the new motor have resulted in a "good as new" *Robert G* which should serve the Harbor for many years.

Mr. Estabrooks requested help to contact, as a courtesy, 18 current mooring holders who have not submitted their mooring renewal request. Mr. Diggs, Mr. Johnstone and Mr. O'Neill volunteered.

A) Gridding Project Update -- Rod Johnstone

A new updated chart was provided the Harbormaster by Mr. Johnstone. He will provide additional updates every few months. Mr. Crites asked if the charts could be made available to Commissioners through the web site. It appears that will be possible down the road, but that it is beyond our technical resources at the moment. The Gridding sub-committee will work on this when time permits.

Mr. Diggs asked about the current status of the web site project. Mr. Estabrooks indicated the project, as originally commissioned is complete, and that the site can be utilized by Commissioners. There is, however, a problem with timely data input.

A motion to accept the Harbormaster's Report as presented was made by Mr. MacKinnon, seconded by Mr. Smith and passed unanimously.

Old Business

BIG Project Discussion – Mr. Diggs has met several times with all the parties interested in the two projects we have identified as most likely to enable use of the BIG money that is available this year through the grant being abandoned by NESS – public rest rooms at the sewage treatment plant and the extension and public access of the Harbormaster's dock.

While everyone deems both projects worthwhile, in neither case is there any money available to fund the required 25% match or the ongoing upkeep. Further, in the case of the dock, making it available to the public will require making it ADA compliant, at a prohibitive cost.

It was decided to offer support for the restroom project in the amount of \$2,500 in the event the Town or Borough changes its position, and contingent upon the project going forward. A motion to this effect was made by Mr. Diggs, seconded by Mr. Crites, and passed unanimously.

VII. New Business

Mr. Hritz explained that the Pre-Application he submitted to the Commission was simply a "heads up" that the dock extension he was proposing was in the works, and that he was not looking for us to take any action on it at this point.

Mr. Hritz further expressed a concern about an action taken by the Commission during the March meeting where Mr. Lobdell presented on behalf of NESS an outline of its Master Plan and requested the support of the Commission in its implementation. By motion the Commission indicated approval of the Plan and therefore its support of it.

However, that support was contingent on a number of representations in Mr. Lobdell's presentation, including the following: "We have the support of the abutting neighbors and believe others to the north supportive based on changes to the original plan."

Mr. Hritz, the NESS neighbor immediately north of NESS, maintained that was not the case, and that he and NESS have a serious ongoing dispute over water rights. While the Commission has nothing to do with the dispute, it does call into question the appropriateness of the support extended in March.

Mr. Lobdell will be invited to the June meeting to discuss this matter.

One additional item of New Business was added by Mr. Tacy. In anticipation of BIG funds becoming available in future years, he suggested we form a sub-committee to look into the feasibility of rebuilding the Monsanto breakwater to provide the harbor with additional protection from storms. The Chairman agreed and Mr. Tacy (Chair), Mr. Johnstone, Mr. Crites and Mr. McKinnon were appointed.

VIII. Public Comment

Mr. Stanley White advised the Commission that a Mr. Gerstein also opposed the NESS Plan, and that Mr. Gerstein will likely propose a dock extension of his own. That latter point prompted Mr. Diggs to suggest Mr. Gerstein and others review the Commission's Wharfing Out Policy that the Commission uses as its guidelines in reviewing applications for wharfs within its jurisdiction.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 upon a motion mad by Mr. McKinnon, seconded by Mr. Diggs and approved unanimously.

Submitted by Sherman Crites

Jay Spalding 10 June 2013
Chair SHMC