

**TOWN OF JAMESTOWN
HARBOR COMMISSION**

Approved: 12/13/23

A meeting of the Jamestown Harbor Commission (JHC) was held on Wednesday, November 8, 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 5:00 p.m.

Present:

Wayne Banks, Chairman
Dan Wurzbacher, Vice-Chairman
Sue Romano, Commissioner
Mark Campbell, Commissioner

Absent:

Jessica McCarthy, Commissioner
Tom Alexander, Commissioner

Also in Attendance:

Steven Bois, Executive Director
Joan Rich, Harbor Clerk
Randy White, Town Council Liaison
Bob Laman, Conservation Commission Liaison

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

A. Thursday, October 5, 2023 – Work Session

Commissioner Romano moved to approve the minutes of the work session that was held on Thursday, October 5, 2023, and Commissioner Campbell seconded. There was no discussion. So voted: 4 aye, 0 nay.

B. Wednesday, October 11, 2023

Commissioner Romano moved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, October 11, 2023, and Chairman Banks seconded. There was no discussion. So voted: 4 aye, 0 nay.

III. Open Forum

A. Scheduled Requests to Address

There were no scheduled requests to address.

B. Non-Scheduled Requests to Address

Everyone wishing to address the Commission would be given the opportunity to do so during Open Forum at the end of the meeting.

IV. Executive Director and Harbormaster Report – S. Bois

Executive Director Bois stated that both boats are out of the water and are being winterized. He also stated that he and the Harbormasters met with the Fire Chief and the fire boat captains regarding coordination of the Fire Department and Harbormasters in case of future emergencies. The harbormasters have finished their duties for the season and anyone who has a vessel left on the kayak racks has been asked to remove it.

Executive Director Bois stated the Budget Committee met to draw up a budget for FY 2025, which runs from July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025. The Harbor Management Plan has been updated, and the roles and responsibilities of the Executive Director, the Harbormasters, and the Harbor Clerk are listed in the plan as an appendix. He discussed a summary sent by Foth Engineering regarding the condition of the New York Yacht Club floating dock, and included a proposal from Tighe & Bond in the amount of \$36,000 to study how and where the dock could best be used in Jamestown.

Executive Director Bois stated he met with Tom Alexander, who is the new Harbor Commissioner, and also informed the commission of the resignation of Eric Lexow. He met with the Facilities Committee to draft a 5-year plan. Chairman Banks had a question about the structure of the NYYC club dock and whether or not there was any corrosion. Executive Director Bois also explained the difference between the Harbor Management Plan, the Harbor Ordinance, and the Harbor Rule Book. There was some discussion. Commissioner Romano stated that residents have been contacting her with concerns that people will have to have their boats on their mooring by June 1 and she is wondering what the forum would be for them to address their concern. Executive Director Bois stated that the June 1 date only applies to occupancy of the kayak racks. He has no plan at this time to require mooring occupancy by June 1.

V. Year-to-Date Financial Report

Commissioner Romano is combining the YDT Financial Report with the Budget Sub-Committee report.

VI. Sub-Committee Reports

A. Budget – S. Romano – Review, discussion, and/or action and/or vote;

Commissioner Romano combined the YTD Financial Report with the FY25 budget proposal. She first thanked retiring Budget Sub-Committee member Eric Lexow for his assistance in preparing the budget and helping her get up to speed with the process. She also met with Town Administrator Edward Mello and Executive Director Bois. The budget was developed with the goal of ensuring public access, keeping up with infrastructure requirements, and improving the wait times on the mooring and outhaul wait lists. A capital line item was created that will include improvements for docks and float repairs, and a 10% increase in mooring and permit

rates is being proposed to offset the capital budget. They are also collaborating with different town departments for improvements to facilities in East and West Ferry and Ft. Getty. The budget will be presented to the Town Council for approval upon approval by the Harbor Commission.

B. Facilities – W. Banks and J. McCarthy – Review, discussion, and/or action and/or vote;

Chairman Banks stated he and Executive Director Bois met with Mike Gray to discuss the big picture of who is repairing what facility. Executive Director Bois stated that the lease fees generated from the marinas do not go to the Harbor Commission, they go to the Town, and there are budgeted expenses for waterfront improvements that the Town pays for.

C. Mooring Implementation – D. Wurzbacher and M. Campbell – Review, discussion, and/or action and/or vote;

Commissioner Campbell stated that there are proposed changes in the ordinance as to how grace periods for moorings and out hauls are granted. Other changes address swim floats, the process of applying for a mooring, and defining a vessel in need of a mooring. These changes are proposed but they have not been implemented yet.

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

Chairman Banks had nothing to report. Executive Director Bois is going to ask more towns to endorse Jamestown's request to improve conditions on Gould Island. There is supposed to be a meeting in May, 2024, wherein the Army Corps of Engineers will explain the levels of contamination on Gould Island, risk areas, and mitigation plans.

VII. Liaison Reports

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

Commissioner Laman had nothing to report.

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

Councilor White stated that the Town Council has accepted the resignation of Commissioner Eric Lexow but he will be missed. He stated the Town Council will make a decision at their next meeting whether they will appoint a replacement for Commissioner Lexow from the same pool of candidates, if they are still interested, that were used to appoint Commissioner Alexander, or if they will re-advertise the vacancy. Councilor White also discussed the use agreement between the Town and Conanicut Marine Services of the concrete float where the Jamestown/Newport Ferry lands. There were a few minor issues during the summer that were addressed promptly. The agreement expires December 31, and the Town Council will discuss, at their next meeting, renewing the agreement and the length of time the agreement would be in place.

VIII. Old Business

A. Comprehensive Harbor Management Plan – Review, discussion, and/or action and/or vote;

Executive Director Bois asked the Harbor Commissioners to continue the review process. Commissioner Romano moved to continue the review process of the Comprehensive Harbor Management Plan and take any necessary action, and Vice-Chairman Wurzbacher seconded. So voted: 4 aye, 0 nay.

B. Harbor Management Rule Book – Review, discussion, and/or action and/or vote;

Executive Director Bois explained that the Rule Book is not bound by any CRMC regulation and can be amended at any time. Vice-Chairman Wurzbacher made a motion to send the Rule Book to the Town Council for approval and Commissioner Romano seconded. So voted: 4 aye, 0 nay.

IX. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

X. New Business

A. Sunset Farm Oyster Farm Upweller Request – Review, discussion, and/or action and/or vote;

Joseph Pinheiro and Tony Pinheiro of Beacon Avenue requested a continuation of approval to place the upweller for their oyster farm at Ft. Getty. There was some discussion. Vice-Chairman Wurzbacher moved to approve the upweller at Ft. Getty with the same conditions as are in place now, and Commissioner Campbell seconded. So voted: 4 aye, 0 nay.

B. Assignment of Commissioner Tom Alexander to the Budget Sub-Committee – Review, discussion, and/or action and/or vote;

Chairman Banks moved that Commissioner Alexander be assigned to the budget sub-committee and Commissioner Romano seconded. So voted: 4 aye, 0 nay.

C. FY 2025 Proposed Budget – Review, discussion, and/or action and/or vote;

Commissioner Romano had presented the FY 2025 budget earlier in the meeting. Vice-Chairman Wurzbacher moved to approve the proposed budget and Commissioner Campbell seconded. There was some discussion. So voted: 4 aye, 0 nay.

D. Proposed Permit Fee Increases – Review, discussion, and/or action and/or vote;

A 10% increase in the harbor fees across the board was proposed. There was some discussion as to the last time fees were raised, and it was unclear. Harbor rates from surrounding towns were provided to the Harbor Commission this past spring. There was more discussion. Chairman Banks moved to approve the 10% rate increase and Commissioner Romano seconded. So voted: 4 aye, 0 nay.

E. Allowing Trailers on the Beach at East Ferry – Review, discussion, and/or action and/or vote;

Executive Director Bois stated two over-the-road boat trailers (not dollies) were left on the beach at East Ferry at the end of September. One had a catamaran on it and the other had an approximately 17-foot Rhodes type boat on it. He received complaints about the trailers, but there is no specific prohibition about parking trailers on the beach. Chairman Banks moved to add a prohibition to the ordinance against parking street legal trailers on the beach at East Ferry and Commissioner Campbell seconded. So voted 4 aye, 0 nay.

F. Adding a Second Level to the Ft. Getty Kayak Rack – Review, discussion, and/or action and/or vote;

Executive Director Bois stated the north kayak rack at Ft. Getty only has two levels, while the southern rack has three. He is proposing the addition of a third level on the northern rack, which would add six more spots. He would also like to add a second level on the dinghy rack, which would add four more dinghy spots. He stated that Ft. Getty was the only rack that was at full capacity all summer. There was some discussion over the cost of the project and who would build the additions. Commissioner Romano moved to add a third level to the northern kayak rack and a second level to the dinghy rack, and Vice-Chairman Wurzbacher seconded. So voted: 4 aye, 0 nay.

XI. Open Forum – Continued (If Necessary) – Review, discussion, and/or action and/or vote;

Alek Bronovitsky of Riptide Street addressed the Commission regarding his opposition to requiring mooring holders to have their boat on a mooring by June 1. He has had a mooring between 15 and 20 years, and he has never had his boat on the mooring by June 1. There are too many variables that the recreational boater has no control over, such as boat haulers, mechanics, parts, and the weather. He feels making people have a boat in the water by June 1 could force someone to put an unsafe boat in the water, causing a danger to everyone.

Ethan Brown of Reservoir Circle also addressed the Harbor Commission. He stated that he wasn't sure what the confusion was about the June 1 date because he addressed the Commission last month when he appealed his grace period denial, and stated that commissioners told him the rules were going to change next year and he would have to have his boat on his mooring by June 1. He also stated that it was difficult to find information about proposed rule changes on the Harbor website. There was some discussion.

Brad Boehringer of South Kingstown stated he purchased the Walrus and Carpenter Oyster Farm this summer. He has another oyster farm in South Kingstown. He stated that when he purchased Walrus and Carpenter, he lost the pier permits that went along with the operation. He asked the Commission to prioritize commercial fishing/aquaculture operations at the Ft. Getty pier. Executive Director Bois stated he would also like to prioritize commercial fishing and aquaculture at Ft. Getty. He is going to include this on the agenda for the December meeting. There was some discussion.

Marion Falla of Green Lane wanted to know how the June 1 date for mooring occupation came about because so many rumors are going around town. Executive Director Bois stated that he believes people misinterpreted his request to the Harbor Commission to have the kayak racks occupied by June 1 to mean he wanted moorings occupied by June 1 as well. He stated that was not his intention. There was some discussion.

Joseph Pinheiro of Beacon Avenue brought up the Ft. Getty boat ramp and the water use categories near the ramp. He suggested changing the water use categories near the boat ramp and the outhauls from conservation back to the original designation, which could make it easier for work to be done in that area, such as dredging and installing new infrastructure. There was some discussion.

James Blanton of Norman Road wanted to know if any of the outhaul holders had gotten an email regarding the proposed changes to the outhaul regulations. There was some discussion.

There being no further business, Commissioner Romano moved to adjourn and Chairman Banks seconded. So voted: 4 aye, 0 nay.

Attest,


Joan Rich, Harbor Clerk