

**TOWN OF JAMESTOWN
HARBOR COMMISSION**

Approved: 3/13/24

A meeting of the Jamestown Harbor Commission (JHC) was held on Wednesday, February 14, 2024 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
Sue Romano, Commissioner
Mark Campbell, Commissioner
Tom Alexander, Commissioner

Absent:

Dan Wurzbacher, Vice-Chairman
Jessica McCarthy, Commissioner
Jim Archibald, Commissioner

Also in Attendance:

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

**II. Approval of Meeting Minutes – Review, discussion, and/or action and/or vote;
A. January 10, 2024**

Commissioner Romano moved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, January 10, 2024 and Commissioner Campbell seconded. So voted: 4 aye, 0 nay.

B. Mooring Sub-Committee – February 6, 2024

Chairman Banks moved to approve the minutes of the Mooring Sub-Committee meeting held on February 6, 2024 and Commissioner Romano seconded. So voted: 4 aye, 0 nay.

III. Open Form

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 at this time.

IV. Executive Director/Harbor Master Report – S. Bois

Executive Director Bois stated that the Town is still waiting for a structural engineering report and cost estimate for the repairs to the Ft. Getty pier, there has been a delay due to weather. The Town is still in negotiations with the operators of the Jamestown-Newport Ferry regarding an agreement for using the concrete touch and go dock at East Ferry. Executive Director Bois gave a presentation about the status of Gould Island at the January 24th Newport City Council meeting. The City Councilors agreed to a resolution supporting the Town of Jamestown in its efforts to open Gould and Dutch Islands to the public. There is interest by the Town Administrator and the Town Council to regulate how charter boats are using Jamestown's public touch and go docks. Some charters have been loading and unloading passengers on the outer touch and go docks, which is not the intended purpose of those docks. Executive Director Bois has heard from some boaters that they do not get enough notice of the changes that have been taking place this year and plans on sending out notices via Online Mooring of major changes to boating regulations. The Town Council agreed to the sale of Freedom, and it is on the government auction website. Executive Director Bois is working on hiring another harbor master along with a summer intern. Commissioner Roman stated the Housing Authority had just hired an intern and 75% of the salary will be funded through the Governor's office.

V. Year-to-Date Financial Report

The year-to-date financial report was not available.

VI. Sub-Committee Reports

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

Commissioner Romano had nothing to report.

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

Chairman Banks stated facilities would be discussed later in New Business.

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

Commissioner Campbell stated the Mooring Sub-Committee met the prior week and the results of that meeting would be discussed later in New Business.

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

Executive Director Bois stated the Army Corps of Engineers will have a meeting on May 16, 2024 in the Jamestown Town Council Chambers to provide a summary of the contamination of Gould Island and the mitigation plan.

VII. Liaison Reports

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

Commissioner Larman stated the Conservation Commission did not meet last night because of the storm so he had nothing to report.

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

Councilor White was not in attendance.

VIII. Old Business

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

Executive Director Bois stated that he would ask the Harbor Commission for a vote to hold a public hearing on the Comprehensive Harbor Management Plan at the next Harbor Commission meeting on Wednesday, March 13, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. The draft plan is on the town's website as well as the Harbor page on the website. The notice of the public hearing will also be advertised in the Jamestown Press. Commissioner Romano made a motion to hold the public hearing on Wednesday, March 13, 2024 and Chairman Banks seconded. There was no discussion. So voted: 4 aye, 0 nay.

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

Executive Director Bois stated that he will be meeting with Town Administrator Mello and a Town Council member the last week of February to review the Harbor Management Ordinance. The draft ordinance is also on the Town website.

IX. Correspondence

A. Email from Josh Furtado

Chairman Banks made a motion to accept the email from Josh Furtado into correspondence and Commissioner Romano seconded. There was no discussion. So voted: 4 aye, 0 nay.

B. Letter from William and Mary Brennan

Chairman Banks made a motion to accept the letter from William and Mary Brennan into correspondence and Commissioner Romano seconded. There was no discussion. So voted: 4 aye, 0 nay.

X. New Business

A. Mooring Policy Changes – Review, discussion, and/or action and/or vote;

Executive Director Bois stated he is proposing the following mooring policy changes to improve the length of time people are on the wait list and increase public access to the water:

1. Enforce proof of vessel registration;
2. Enforce 20-day mooring occupancy rule;
3. Must have a registered boat when a wait list person comes in to the top 5 on the wait list. There was some discussion about this requirement due to the length of the wait list in East and West Ferry – a person could be on the wait list another ten years when they get to the top 5 on the wait list;
4. Allow only one 1-year grace period;
5. Promote temporary use system by a wait list person for a mooring in a grace period;
6. No new moorings to private businesses;
7. No new moorings to yacht clubs;
8. Limit number of moorings to 1 only in East Ferry and Dutch Harbor. Riparian property owners must go on the wait list for a second mooring;

9. A person on the wait list for East Ferry and Dutch Harbor can only reject a mooring offer once, then they are off the wait list;
10. A boat must be seaworthy, as determined by the harbormaster;
11. Harbor areas cannot have a kayak or a dinghy on a mooring;
12. Limit a person to two areas on the wait list;
13. A boat owner must notify the harbormaster via phone/text/Channel 16 that the boat is on the mooring for the season.

There was some discussion on these items. Commissioner Romano had a question on the insurance requirement for all vessels, but the Harbor Commission voted to only require insurance for the outhauls. Chairman Banks then opened discussion to those in the audience.

Richard Lawlor of Stanchion Street recommended the Harbor Commission require insurance for vessels on moorings, not just for those on outhauls. He also stated there must be a specific definition of seaworthiness of a vessel. Mr. Lawlor addressed the proposal of no new yacht club moorings by stating that he is a member of an area yacht club that uses the assigned Jamestown mooring, and that yacht club moorings are economic drivers to the town because users go to dinner and shop.

Donald Salisbury of Wickford, who has a mooring in Jamestown, commented about some of the proposed regulations and also questioned how far a mooring can be from shore.

Jeff Boal of Ft. Getty Road commented that the Harbor Commission to be very public with all the proposed rule changes.

Bruce Underhill of Priscilla Road commented he was having difficulty determining where he is on the wait list.

Brandon Sommers, the manager of Jamestown Boatyard, commented that the language regarding owning a boat when a person gets near the top of the wait list should be very specific because it is easy to get a boat when a person is looking in the smaller size range, but when a person is looking at a 60-foot boat it is much more difficult to find something in a short period of time. There are several private moorings located within the Jamestown Boatyard mooring field and feels there may be some pushback to the temporary use permit due to wear and tear on the chain and tackle. He also feels that requiring insurance is a good idea, as most of the boatyards/marinas require insurance. The seaworthiness clause should also address houseboats, and he feels yacht club moorings do bring business to Jamestown, so language should be very specific to address usage of the moorings. Mr. Sommers also addressed the abandoned mooring issue.

B. Public Meeting: Discussion and Possible Action to Order to Advertise in the Jamestown Press; Notice of a Public Meeting to take place on March 13, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. for Proposed Amendments to the Harbor Management Plan;

This item was voted on when it was addressed in Old Business.

C. Use of Town Pier in East Ferry by Charter Boats and Educational Institutions – Review, discussion, and/or action and/or vote;

Executive Director Bois stated that Town Administrator Mello is seeking input in developing a draft set of rules and seasonal fees for the management and use of the two outer touch and go docks and the inner ferry dock after observations last summer that the touch and go docks were used charter vessels and non-profit vessels. There was some discussion.

Steve Land, who is the Harbormaster for the City of Newport, spoke to the Harbor Commission regarding how Newport deals with charter and non-profit vessels. He also stated that Newport had the same issues with moorings and wait lists when he began working there. There was some discussion.

D. Ft. Getty Pier Repairs – Review, discussion, and/or action and/or vote;

Executive Director Bois stated that the estimates to repair the Ft. Getty pier right now are between \$350,000 and \$500,000 from three different vendors, to replace the deck and up to 20 stringers. The material and structural analysis will begin next Monday or Tuesday. There was some discussion about where the funding would come from, and would the repairs be such that it could withstand more storms. Chairman Banks made a motion to move forward with the repairs to the Ft. Getty Pier and Commissioner Romano seconded. So voted: 4 aye, 0 nay.

XI. Open Forum – Continued (If Necessary)

None.

XII. Adjournment

There being no further business, Chairman Banks made a motion to adjourn and it was seconded by Commissioner Romano. So voted: 4 aye, 0 nay. The meeting adjourned at 6:16 p.m.

Attest,


Joan Rich, Harbor Clerk