



Harbor Management Commission

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Regular Meeting Minutes
Thursday, May 25, 2023, 7:00 p.m.
Town Hall Meeting Room A

1. Call to Order

Chairman Terry Stewart called the regularly scheduled meeting of the Essex Harbor Management Commission to order at 7:00 p.m.

Terry noted the passing of Celia Francis, a real friend of the harbor and community and wife of Jim Francis, who was the first Harbor Master in Essex. The Commission members mourn her loss and Jim and his family are in their thoughts.

2. Attendance

Members Present: Jeff Going, Bill Herlihy, Susan Malan, Kit Schellens, John Senning, Remote, Terry Stewart, Brian Weinstein

Absent: Dave Fasulo

Others Present: Paul Riggio, Harbor Master, Rachel Smith, Safe Harbor, Remote

Bill Herlihy was seated for Susan Malan. Susan Malan arrived at 7:02 p.m. and Bill Herlihy was unseated.

3. Approval of the April 2023 Meeting Minutes

The April 27, 2023 regular meeting minutes were reviewed.

MOTION made by Jeff Going to approve the April 27, 2023 regular meeting minutes.
SECONDED: John Senning; **Voting in Favor:** Jeff Going, Susan Malan, Kit Schellens, John Senning, **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 4/0/0. **Discussion:** No further discussion.

4. Public Comment: None.

5. Financial Report

Bill Herlihy presented the May 2023 financial report for the Liberty Checking, Public Access, and General bank accounts, with a total funds closing balance as of April 30, 2023 of \$55,221.46.

MOTION made by Jeff Going to approve the April 2023 financial report as presented. **SECONDED:** Kit Schellens, **Voting in Favor:** Jeff Going, Susan Malan, Kit Schellens, John Senning, **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None, **Approved:** 4/0/0. **Discussion:** No further discussion.

Bill presented two invoices for approval; one for EHMC administrative support in the amount of \$267.55 and one from Safe Harbor for setting the harbor marks, channel marks, and buoys in the Main and Meadows anchorage and dock in the amount of \$3,062.50. This is the first of two invoices for our services contract with Safe Harbor.

MOTION made by Jeff Going to approve the invoices presented. **SECONDED:** Kit Schellens, **Voting in Favor:** Jeff Going, Susan Malan, Kit Schellens,, John Senning, **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 4/0/0. **Discussion:** No further discussion.

6. Harbor Master Report

Paul Riggio provided an update on the harbor mark and mooring locations. Some minor adjustments may be needed but the layout is 95% complete. The GPS coordinates were double checked against where they should be and adjustments were made accordingly. Jeff said that some of the markers are set in the wrong place and we don't want to encourage people to cut the buoys. The south field was set much lower than it should have been but there is no point in changing it now and there is plenty of room. John suggested that we pinpoint the final mooring field for this year and use that as a template for next year. This is actually what is done and adjustments are made based on changes in boat type and size. Paul said they are taking a more measured approach this year as to how the moorings are laid out resulting in a more accurate layout and that he, Dave Fasulo and Rachel Smith are working on getting the layout documented electronically this year. Paul, Jeff and Rachel will take another look at the layout based on tonite's discussion.

Paul noted that as happens every year, there have been a few people who feel they deserve a better/different mooring location in the harbor. Paul's response is that the harbor is laid out based on boat size and design in order to keep the boats from hitting each other and to keep the harbor safe. John suggested that something be added to the permit policy stating that moorings may not be in the same place as last year depending on changes in boat size and type.

One new Bushnell Access Wait List applicant: Ada, Swinney, 5.23.23.

Paul and Dave Fasulo will discuss whether there is space for Mooring Permit Wait List applicant John Morrison in the Meadows and will let him know.

The question of granting sabbaticals for Bushnell Access Wait List applicants who take a one year "vacation" needs to be discussed.

Rachel Smith sent Paul a list of channel marker coordinates and they need to figure out how long the poles need to be. They will review this tomorrow.

7. Harbor Management Business

Members were provided with a copy of a COP application that Docko submitted to DEEP regarding the rock pile relocation project. This is for our information only and no action on our

part is needed. Jeff said he was told the relocation would be done as fast as possible with a target of July 1st.

8. Town Public Access Points

Terry asked that everyone take a look at their assigned access points and let him know if anything needs to be done in terms of spring cleanup, etc.

John Senning noted that everything has been taken care of very nicely at Mack Lane. There is a recurring problem with a boat tied up at the Mack Lane dock that is longer than it should be. This person was warned three times last year and continues to do it. DEEP issued a warning to the Commission about this last year as the dock is supposed to be totally open for small vessel launching. Paul suggested that the Commission should decide the maximum boat size for this dock. Paul will address this with the boat owner tomorrow.

John also reiterated his concern about the lack of designated parking at the Mack Lane public access. He suggested that the Commission either comes up with a solution or takes down the public access sign. Paul and Terry will visit Mack Lane and come up with a suggestion as to what the solution might be.

Commission members were provided with Bob Ward's usage analysis and recommendation for reconfiguring the small vessel racks at Bushnell Access. It was decided to wait until the end of the season when the racks are empty to reconfigure the racks. Bob and Kit will make the changes and others will help if needed. Bob was thanked for his work on this.

9. Harbor Management Plan Update

Terry noted that the intent of our tour of the Harbor last month with Marcy Balint was to show her the unique elements of our harbor as many of her comments on our Harbor Management Plan were primarily focused around a generic Connecticut harbor. Marcy is our contact at DEEP who is reviewing our plan and is also our liaison with CORP. It was a great visit and she learned a lot. As a next step she will be coming back to us with how she sees Essex Harbor today given her comments and we will have a working session over the phone with her to go over those comments. No date has been set for this and Terry will keep everyone informed. Her visit was a major step in giving her a more personal view of the harbor. We need to keep in mind what is in the best interest of our community during these discussions and for the final version of our Plan.

10. Correspondence: None.

11. New Business: None.

Paul met with Elizabeth Kaeser, Executive Director of the Connecticut River Museum, to discuss the problem with visitor bus parking at and around the Foot of Main. CRM has adopted a plan to address this.

Kit Schellens asked about the status of the boat house concern at 54 Main Street discussed at previous meetings. Paul stated that because it is classified as a historical property, FEMA does not apply which means they can do whatever they want as far as dollars spent on the property. However, as soon as you try to heat a space it requires health code review which means they have

to comply with current septic and they can't. John raised the question as to whom anyone would appeal to have the historic designation deleted because of the fact that changes made to the building make it no longer historic. One of Paul's initial concerns was with an air conditioning/heating unit hanging out over the water that has since been removed. Concern was expressed over this and other situations regarding historic properties that may arise and what can be done to manage them. This is thought to be a Planning & Zoning/Land Use Department matter with the State having jurisdiction over the historic designation.

12. Adjournment

MOTION made by Susan Malan to adjourn the meeting at 7:54 p.m. **SECONDED:** Jeff Going; **Voting in Favor:** Jeff Going, Susan Malan, Kit Schellens, John Senning, **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 4/0/0. **Discussion:** No further discussion.

Respectfully Submitted,

Betsy McLaughlin
Recording Clerk