

HARBOR MANAGEMENT COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, January 28, 2020
City Hall, Room 319, 5:00 PM

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Geoff Steadman, Kyle Heard and Recording Secretary Melinda Wilson

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mark Sicuso

CITIZENS PRESENT: None

1. Call to Order: Chair Tucker Braddock called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.
2. Determination of Quorum: It was determined a quorum was present.
3. Approval of Minutes: On a motion by Michael Gualtieri, seconded by Mayor Peter Nystrom, the November 19, 2019, meeting minutes of the Harbor Management Commission (HMC) were unanimously approved as presented.
4. Correspondence: Chair Braddock reported on a letter he wrote to Governor Ned Lamont, State Senator Carlo Leone and State Representative Roland Lemar regarding the Connecticut Port Authority's (CPA) suspension of the Small Harbor Improvement Projects Program (SHIPP) grants. State Senator Cathy Osten responded to Chair Braddock.

Mike Gualtieri reported on the November and December 2019 financial reports. The \$75.00 recording fee for a permit for the dock grant which has been recorded under restricted funds was moved. In December, the report shows a monthly fee for the data line of \$75.40 for the harbor cam. It was the only expense that month. Under professional services, Geoff Steadman's fee has been paid from the HMC funds for consulting services. Geoff's fees were further broken down to \$3,864.30 for the SHIPP work, included in grant analysis and \$1,657.96 for other HMC business listed in unrestricted funds. The restricted funds are for the Harbor Management Plan (HMP) Update. On a motion by Mayor Peter Nystrom, seconded by Mike Aliano, the November and December 2019 financial reports were unanimously accepted.

5. Old Business:

a) Introduction of new members

New members Mike Aliano and Sofia LeWitt shared their reasons for joining the HMC. Returning member Alderman Mark Bettencourt also gave his reasons for rejoining the HMC. Reasons included economic development and the harbor being the city's greatest asset.

b) Vote for Chair and Vice Chair

On a motion by Mike Gualtieri, seconded by Alderman Mark Bettencourt, the HMC appointed Tucker Braddock as Chair. Tucker Braddock recused himself from the vote.

On a motion by John Salomone, seconded by Mike Gualtieri, Alderman Mark Bettencourt was appointed Vice Chair of the HMC. Alderman Mark Bettencourt recused himself from the discussion and vote.

c) CT Harbor Management Association

Geoff Steadman explained the history and purpose of the Connecticut Harbor Management Association (CHMA). He noted that Mike Aliano's father helped establish it years ago. The group's members share information and address issues that are of concern to the members. The group has written to Governor Lamont and the Chair of Transportation Committee asking to continue grant program. When the CPA was created, the maritime division of the Department of Transportation (DOT), which had a small harbor grant program, was eliminated. The CPA created the SHIPP which is now in limbo. The CHMA is also involved in the statute surrounding HMPs. Currently in Connecticut, there is a court dispute over the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's (DEEP) authority versus the Greenwich HMP. This is of concern to the CHMA and HMC's across the state.

The CHMA also puts on workshops. On May 8th, they will hold a workshop for HMCs. Geoff noted that DEEP has organized this for Harbor Masters. Regulatory and law enforcement personnel will speak about issues for Harbor Masters. Chair Braddock confirmed that Harbor Master Rich Thayer plans to continue in that post.

d) NPD Representation

Chair Braddock reported that he spoke with Chief Daley who will send staff to the meeting when he has available staffing.

6. New Business:

On a motion by Alderman Bettencourt, seconded by Mike Aliano, the HMC unanimously voted to

suspend the agenda to allow Kyle Heard to speak about the osprey nest.

Kyle reported that Scout Troop #4, placed the osprey nest on a 35' utility pole at 150 Thames Street next to the police station in November. He has since attained the rank of Eagle Scout. He told the HMC that he built two nests. He has a 16' pole for the second nest which he can transport. He held a fundraiser for the project. Leftover funds will be donated the HMC. He hopes to have a ceremony in April and will share more information as the event gets closer. He will bring the DEEP approval information and his final report on the project to the next HMC meeting he attends. He informed the HMC that he plans to donate the pole to the HMC and he will help with installation.

a) HMC 2020 Priorities

Chair Braddock handed out an ongoing list of priorities of the HMC. Geoff noted that DEEP will review the HMP updates.

b) CT Port Authority Grant Advocacy

Discussion ensued on the delay of the SHIPP grants due to the controversy with the CPA. Mayor Nystrom confirmed that the 20% match from the city has been agreed to and will remain dedicated to the dock repair grant program. Mike Aliano noted that the north end of the docks are missing concrete. Mayor Nystrom said he will check with the Department of Public Works City Engineer tomorrow in regards to the docks.

c) Police Station Nautical Flags

Chair Braddock said there is interest in repainting the mural near the police station which says, "Welcome to Norwich." There is a large tree near D dock. The Norwich Fire Department is involved. The goal is to remove it so it does not create a hazard.

d) Harbor Management Plan Review

Geoff explained the history of the Harbor Management Plan. HMPs were initially proposed as a way to achieve more home rule over local harbors instead of being governed by state and federal agencies. The need at the time of Norwich's first HMC was to accommodate expansion of the marina at American Wharf. There is a federally designated channel and a turning basis with boundaries. The principal goal of the first HMP was to stimulate economic development and revitalization. The HMP needs approval of the state and adoption by the City Council.

Subsequent to the first HMP, the Norwich Harbor Water Trail was created and the waterfront vision was written to be a summary of the HMP. Since it was done, the floodways have been updated by FEMA. Geoff has included this information and input from HMC members in the draft

update. He provided hard copies of the draft plan provisions. He let HMC members know that he can also provide electronic copies at their request. He also included a hard copy of the presentation which the HMC has on hand for members of the public. He has updated with new members' names. He asked members to please review the draft HMP Update and to comment.

e) Chair Braddock brought up the carnival request. Mayor Nystrom explained that the noontime rotary has made a request to use Howard T. Brown Park for their carnival. The timeline is under discussion with city officials. Last year the carnival was held at the viaduct. City Manager Salomone said the viaduct is preferable from a logistics point of view. Mayor Nystrom noted that the parking lot behind Three Rivers Community College (TRCC) has been successfully utilized for events in the past. The HMC will have the opportunity to comment prior to a vote by the City Council.

7. Citizen Comment: None

8. Adjournment: On a motion to adjourn by Mayor Nystrom, seconded by Mike Gualtieri, the Harbor Management Commission meeting adjourned at 6:14 PM.

*Respectfully submitted,
Melinda Wilson
Recording Secretary*