

**MINUTES
TOWN OF HARWICH
WATERWAYS COMMITTEE
Harwich Channel Studio
Community Center
100 Oak Street
Wednesday, January 15, 2025, 6:00 PM**

Attendance and Introductions:

MEMBERS PARTICIPATING: Dan Hall, Chair, Richard Shevory, Larry Brutti, Kent Drushella and Jim Walpole

ALSO PARTICIPATING: John Rendon, Harbormaster

MINUTES: October 16, 2024 Review & Approval

Mr. Shevory noted that his name was misspelled in the Minutes.

A motion to approve the Minutes of October 16, 2024 with corrections was made and seconded.

Vote: 6:0 in favor. Motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA: None

OPEN FORUM: None

FINANCIAL REPORT: November, December 2024 Monthly

Mr. Rendon noted that two months are included in the Financial Report. The December Revenues look alarming but the bottom line, year to date, is still close to December 2023. He noted that today was the first day for transient dockage applications, he already has a list of requests and expects that the numbers will be good again this year. The rates have not changed this year but may change next year. He explained that when he proposed the rate change to the Select Board in 2021, he had indicated that he would like to get on a four year cycle. Mr. Rendon commented that when they did the marina in 2018, they raised the rates significantly. They did have some people question how often it would happen when the rates changed in 2021. He suggested that people will understand if the rates change on a regular schedule. He commented that they try and keep the rates as reasonable as possible although some in Town politics would like to see more revenue.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Request for two Working Mooring permits to anchor 8' x 20' floating upweller (FLUPSY) – Aquacultural Research Corporation (ARC)

Mr. Rendon noted that Paul Whittenstein is present and is the General Manager of ARC, noting that ARC runs the shellfishery/hatchery on the Herring River. He gave a description of their request, what a FLUPSY is and why they are before the Waterways Committee. Mr. Rendon noted that as Harbormaster, by Mass. General Law, he has the authority to issue mooring permits and their request is to put a float in place that is held by moorings. Mr. Rendon noted that he supports this and is elevating it up to the Select Board level for approval of working moorings. He stated that working moorings are defined in the Harbor Management Plan as being meant for boatyard type businesses to help with running their businesses. He gave an example of a working mooring that they presently have. He suggested that what ARC wants, fits within the definition of a working mooring. He commented that he would like to go before the Select Board with the Committee's recommendation.

Mr. Whittenstein described what a FLUPSY is, gave a description of what they are presently doing on the river and how the FLUPSY would be beneficial in helping grow more quahogs and oysters. It is a seasonal business.

Mr. Rendon noted that it would take two moorings and since it is seasonal, he does not see any issues. He referred to a similar situation that was not an issue until it became year round and Mr. Rendon considered it a hazard. He commented that this is notably a good thing for their business but he also views it as somewhat of a safety benefit. He commented that some of the feedback they got when they were doing the Wixon dock was the fear that the current would sweep people who were in the water, under the fish house. He added that if anything, this might be a buffer. It is on the north side of the building and will not impede on the path that was put in place for access to the dinghies. He also doesn't see it as a navigational issue.

Mr. Walpole commented that they have safety, no navigational concerns and water quality improvement.

Mr. Rendon also noted that Mr. Whittenstein has been working with Don Yannuzzi, Natural Resources Director, that a certain number of seed planted go back into the Herring River for the benefit of the Town.

Mr. Whittenstein commented that the number of seed planted varies year to year. He estimated that they spread 50,000 quahogs seeds up and down the river.

Mr. Rendon noted that this not a water dependent structure. It's a float that will be held by moorings that the Harbormaster has the authority to issue. He noted the reason he decided to bring it up to the Select Board is that it fits into the category of a working mooring which has to

be approved by the Select Board. He also believes there is value in bringing some transparency to what they are doing because of ongoing projects.

Mr. Rendon noted that one stipulation was that they don't have a boat tied to it unless they are actually recovering or servicing the product. He also commented on the ways they have been friendly to the Town.

Mr. Drushella moved to approve the proposed float as per the plan. Seconded by Mr. Walpole.

Vote: 5:0 in favor. Motion carried.

2. Mooring Servicing Agent Renewals – Harbormaster

Mr. Rendon noted the process of going out to bid and that a three year license was awarded to three Mooring Servicing Agents, which he listed. It is a three year license but every year they need to go before the Board for review. He commented that their performance has been good. He explained the challenges that Lower Cape Marine Services faced and that they are working hard. Mr. Rendon recommended that the Committee supports renewal and recommends to the Board that they continue on the same track.

Mr. Brutti asked what the recourse would be if mornings are pulled that shouldn't have been pulled or that work was done on them that was not requested.

Mr. Rendon replied that it is up to the permit holder to communicate clearly what they want done. The Mooring Servicing Agents are responsible for reaching out to the morning permit holders, offering services and having the permit holders decide what services they want. The Harbormaster does not police that effort.

Bill Neiser, Deputy Harbormaster was present and noted the if someone has an issue, he suggests that they go to the Servicing Agent and work it out.

Mr. Brutti noted the issues he has encounter with the Mooring Servicing Agent.

Mr. Rendon recommended the he do everything in writing. He commented that the mooring fields are tight, they need a centralized management and he thinks they have been successful managing them.

Mr. Hall moved to accept Mr. Rendon's memo to go forward with the Select Board. Seconded by Mr. Walpole.

Vote: 5:0 in favor. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

MONTHLY REPORTS:

Board of Selectmen -None
Harbormaster

Mr. Rendon noted that his Monthly Report is also his Annual Report which he submitted in the packet. He noted specific details on the report and noted a decrease in maritime assistance cases. In answer to questions about the Snack Shack's decrease in revenues, Mr. Rendon noted that they had a new Vendor come in. He noted the original license agreement and that the terms of the new license agreement were changed and it wasn't as beneficial to the Town. He explained what they pay the Town and that their revenues may not have been as good as the first year. He also noted that the Harbormaster has to maintain the building. Mr. Rendon noted that he has said they need a Revolving Account for this money to go into so the Harbormaster can use it for maintenance of the building. He has requested a Revolving Account again this year but does not anticipated getting it. Mr. Rendon also noted the significant increase in the dredging fees and the dredge permits they have in place for the next ten years.

Mr. Rendon announced that he is retiring and his official retirement date is January 30th. Mr. Neiser will be standing in until the Town hires a new Harbormaster, which he hopes will happen within a month or so. He thanked the Committee for their support and commented that they have done some good things in the Town.

Natural Resource Officer

None

CORRESPONDANCE:

1. Harbormaster Department 2024 Annual Report

Addressed in the Monthly Report.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday February 19, 2025

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Drushella moved to adjourn. Seconded by Mr. Walpole.

Vote: 5:0 in favor. Motion carried. meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Judi Moldstad
Board Secretary

www Chairman Don Hen 2/26/25

Page 5 empty