

HARBOR MANAGEMENT COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, April 27, 2021

5:00 PM

Zoom Virtual Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Tucker Braddock, Mayor Peter Nystrom, Alderman Mark Bettencourt, City Manager John Salomone, Michael Aliano, Michael Gualtieri and Mark Sicuso

OTHERS PRESENT: Consultant Geoff Steadman and Recording Secretary Melinda Wilson

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sofia LeWitt

CITIZENS PRESENT: Keith Neilson of DOCKO, Inc.

Alderman Mark Bettencourt read the rules of the virtual meeting. He clearly stated that the meeting would be recorded and would be posted on the city's website.

1. Call to Order: Chair Tucker Braddock called the meeting to order at 5:02 PM.
2. Determination of Quorum: It was determined a quorum was present.
3. Approval of Minutes: On a motion by Mayor Peter Nystrom, seconded by Michael Aliano, the March 23, 2021 meeting minutes of the Harbor Management Commission (HMC) were unanimously approved as presented by a roll call vote.
4. Community Policing Report: Norwich Police Department Community Policing was not represented at the meeting. Michael Aliano confirmed that the Police Department boat was not in the harbor. Mark Sicuso confirmed that the Fire Department boat is in the water.
5. Correspondence:
  - a) Financial Report: Michael Gualtieri confirmed the account and grant balances, and a payment for the harbor cam. Geoff Steadman did send an invoice. The invoice totaled \$4,012.50 of which \$2,775 was towards the SHIPP grant program of updating the Harbor Management Plan and \$1,237.50 related to other HMC business. The invoice was appropriate in his view.

On a motion by Alderman Bettencourt, seconded by Mike Aliano, the HMC unanimously approved by roll call vote payment of the invoice to Mr. Steadman as soon as possible.
6. Harbor Master Report: Harbor Master Rich Thayer was not present.
7. New Business:
  - a) Thayer's Proposal: Keith Neilson represented Thayer's Marina by giving a presentation on their plans for the east shore of the west branch of the Yantic River. The applicant would like to add workspace. The project would repair and restore the existing rockwork and extend it. The length of the property would be improved with concrete block or stone. During the meeting, Mr. Neilson emailed the drawings to Alderman Bettencourt, who displayed them via Zoom.

Mr. Steadman raised the issue of a potential pre-application to the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP). He reviewed the process of pre-application. He suggested the HMC consider the language of 'no objection to the application moving forward.'

Michael Aliano made a motion, seconded by Mayor Peter Nystrom, that the HMC have no objection to Thayer's application moving forward. Via a roll call vote, the HMC approved the motion unanimously.

- b) Rowing Shells: Chair Braddock proposes to move the city-owned shells and the trailer to Hollyhock Island. They are currently in Mohegan Park. He suggested offering them to NFA to have a rowing team. There is a building on Hollyhock which is large enough to house the shells. Discussion ensued. The item will remain on the agenda for future meetings.

8. Old Business:

- a) Wiese / Thames River Proposal: Mr. Neilson represented Mel Wiese, the owner of the property. He referenced the provision for utilities that was raised at the last meeting. Mr. Weise has added utilities being run under the railroad to the drawings of the project. Mr. Weise needs to go through various city departments and the railroad for approval to do this.
- b) SHIPP Grant/Dock Repair/RFP Consideration: Chair Braddock noted that \$540,000 has been awarded to the City for replacement of the docks at Howard Brown Park. Mr. Steadman reported that the grant will be reimbursed through the CT Port Authority. This is a change from prior processes. There is a 30-day public comment period which is occurring now. Discussion ensued regarding the timing of repairs to coincide with the seasons.

Mark Sicuso left the meeting at 6 PM.

Discussion was held on the possibility of pandemic recovery funding being used for improvements along the harbor.

- c) Susan Cohen v State of CT: Mr. Steadman spoke to updates to the legal case. The judge's decision is concerning in its effect on Harbor Management Commissions having authority to make recommendations to DEEP, versus only to Planning & Zoning Departments. There is an appeal being made. The potential exists that clarifying state legislation will be passed in the next legislative session. Michael Aliano made a motion to encourage and support the legislative clarifications needed to confirm the longstanding authority of harbor management commissions to review and make recommendations concerning DEEP decisions affecting their harbors. Mayor Peter Nystrom seconded. The motion carried unanimously via roll call vote of all commissioners present.
- d) Harbor Management Plan (HMP): DRAFT Chapters 1 – 7 Review: Chair Braddock asked all HMC members to review the chapters so that they can be approved to be sent to DEEP next month.

9. Citizen Comment: None

10. Other: Mike Gualtieri asked if ospreys have been seen near the harbor. Chair Braddock noted that he had not seen any ospreys. He also noted that the second osprey platform is ready to be installed and the mud flats would be an appropriate spot.

11. Adjournment: On a motion to adjourn by Mark Bettencourt, seconded by Michael Aliano, the Harbor Management Commission meeting adjourned via roll call vote at 6:15 PM.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Melinda Wilson*  
*Recording Secretary*