

**TOWN OF JAMESTOWN  
HARBOR COMMISSION**

**APPROVED:** 6/11/25

A meeting of the Jamestown Harbor Commission (JHC) was held on Wednesday, May 14, 2025 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**

The meeting was called to order at 5:02 p.m. by Vice-Chairman Mark Campbell.

Present:

Mark Campbell, Vice-Chairman  
Sue Romano, Commissioner  
Jim Archibald, Commissioner  
Bob Laman, Commissioner  
Paul Sprague, Commissioner

Absent:

Jessica McCarthy, Commissioner

Also in Attendance:

Jim Heagney, Executive Director  
Joan Rich, Harbor Clerk  
Nancy Beye, Town Council Liaison

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

**A. February 12, 2025**

Commissioner Laman made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of February 12, 2025, and seconded by Commissioner Romano. There was no discussion. So voted: Vice-Chairman Campbell, aye; Commissioner Romano, aye; Commissioner Archibald, aye; Commissioner Laman, aye; Commissioner Sprague, aye.

**III. Executive Director's Report – J. Heagney**

Executive Director Heagney stated that the only outstanding item in the Harbor Management Plan is the sunset clause for the transfer of a mooring to an immediate family member. CRMC is no longer allowing such transfers in any community. Executive Director Heagney stated he has not been able to get in touch with Kevin Cute at CRMC to go over the draft plan. Commissioner Sprague asked what other towns are doing as far as the sunset clause, and only Newport no longer allows transfers to a family member. Commissioner Archibald asked if the mooring permit would then be available to someone on the waiting list, and it would be. Commissioner

Sprague asked if riparian moorings would be affected, and they would not be. There was some discussion.

Executive Director Heagney stated he has also finished updating the Harbor Management Ordinance, but he is not going to submit the Ordinance for discussion until the Plan is approved. There was some discussion about the timeline and when public input should be sought. Marian Falla, of Green Lane, stated she thought there should be public comment before the Plan is adopted. There was more discussion about how the Plan and Ordinance would be presented to the public.

#### **IV. Harbormaster's Report – J. Heagney**

Harbormaster Bart Totten was not available so Executive Director Heagney updated the Commission. The older boat has been launched and is currently at the dock at East Ferry. It will eventually be moved to Dutch Harbor after the ramp to the Harbormaster dock is installed within the next week. The new boat is still on the trailer awaiting installation of the radar. Harbormaster Totten has hired a new assistant harbormaster, Mike Paruta, who is also an assistant harbormaster in Newport, and there will be one intern this summer, Kiley George. The harbormaster and the assistants will be working a rotating schedule throughout the summer, and the intern will be working 3 or 4 days a week. The harbormaster office will be moving to the former ambulance barn on Knowles Court for the summer. Commissioner Romano asked if the expenses to set up the office would be covered by the amount that was budgeted for an office space. Office furniture and internet wiring are already in place, so the only thing that needs to be installed is a land line. Commissioner Romano also asked how much of the building will be utilized. The back half of the building will be used by the harbormasters, and shared occasionally with the Parks and Recreation Department.

#### **V. Year-to-Date Financial Report – S. Romano**

Commissioner Romano explained a cost overrun in the fees, dues, and supplies line. Expenses that should have been charged to the maintenance of docks and harbor account will be reallocated.

Commissioner Sprague brought up the existence of a town fund that is specifically for the Parks and Recreation Department, but he wondered if it could possibly be accessed by the Harbor Department if a maintenance or repair project was applicable to both departments. There was some discussion.

#### **VI. Sub-Committee Reports**

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

Commissioner Romano discussed the timeline to prepare the budget for Fiscal Year 2027.

##### **B. Facilities – J. Archibald – Review, discussion, and/or potential action and/or vote;**

Commissioner Archibald stated that the repair to the West Ferry bulkhead looks great, but there are still some sinkholes on the north side of the pier that need to be taken care of. Executive Director Heagney stated that those sinkholes keep reappearing and there are no plans to repair

them at this time. The East Ferry project to repair the old ferry landing was brought up but there is no timeline for when that might begin.

Vice-Chairman Campbell asked if the pumpouts have been commissioned yet. They are not but will be next week. The West Ferry bathroom is open.

**C. Gould Island Restoration – M. Campbell and B. Laman – Review, discussion, and/or potential action and/or vote;**

Commissioner Laman stated he did not know what the date is yet for the June meeting. The RAB will be presenting what remediation needs to be done at that meeting.

**VII. Liaison Reports**

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

The Conservation Commission has gotten a lot of feedback from people who do not want to have Gould Island opened up for public use because they would like it to be kept strictly as a wildlife sanctuary. It is currently deeded as a wildlife sanctuary. The Audubon Society, in particular, is concerned because Gould Island is on the migratory route. Commissioner Laman stated the Conservation Commission is trying to put together a group to study the impact of public use on the birds and other wildlife on Gould Island.

The Conservation Commission is also involved in discussions about RIDOT plans for the Great Creek bridge. It could potentially be reconstructed in 2029, and the state is looking for feedback from Jamestown. One of the other conservation commissioners was told that the state will do what Jamestown wants to do as far as plans for a repaired or completely new bridge. Commissioner Laman thinks there should be a coordinated effort between the Harbor and Conservation Commissions to elicit feedback from the public.

Vice-Chairman Campbell brought up Gould Island again to confirm that the Harbor and Conservation Commissions, as well as the Town Council, are taking a wait and see attitude about allowing recreation on Gould Island. Once the Army Corps of Engineers finishes their hazardous waste remediation, the State must also do their own study to address the public safety issues on the island. There is no money in their budget this year or next for such a study. Commissioner Romano asked what the deed states as far as what the use of Gould Island is to be. The deed states it is to be used as a wildlife refuge.

**B. Town Council – N. Beye – Review, discussion, and/or potential action and/or vote;**

Town Council President Nancy Beye introduced herself as the new Town Council Liaison to the Harbor Commission. She stated three candidates for the vacancy on the Harbor Commission were interviewed at the last Town Council meeting, and the council may vote to fill the vacancy at the next meeting Monday night.

Vice-Chairman Campbell asked President Beye to bring information from the Town Council meetings as it relates to the Harbor Commission. There was some discussion.

## **VIII. Old Business**

### **A. Liability Insurance Requirements for Mooring Permit Holders – Review, discussion, and/or potential action and/or vote;**

Executive Director Heagney stated that he ran a report after the last meeting to show how many Class 3 mooring permit holders did not have liability insurance, and only 5 permit holders did not have insurance listed for their vessels. Vice-Chairman Campbell clarified they are discussing Class 3 moorings, of which there are 315 permitted. There was some discussion. Commissioner Romano asked about transient moorings, but the only transient moorings in Jamestown waters are leased by the marinas, and they all require insurance for vessels occupying a transient mooring. Executive Director Heagney stated that during a meeting with other harbor masters from the surrounding communities, he discovered that only Newport requires liability insurance for private moorings. Commissioner Sprague pointed out that the state does not require liability insurance when you register a vessel. There was more discussion about what the minimum size is for registering a boat and insurance requirements.

Commissioner Romano made a motion to require liability insurance for Class 3 mooring permit holders and was seconded by Commissioner Sprague. There was more discussion about including riparian mooring permit holders and how the insurance requirement would be reported in Online Mooring. Tony Pinheiro, of Beacon Avenue, asked how insurance requirements would be enforced for guest moorings. The motion was amended to state that non-commercial mooring permit holders, Riparian and Class 3, in Jamestown are required to have liability insurance to state-registered vessels. Commissioner Sprague then made a motion that all non-commercial mooring permit holders in Jamestown are required to have liability insurance for their vessel, if it is required to be registered by the state, and was seconded by Commissioner Laman. There was no further discussion. So voted on the original motion that would require liability insurance for Class 3 mooring permit holders: Vice-Chairman Campbell, aye; Commissioner Romano, aye; Commissioner Archibald, aye; Commissioner Laman, aye; Commissioner Sprague, aye. So voted on the amended motion: Vice-Chairman Campbell, aye; Commissioner Romano, aye; Commissioner Archibald, aye; Commissioner Laman, aye; Commissioner Sprague, aye.

### **B. Request of Antonio Pinheiro to defer payment of permit fees until later in the Season – Review, discussion, and/or potential action and/or vote;**

Vice-Chairman Campbell opened the discussion by asking Executive Director Heagney if any other aquafarmers/commercial permit holders had asked to defer payment, and no one else has. Commissioner Romano stated she had asked a commercial fisherman who has an outhaul permit if he needed to defer payment of the fees, and he replied that he budgets for that. There was some discussion, including the fact that if one person got an exception then more people could ask for an exception. Commissioner Romano made a motion that no changes be made to the renewal period for permit fees and was seconded by Commissioner Archibald. So voted: Vice-Chairman Campbell, aye; Commissioner Romano, aye, Commissioner Archibald, aye; Commissioner Layman, aye; Commissioner Sprague, nay.

**IX. Correspondence – None at this time.**

**X. New Business**

**A. Nomination and Selection of New Harbor Commission Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson – Review, discussion, and/or potential action and/or vote;**

Commissioner Laman nominated Vice-Chairman Campbell for Chairman and was seconded by Commissioner Romano. So voted: Vice-Chairman Campbell, aye; Commissioner Romano, aye; Commissioner Archibald, aye; Commissioner Laman, aye; Commissioner Sprague, aye.

Commissioner Archibald nominated Commissioner Romano for Vice-Chair, but there was no second. Chairman Campbell then nominated Commissioner Laman. There was some discussion, as Commissioner Laman is already serving as Chairman of the Conservation Commission. It was pointed out that the Vice-Chair does not automatically become the Chair if the position is vacant. Commissioner Sprague stated he thought it would be a conflict of interest for Commissioner Laman to be the Chair of Conservation and Vice-Chair of Harbor because the two commissions often meld together in discussions. Commissioner Romano pointed out Commissioner Laman could recuse himself in those cases. There was more discussion. So voted: Chairman Campbell, aye; Commissioner Romano, aye; Commissioner Archibald, aye; Commissioner Laman, aye; Commissioner Sprague, nay.

**B. Wait List Opportunities – Review, discussion, and/or potential action and/or vote;**

Executive Director Heagney started by saying that 19 mooring permits turned over during the off-season. The process of reassigning the permits, however, becomes onerous because there are some people at the top of the wait list who have been there for some time, and they decline a mooring permit when offered. The Harbor Management Plan does not address the issue of how long someone can be on the wait list and how many times someone can say “no thank you” to a permit offer. Commissioner Romano asked if it would be addressed in the Ordinance, but it is not currently. Executive Director Heagney would like it to be addressed.

In his meeting with the other harbormasters last week, Executive Director Heagney asked what their wait list policies are. Some towns remove a person from the wait list entirely if they decline a mooring offer, in other towns, the person goes to the bottom of the wait list. Jamestown is the only town that allows wait list occupants to maintain their wait list position when they decline a mooring offer. There was some discussion. Harbor Clerk Rich stated that four people in the top 6 on the wait list in Dutch Harbor have been offered moorings multiple times and declined every time. It slows down the process of offering permits because the wait listed person is given 72 hours to reply yes or no to the offer. Commissioner Romano stated that Newport has opened up a mooring field for smaller boats and asked if something like that could work for Jamestown, but there is currently no space available for such a mooring field.

Executive Director Heagney discussed the five mooring zones around Jamestown that are open to Class 3 (non-riparian) mooring permits. Within two of the zones there are different mooring fields, some of which don't have any moorings in them. For example, within Zone E (Head's Beach), there are five different mooring fields. Executive Director Heagney is working with

Online Mooring this year to add the 17 different mooring fields so people can choose which mooring field, within a particular zone, they would like to be wait listed for. Some of the mooring fields are off of rights of way, so access could be difficult for some people, but for others, they could have a mooring tomorrow. Commissioner Sprague mentioned that parking could be an issue at some of the rights of way. There was some discussion. Executive Director Heagney asked the Harbor Commission if there should be a one or two strike policy for declining a mooring permit so it can be incorporated into the plan and ordinance. There was some discussion about how long a person has to get a boat if they accept a mooring permit. Vice-Chairman Laman made a motion that if a person declines a mooring offer, they will go to the bottom of the wait list, and it was seconded by Chairman Campbell. There was no discussion. So voted: Chairman Campbell, aye; Vice-Chairman Laman, aye, Commissioner Romano, aye; Commissioner Archibald, aye; Commissioner Sprague, aye.

**C. Draft Letter from Sail Newport to Rear Admiral Platt, USCG First District Commander regarding Narragansett Bay Buoys – Review, discussion, and/or potential action and/or vote;**

Executive Director Heagney asked if everyone had gotten a chance to read the letter contained in their packet regarding the potential removal, by the Coast Guard, of aids to navigation around Narragansett Bay. There was some discussion about the timeline because the Coast Guard has a deadline of June 13 for public comment. Executive Director Heagney had asked the Town Administrator, Edward Mello, what the role of the Harbor Commission should be for this request, and his response was one letter from the Town Council, at the request of the Harbor Commission, is sufficient. Executive Director Heagney had a chart of Narragansett Bay with pins identifying the buoys Sail Newport had identified that should not be removed. He asked if there were other buoys the commissioners felt should be included in the list to keep. There was more discussion as to the scope of the letter, and consensus that the letter from the commission should be limited to those buoys in Jamestown waters. Commissioner Sprague made a motion to have Executive Director Heagney draft a letter to the Town Council that would be forwarded to them after approval by the Town Administrator, and it was seconded by Commissioner Romano. There was no more discussion. So voted: Chairman Campbell, aye; Vice-Chairman Laman, aye; Commissioner Romano, aye; Commissioner Archibald, aye; Commissioner Sprague, aye.

**XI. Open Forum**

**A. Scheduled Requests to Address – None scheduled at this time;**

**B. Non-Scheduled Requests to Address**

John Potter, of Narragansett Avenue, had suggestions for posting the draft plan and ordinance on the Harbor page of the Town website. What is currently on the page is confusing and unclear as to what is being revised.

Marian Falla, of Green Lane, stated that during the Fort Getty presentation, someone brought up adding a touch and go dock there, and she asked if it was something that could be put on a future agenda for the Harbor Commission to discuss, or perhaps discuss it jointly with the Recreation Department. She thinks it is a good idea to have a touch and go dock there. There

was some discussion. Everyone agreed it would be a great idea to have a touch and go dock near the boat ramp and it has been discussed in the past, but there are always the issues that it is near a conservation zone and who is going to pay for it.

Tony Pinheiro, of Beacon Avenue, suggested filing an application with CRMC for maintenance of the existing boat ramp. There was some discussion. Executive Director Heagney recently met with Carlos Pena, who had done a study of the ramp for the previous Executive Director, and he suggested moving the ramp to the other side of the causeway where it would not be in a conservation area. There was more discussion. This item will be placed on the agenda for the next meeting for further discussion.

Chairman Campbell listed the items that had been discussed during the meeting, and it is a long list. He wants to know, what is the charter of the Harbor Commission and what is their role in the town? He will do the research, and stated the Harbor Commission needs to focus on doing what it is supposed to be doing.

There being no further business, Commissioner Romano made a motion to adjourn and was seconded by Commissioner Sprague. So voted: Chairman Campbell, aye; Vice-Chairman Laman, aye; Commissioner Romano, aye; Commissioner Archibald, aye; Commissioner Sprague, aye. The meeting adjourned at 6:52 p.m.

Attest,



---

Joan Rich, Harbor Clerk