

TOWN OF FAIRFIELD
HARBOR MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES OF MAY 18, 2021

A Meeting of the Harbor Management Commission (HMC) of the Town of Fairfield was held on Tuesday, May 18, 2021 at 4:45 p.m. via teleconference.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Kim Taylor, Chairwoman; Mark Foster; Ted Schwartzman; Jacob Herschler; Doug Metchick; Sam Cargill; and Eric Sundman. **ABSENT:** Harry French; Libby Tritschler. **ALSO PRESENT:** Geoffrey Steadman, HMC Consultant; Jeff Engborg, Manager, PYC; Harbor Master Edward Billings; Steven Sternberg, RACE Coastal Engineering (RACE); Devin Santa, RACE.

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 4:45 p.m. by Chairwoman Taylor.

Note: the order of business was adjusted to have the Consultants from RACE advise the HMC concerning the Lower Wharf Project

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Lower Wharf Project: Chairwoman Taylor reported that she and Mr. Steadman recently met with Mr. Sternberg and Mr. Santa to discuss RACE's proposal for obtaining a new DEEP permit for the Lower Wharf Project. Mr. Santa reviewed the work included in the previous permit, now expired and not subject to renewal, including dredging, reconstruction of the Lower Wharf piers, stonewall repairs, and reconstruction of the boat launching ramp. Mr. Steadman talked with Town Marina Coordinator Cathcart regarding the possibility of reconstructing the dinghy docks to increase their utility. The HMC has run into many delays and obstacles beyond its control relative to the dredging project which is to be funded with a grant previously provided by the CT Port Authority. The biggest obstacle has been the lack of any other dredging projects in Long Island Sound to serve as "cap" material for the Lower Wharf dredged material. The HMC held considerable discussion on the costs, permitting, funding, and feasibility of the several projects included in the overall Lower Wharf Project. Chairwoman Taylor reported that she would pursue a discussion with the Director of the Parks and Recreation Department to see if the new permit application might be able to include some additional work of benefit to the Department. Mr. Steadman will inquire regarding use of the Port Authority grant for components of the Lower Wharf Project other than dredging. At the request of Mr. Foster, Mr. Steadman will provide copies of the most recent sediment testing results.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: HMC meeting on April 20, 2021: Mark Foster *moved* and Sam Cargill *seconded* to approve the Meeting Minutes of April 20, 2021 as presented: *Motion passed unanimously.*

CHAIRWOMAN'S REPORT: Chairwoman Taylor reported the following:

1. Email on April 20, 2021 from Mr. Sternberg of RACE sending a proposal outlining the work necessary to obtain a new DEEP permit for the Lower Wharf project.
2. Email on April 21, 2021 to Attorney John Casey informing him of the HMC's motion on April 20, 2021 that it finds no exceptions to the Harbor Master's actions concerning Mr. Owens's application for a mooring permit associated with property at 789 Harbor Road.

3. Email on April 26, 2021 to Janice Deshais, DEEP hearing officer, requesting extension of the deadline for the HMC's written comments from May 15 to May 21, 2021 in the matter of Aquarion Water Company's application to DEEP to divert water from the Hemlocks Reservoir to southwestern Connecticut and potentially affecting the Mill River.
4. Email from Ms. Deshais, DEEP hearing officer granting the HMC's request to submit written comments to the end of business on May 21, 2021.
5. May 4, 2020 zoom meeting with Mr. Sternberg and Mr. Santa of RACE and Mr. Steadman to discuss the cost estimate and scope of work to obtain a new DEEP permit for work at the Lower Wharf.
6. May 4, 2020 attend via zoom the DEEP public hearing in connection with Aquarion Water Company's application to divert water from the Hemlocks Reservoir to southwestern Connecticut.
7. May 10, 2021 letter in accord with DEEP requirements from LandTech in connection with an application for a residential dock at 50 Bay Edge Court (outside of HMC jurisdiction).

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Sand Management Project: Mr. Steadman and Mr. Foster: Mr. Steadman reported that he is working to coordinate a zoom meeting with the ACOE prior to an on-site meeting involving DEEP to review the ACOE channel dredging plans.
2. Mooring Committee: Mr. Herschler reported that the Mooring Committee met on May 12th. The HMC is still awaiting the Town's approval for the vessel donated to the HMC by the PYC. The Harbor Master is still awaiting receipt of renewal application documents from a handful of mooring permit renewal applicants.

HARBOR MASTER'S REPORT: Edward Billings, Harbor Master: Mr. Billings reported that there are still individuals who have not provided full documentation required for mooring permit renewal. There are approximately 65 individuals on the wait list. The FOIA request concerning the Owens application is still being reviewed; OnLine Mooring will also provide information. Although not many boats are currently in the Harbor, he anticipates that the number will increase after the first week of June.

OLD BUSINESS:

4. Harbor Management Plan Update: Chairwoman Taylor reported that the Committee anticipates meeting again towards the end of the month.
5. Proposed Changes to Rules and Procedures: Mr. Herschler. Following Discussion, Jac Herschler moved and Mark Foster seconded to approve the Draft May 13, 2021 amendment to the Rules and Procedures, April 19, 2021 proposed update to the Town Code Chapter 24, and April 19, 2021 Southport Harbor Mooring Tackle & Table of Fees. Motion passed unanimously.

6. Budget Request: Mr. Schwartzman reported that the RTM met on May 3rd; the HMC FY2020-21 budget request was approved. Chairwoman Taylor thanked Mr. Schwartzman for his hard work.

7. CT DEEP public hearing on May 4, and evidentiary hearing on May 6, 2021 in connection with Aquarion Water Company's application to divert water from the Hemlocks Reservoir to southwestern Connecticut: Mr. Steadman: Mr. Steadman provided the HMC with a brief summary of the hearing as well as the history of this proposal. Following considerable discussion, Jac Herschler *moved* and Ted Schwartzman *seconded* to send a letter to the Hearing Officer outlining the concerns of the HMC. *Motion passed unanimously.*

APPLICATIONS: 50 Bay Edge Court, Fairfield: Out of HMC jurisdiction.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to come before the Commission, Sam Cargill *moved*, and Jac Herschler *seconded* to adjourn at 6:42 p.m. *Motion passed unanimously.*

The audio recording can be found here: [Harbor Management Commission - 5/18/21 - YouTube](#)

Respectfully submitted,

Betty Gabriel