

**TOWN OF JAMESTOWN
HARBOR COMMISSION**

Minutes of the June 14, 2023 meeting of the Jamestown Harbor Commission.

Approved: 8/9/23

A meeting of the Jamestown Harbor Commission (JHC) was held on Wednesday, June 14, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. in the Town Council Chambers of the Jamestown Town Hall, 93 Narragansett Avenue, Jamestown, Rhode Island.

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chairman Wayne Banks called the meeting to order at 5:09 p.m. He also welcomed Mark Campbell, who was recently appointed to serve on the Harbor Commission.

Present:

Wayne Banks, Chairman
Michael Junge, Vice-Chairman
Jessica McCarthy, Commissioner
Sue Romano, Commissioner
Mark Campbell, Commissioner

Absent:

Dan Wurzbacher, Commissioner
Eric Lexow, Commissioner

Also in Attendance:

Steve Bois, Executive Director
Joan Rich, Harbor Clerk
Bob Laman, Conservation Commission Liaison

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes – Review, discussion, and/or potential action and/or vote;

A. Wednesday, May 10, 2023

There was a question about the Town Council Liaison's statement that the Town Council was interviewing candidates for the vacant Planning Commission liaison spot. Chairman Banks stated that he has been on the Harbor Commission for seven years and there has never been a Planning Commission liaison. Harbor Clerk Rich stated she would contact Councilor Randy White for clarification. Commissioner Romano moved to approve the minutes and Vice-Commissioner Junge seconded. So voted: 5 aye, 0 nay.

III. Open Forum

A. Scheduled Requests to Address

There were no scheduled requests to address.

B. Non-Scheduled Requests to Address

There were no non-scheduled requests to address.

IV. Executive Director's Report – S. Bois

Executive Director Bois stated that he was going to combine the Executive Director's report with the harbormaster report. The engine for one of the boats has been undergoing repairs, as well as one of the trailers, which is having the brakes, pads, and rotors replaced. The Ocean Race went well; the harbormasters are patrolling 7 days a week; CRMC has granted a one year extension to update the Harbor Management Plan and Ordinance, and there was an active shooter drill on the water involving federal, state, and municipal agencies boarding a ferry. Executive Director Bois is hoping to meet with the DEM personnel on Prudence Island on June 29 to gather information on the restoration/ remediation of Prudence Island. He also has a meeting scheduled with DEM in late July to monitor the oyster farms on the west side of Jamestown and ensure they are on station.

V. Year-to-Date Financial Report – Review, discussion, and/or potential action and/or vote;

Executive Director Bois stated the report was not available.

VI. Sub-Committee Reports

A. Budget – E. Lexow – Review, discussion, and/or potential action and/or vote;

Commissioner Lexow was absent.

B. Facilities – D. Wurzbacher and W. Banks – Review, discussion, and/or potential action and/or vote;

Commissioner Romano stated that she, Chairman Banks, and Commissioner Wurzbacher met with Mike Gray, Public Works Director, Ed Mello, Interim Town Manager, Steve Bois, Executive Director of the Harbor Commission, and Joan Rich, Harbor Clerk, last week. Mike Gray went over the asset inventory and the infrastructure of the Harbor Commission, and what projects have taken place over the last ten years, and potential future projects. He will update the asset inventory, and the committee will work on developing a 5-10 year capital plan and building a capital budget. Vice-Chairman Junge asked that the boats, trailers, and vehicle be added to the asset list. There was some discussion.

C. Mooring Implementation – W. Banks – Review, discussion, and/or potential action and/or vote;

Chairman Banks had nothing to report.

D. Gould Island Restoration – W. Banks – Review, discussion, and/or potential action and/or vote;

Chairman Banks turned the discussion over to Executive Director Bois, who stated that there is growing support among non-governmental organizations to encourage the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) to stay involved with the Gould Island restoration/remediation for a longer period of time. He discussed having the Town Council ask for letters of support from the communities bordering Narragansett Bay. He also discussed the request of the Shake-A-Leg Foundation, an adaptive sailing program for individuals with disabilities, to establish a summer camp/sailing facility on Gould Island. They are in the information gathering and fundraising stage. There was some discussion.

Vice-Chairman Junge mentioned that the Town Council meeting agenda just came out and Mike Gray will be recommending improvements to the East Ferry landing and wanted to know why the Harbor Commission was not advised of this. Chairman Banks and Commissioner Romano stated Mike had mentioned it during the Facilities sub-committee meeting. There was some discussion.

VII. Liaison Reports

A. Conservation Commission – B. Laman – Review, discussion, and/or potential action and/or vote;

Commissioner Laman discussed the Commission's request to the Town Council to update the Town Right of Way map, which was last updated in 2013, and the draft of a letter he distributed to Harbor Commission members before the start of the meeting. He also discussed touring several of the rights of way in Jamestown with Chairman Banks, Executive Director Bois, and Carol Nelson Lee of the Friends of Jamestown ROW and Roads and cleaning up some of the rights of way, in particular ROW #20, photos of which were included in his draft letter. He asked the Harbor Commission to endorse the requests of the Conservation Commission to the Town Council. There was some discussion, and Commissioner Laman proposed that the vote for the endorsement be placed on the agenda for next month's meeting. A letter was sent out by Executive Director Bois to the abutters of ROW #20 informing them to cease and desist storing any lobster pots, boats, dinghys, or other vehicles, and to remove any "no parking" or "no trespassing" signs. There was some discussion.

Commissioner McCarthy asked if bike racks could be placed near some of the right of ways. There was some discussion.

Dianne Churchill Nieboer of East Shore Road, one of the abutters of ROW #20, expressed her disagreement with the designation of #20 as a right of way. She stated it is unclear what the property lines are and who the lot owner is. Ms. Churchill-Nieboer also stated that the photos included in Commissioner Laman's letter were taken after a big storm and not an accurate depiction of the condition of the area. There was much discussion.

Peter Gadoury of Summer Street also spoke. He previously owned a house on Weeden Lane and stated he had a deed for that property from 1908 granting access through the lot in question to residents of the Narragansett Park plat. There was some discussion.

B. Town Council – R. White – Review, discussion, and/or potential action and/or vote;
Council White was absent.

VIII. Old Business

A. Ft. Getty Engineering Study-Proposals – Review, discussion, and/or potential action and/or vote;

After some discussion, it was decided to have Mike Gray look at the proposals and make a recommendation of which proposal to accept based on his experience in dealing with the two vendors.

B. East Ferry Area Potential Improvements – Review, discussion, and/or potential action and/or vote;

As stated earlier, Mike Gray will be presenting to the Town Council improvements that will be undertaken by the Town in the East Ferry area. The part of the sidewalk that is collapsing in Memorial Square will be repaired, the old ferry landing (not to be confused with the dock currently used by the Jamestown-Newport Ferry) will be improved to be more aesthetically pleasing, and the structure of the wood pile pier will be studied.

Executive Director Bois also updated the commissioners on a potential floating dock that would be attached to the south side of the wood pile pier, studies of which were begun by the previous Executive Director. The New York Yacht Club is going to restructure its waterfront facilities and have a floating, concrete pier that is 11' wide and approximately 120' long, that they are willing to give to the Town for free. There was some discussion and it was decided that further study is needed.

IX. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

X. New Business

A. Committee Reassignments – Review, discussion, and/or potential action and/or vote;

Sue Romano volunteered to be on the Budget subcommittee; Michael Junge volunteered to be on the Mooring Implementation subcommittee; Jessica McCarthy volunteered for the Gould Island subcommittee, and Wayne Banks stated he would give up his spot on the Mooring Implementation subcommittee but stay on Facilities and Gould Island. There was some discussion about evolving subcommittees, and how those subcommittees will be staffed, as the Harbor Management Plan and Ordinance are revised. The subcommittee assignments will be placed on the agenda for next month's meeting.

Vice Chairman Junge left the meeting at 6:24 p.m.

B. Roles and Responsibilities of Harbor Commission Members – Review, discussion, and/or potential action and/or vote;

Executive Director Bois prepared a spreadsheet showing the different roles and responsibilities assigned to the Harbor Commission by the Harbor Management Plan and Ordinance, the Harbor Guidebook, and the Town planning document. Current roles and responsibilities are listed along with additions that he has proposed for the commissioners to consider. There was some discussion, with Commissioner Campbell advising that the CRMC “Red Book” also be consulted, because those rules and regulations take precedence over town rules and regulations.

C. Increasing the number of beach/kayak/paddleboard permits – Review, discussion, and/or potential action and/or vote;

Executive Director Bois discussed the four areas that have kayak racks: Maple Avenue/Sheffield Cove, Ft. Getty, Head’s Beach, and East Ferry, along with the capacity of each. According to Commissioner Campbell, who was the Jamestown Harbormaster for several years, the capacity was based on the beam of the average kayak, the amount of space in the racks, and the number of racks. The number of racks was limited by CRMC. Adding more kayak racks and “overselling” permits, based on the premise that some people get permits and never use them, was discussed. There were also suggestions to limit the number of permits that could be issued to a person or family and that a date of occupancy on the rack should be set. Commissioner McCarthy made a motion to increase the number of permits offered by 25% and Commissioner Romano seconded. So voted: 4 aye, 0 nay.

D. One year lease of approved grace period moorings to wait listed applicants – Review, discussion, and/or potential action and/or vote;

Executive Director Bois stated that 21 mooring grace periods were granted last year for various reasons. He is proposing that instead of having the mooring sit unused for a year that the permit be leased to someone on the wait list. The person could use that mooring for the season and then they would go back to their same position on the wait list at the end of the season. There was much discussion, including how to handle the use of the tackle, who pays for what, and what type of legal agreement would need to be in place. Chairman Banks stated that the concept should be fleshed out and voted on at the next meeting.

XI. Open Forum – Continued (if necessary);


Vice Chairman Junge had left the meeting earlier but returned, and used the open forum to explain why he left. He stated he has been on the Harbor Commission for seven years, and he realizes that he has gotten involved in heated conversations and is opinionated, but before tonight has only been insulted by a member of the general public once. He felt that tonight he was the target of a sexist, rude, comment by another member of the Harbor Commission. He reminded the other commissioners that they all need to think about what they are saying to

each other and how any offhand remark might be perceived by someone else. Insulting another member of the commission is inappropriate and not how business should be conducted.

Peter Gadoury asked for clarification if he can still use on ROW #20 to go clamming. Executive Director Bois stated the town does not regulate activities once water access has been gained, but DEM regulates them. There was more discussion regarding ROW #20.

There being no further business, Commissioner Romano moved to adjourn, with Commissioner McCarthy seconding. So voted: 4 aye, 0 nay.

Attest,



Joan Rich, Harbor Clerk