



Harbor Management Commission

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**Regular Meeting Minutes
Thursday, December 21, 2023, 7:00 p.m.
Town Hall Meeting Room A**

1. Call to Order

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

2. Attendance

Members Present: Jeff Going, Bill Herlihy, John Senning, Terry Stewart

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

Absent: Dave Fasulo, Kit Schellens, Susan Malan, Brian Weinstein

Bill Herlihy was seated for Susan Malan.

3. Approval of the November 2023 Meeting Minutes

The November 16, 2023 regular meeting minutes were reviewed.

MOTION made by John Senning to approve the November 16, 2023 regular meeting minutes.

SECONDED: Jeff Going, **Voting in Favor:** Jeff Going, Bill Herlihy, John Senning, **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 3/0/0. **Discussion:** No further discussion.

4. Public Comment: None.

5. Financial Report

Bill Herlihy presented the November 2023 financial report for the Liberty Checking, Public Access, and General bank accounts, with a total funds closing balance as of November 30, 2023 of \$49,283.41.

MOTION made by Jeff Going to approve the November 2023 financial report as presented.

SECONDED: John Senning, **Voting in Favor:** Jeff Going, Bill Herlihy, John Senning, **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None, **Approved:** 3/0/0. **Discussion:** No further discussion.

Bill presented an invoice for approval from Coastline Consulting & Development, LLC for dredge permitting services in the amount of \$4,120.00. This is part of the sampling and testing plan for the dredging. The services were discussed.

MOTION made by Jeff Going to approve the invoice presented. **SECONDED:** Bill Herlihy, **Voting in Favor:** Jeff Going, Bill Herlihy, **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** John Senning; **Approved: 2/0/1. Discussion:** No further discussion.

6. Harbor Master Report

The mooring permit renewal update was provided as per below.

2024 to date: 73 approved permits

Deadline for mooring permit wait list applicants to accept spaces offered ended November 30, 2023.

12 Wait list applicants were offered moorings

1 year wait list sabbatical requested: Robert Rosenberg

5 did not submit

- Jan Beyen, Meadows
- John Hincks, Main
- William Jones, Main
- John Pfarr, Main
- Louis Spann, Jr., Main

5 permits issued:

- Gregory Hawkins, Main
- Christopher Manero, Main
- Christopher Manero, Meadows
- Christian Meisner, Main
- Michael Walsh, Main

1 Pending Submission this week

- John Morrison, Main

2023 Mooring Permit Wait List Sabbatical Update

- Hunter Wilcox, Main, Not Renewing
- Thomas Pinkowich, Main, Mooring approved, no boat pending documentation in the Spring
- Matt Montana, pending receipt of application.
- Alexander Pichs, Offered permit, did not submit

New Mooring Permit Wait List Applicants

- 11/29/23: John Hincks, Main
- 11/29/23: Gus Bentivegna, Main
- 11/30/23: Dirk Samuelson, Meadows
- 12/4/23: Gus Bentivegna, Middle Cove

New Bushnell Access Wait List Applicants

- 11/29/23: John Hincks
- 12/1/23: Jen Beyen
- 12/1/23: Jen Beyen

Mooring Permit Wait List and Commercial Renewals begin January 1, 2024.

Paul noted that we are receiving more and more calls for the possibility of putting catamarans on moorings. We can't legally say that we don't allow them, so we have to figure out a way to create space for them. This would require a fair amount of room to make this workable. South Cove was suggested as the best place for this. Three requests have been made; one from Safe Harbor, one from the Essex Yacht Club, and one was just an inquiry. The question of pricing was raised as the catamarans take up more space than the other vessels. One thought was to charge at least double the maximum of current mooring permit fees. Henry Domenie, Safe Harbor, spoke to their experience regarding this and was asked to reach out to other properties as to how they are handling this in terms of pricing and moorings. The Commission's guidance to Paul was that we consider three mooring locations for catamarans on an experimental basis, pricing to be determined as we learn more. Henry will research this with other properties and report back at the next meeting.

Paul Riggio and Terry Stewart attended the first meeting of the CT River Marine Task Force on November 30, 2023, and the key takeaways were shared with Commission members.

7. Harbor Management Business

At the last meeting, Kit Schellens was asked to look into the DEEP standards regarding improvements to the Mack Lane and Town Park docks. Kit was not present but will hopefully have something to share at the next meeting. We have an existing permit for this and a COP is not needed.

Paul Riggio, Terry Stewart, Bob Ward and Ryan Welch met at Bushnell Access to discuss adding more small vessel rack space at Bushnell Access to reduce the Wait List. The plan is to take off the top rack of all three racks and use those components to build a fourth rack. This will allow for approximately 30 more spots. It has been confirmed with ZBA that no permit is required and that there are no parking regulations, so that is not an issue. Hats off to Ryan and the Town Crew, who will do the work.

The Thatchbed Island Restoration Demonstration Project was shared with Commission members. Jeff Going provided an explanation of the project and is asking for a statement of approval from

the Commission in support of this. The project was discussed and questions were raised, including why the Harbor Management Commission even needs to approve this. Concern with potential legal consequences were also expressed. DEEP and UConn CIRCA have asked the Ad Hoc Committee to present the plan locally to see whether there is support for the plan.

MOTION made by Bill Herlihy to support the concept of the Thatchbed Demonstration Project. **SECONDED:** Jeff Going, **Voting in Favor:** Jeff Going, Bill Herlihy, **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** John Senning, **Approved:** 2/0/1. **Discussion:** No further discussion.

8. Town Public Access Points

Terry noted that in addition to modifying the storage racks at Bushnell Access, Ryan Welch has taken on the task of improving the Town Dock by adding new stone to level out the ramp. He is also going to make some improvements to the observation deck.

Rachel Smith confirmed that there were no issues with pulling out the marks in the harbor or with taking out the Town Dock at the close out of the season. She also confirmed that the mushroom was taken out when the derelict dock at the Foot of Main was removed.

Now that John Senning has stepped away from Mack Lane Public Access oversight and Brian Weinstein has taken on this responsibility, John has offered to take on oversight of the Foot of Main or Little Point Street so Brian will only oversight for two public access points instead of three. Brian will be consulted.

9. Harbor Management Plan Update

The latest draft version of the Harbor Management Plan incorporating our comments was received and shared with Commission members. Further suggested edits were made at the meeting and another draft will be shared for final review.

10. Correspondence

The ZBA application received for improvements at 10 Benson Lane was reviewed.

MOTION made by Jeff Going that the Harbor Management Commission has reviewed the application and has no objections. **SECONDED:** Bill Herlihy, **Voting in Favor:** Jeff Going, Bill Herlihy, John Senning. **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None, **Approved:** 3/0/0. **Discussion:** No further discussion.

A COP application was received from Coastline Consulting & Development, LLC on behalf of the owner of 17 Mack Lane, Essex, for modification of the existing docks at that location. The Commission acknowledged receipt of the application and it will be reviewed and discussed at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

11. New Business

The 2024 Meeting Schedule was reviewed. Members were in agreement with moving the November and December meetings from the third Thursday of the month to the third Wednesday since Terry and Brian have conflicts on the Thursday dates. Members were in agreement with this if the Meeting Room is available. Terry will check on this.

12. Adjournment

MOTION made by Jeff Going to adjourn the meeting at 7:59 p.m. **SECONDED:** John Senning; **Voting in Favor:** Jeff Going, Bill Herlihy, John Senning, **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 3/0/0. **Discussion:** No further discussion.

Respectfully Submitted,

Betsy McLaughlin
Recording Clerk