

MINUTES OF WATERWAYS MANAGEMENT COMMISSION MEETING
DECEMBER 04, 2007

A meeting of the Waterways Management Commission was duly called and held on Tuesday, December 04, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was called to order by the Chairman, Gerald Hickey. The following people were present: Robert Metcalf, Roger Race, Warren Hathaway, and Chris Hemingway. Excused were Norman Peloquin and Ira Perry. Also present was Mr. Steven Melo, Harbormaster.

Mr. Hickey reviewed the agenda for the meeting. Mr. Race said he would like to add under New Business a discussion on Rogers Street. Mr. Hickey would like to add the formation of two new sub-committees: 1) to identify any issues that could come up regarding the ACE permits and 2) to discuss needed personnel in the office; these two committees to report back in two weeks in lieu of going into executive session tonight. Mr. Metcalf moved to accept the agenda as amended. Mr. Hemingway seconded. So Moved.

The minutes of the meeting of November 20, 2007 were discussed. On the second page under DRMO, the last sentence should read **Julian Race, Assistant Harbormaster, has applied for and received two laptop computers for the Harbormasters Office for free to be picked up in Groton, CT.** Mr. Hemingway moved to accept the minutes with the change. Mr. Metcalf seconded. So Moved.

Harbormaster Report.

Computers. Mr. Melo reported he went to Connecticut and received three laptop computers; one for the Police Dept. and the other two for the Harbormasters Office. He stated that when the warranty is up the feds put the computers on the DRMO website for other government use.

Storage of Boats at Concordia. Mr. Melo informed the WMC that Concordia has given permission to store the department boats if needed at their site during the winter under our insurance policy.

Old Business.

Concordia's Commercial Permit. Ms. Carol Hill was present and said she has tried to call Ms. Brian Valiton and was told that he hadn't looked at their permit and didn't know when he would have time to read it. She said she didn't get any answers from him; today she tried to send him an e-mail. She has tried to contact him any way she can and told him she needed answers for their customers. Mr. Valiton replied they wouldn't make Concordia take them out of the water. She handed out a copy of the e-mail she sent and received. She said Mr. Valiton states that he might not have an answer until after the new year. Mr. Hathaway said that in the past it was stated that they would receive an answer within two-three months of the submitted application. Mr. Race said that Ms. Hill is trying to do all she can to get an answer. Ms. Hill said that she sends out Concordia's renewals around December 15 but can wait until the end of the year. Mr. Hickey said that he would like to appoint a sub-committee to look into the different plans if Concordia doesn't get their permits soon. He said that we have a business with 167 moorings waiting for the ACE permit and these people are expecting to get moorings but they are not on the waiting list. Mr. Hemingway said that Norman Peloquin would like to be on the committee since he wanted to do a list during the summer. Mr. Race and Hathaway also would like to be on the subcommittee. Mr. Hickey would like to discuss this at the next meeting on December 18th at Town Hall, Room 315.

2007 Financial Picture. Mr. Melo handed out a copy of the F/Y 2007 Financial Summary given to him by the Town Accountants Office. He stated we were able to put money into waterways retained earnings last year after all annual expenses were paid. He stated the Clean Vessel Act is separate from the enterprise fund, like a revolving account. He said he uses the CVA money to reimburse pump-out related expenses. Mr. Melo said that the CVA grant was only about \$13,000 yearly, but supplemental requests could be put in. Mr. Melo said that he can just get CVA money transferred for reimbursement by going to the Town Accountant, not Town Meeting like retained earnings money. Mr. Melo said that his assistants do not get any health or other benefits from the Town. Mr. Metcalf asked why a breakdown isn't in the Town Meeting reports. Mr. Melo answered that all enterprise funds are approved bottom line. Mr. Metcalf asked if the CVA money could be spent for capital expenses. Mr. Melo said that it has to be related to pump-outs. Mr. Hemingway would like to see the money in retained earnings grow for the major projects in the future. Mr. Race said that ACE would not be able to help clean up the Rogers Street area; he said that it would have to go out for bids. Mr. Hickey would like to make a list of things that have to be done. Mr. Melo said that the Rogers Street house costs approximately \$25,000 per year and boat insurances run about \$13,000. yearly, these expenses could be paid from retained earnings.

Waterways Fees. Mr. Hickey said that a subcommittee met to discuss setting the new waterways fees. Mr. Race read the report with the suggested new fees; he said that it is a tiered structure. He said the past average for residents is \$1.85/foot and non-residents is \$4.01/foot., revenues for residents total \$50,000. and non-residents \$44,000. He said that the tier system hasn't changed since it was implemented in 1991 and raised in 2003. He said after a lot of discussion they have set new rates, the resident rate will go to \$2.60/foot and non-residents to \$6.20/foot, keeping the ratio close. Mr. Race said that the new structure makes the larger boats pay more, the middle boats about the same and some smaller boats will pay less. Mr. Race said that they feel the new structure is fair to everyone. Before the total revenue was approximately \$94,000. now it will be \$122,000., an approximate 25% increase. This schedule will be based on linear feet. Mr. Hemingway said to show the percentage the expenses rose as a comparison. Mr. Race said that the new fees will put us in the middle of the surrounding towns, he said an example is a 25 foot resident boat paid \$55.00 per year and now it will be \$65.00 per year, a 19-foot boat paid \$55.00 last year now it will be \$49.40. Mr. Metcalf said that the length of the boat must be defined as the overall registered, titled or documented length, not the water line length. The dingy rack fee will go from \$35.00 to \$40.00. Mooring fees will be \$30.00 for recreation and \$60.00 for commercial. Mr. Metcalf suggested making more dingy racks. Mr. Melo suggested needing two motions; one for changing the fee structure and second for assigning the new fees.

Mr. Race moved to create a new rate per foot for residents and non-residents and eliminate the tiered system. Mr. Metcalf seconded. So Moved. All were in favor of the new scale. Mr. Melo said that the by-laws state that all boats over 12-feet have to pay a waterways usage fee since 1991. Mr. Race next moved to set the new fees for the 2008 Boating Season: Mooring fees will be Recreation \$30.00 and Commercial \$60.00.; Dingy Rack Fee will be \$40.00 per year.; Waterways usage fee will be residents \$2.60 per foot overall length and non-residents \$6.20 per foot overall length. Mr. Metcalf seconded the new fees. So Moved. All were in favor of the new fees. Mr. Metcalf asked about the launching fees. Mr. Melo stated they this will require State action. Mr. Melo said that the new revenue would be approximately \$11,000. for commercial and \$27,000. for recreational. Mr. Melo said that the total bottom line revenue would be approximately \$226,000. not including tickets, etc.

Mr. Hickey said that the new fees would be presented at the public hearing on December 18, 2007. Mr. Hickey asked if there should be a PowerPoint presentation at the public hearing. Mr. Race said he would set up a presentation.

New Business.

Personnel Subcommittee. Mr. Hickey said that he would like to appoint a subcommittee to research and set up the personnel that will be necessary for the 2008 boating season, the positions that will be needed and the funding necessary. Mr. Hemingway moved to create a committee. Mr. Hathaway seconded. So Moved. Mr. Melo said that it takes time to train someone. He needs someone in January to help with the mailings. Mr. Hemingway wants to be on the committee. Mr. Hickey appointed Mr. Hemingway; Mr. Metcalf will also be on the committee, Mr. Hickey will ask Mr. Perry to be on the committee, if he can't do it Mr. Hickey will.

Mooring Re-Grid. Mr. Hickey would like to put this on the agenda for the next meeting. Mr. Hemingway said that we have discussed this in the past and this year we should prioritize what was discussed in the past and work on that list.

Rogers Street Update.

Mr. Race said he spoke with Mr. Michael O'Reilly and was told Mr. O'Reilly has not heard from the DEP and he didn't expect any answer until the end of the year. Mr. Race suggested clearing the lot but not touching the area where the tanks were that is under the DEP. Mr. Race said he would check with Mr. O'Reilly weekly. Mr. Hemingway asked about the end of Rogers Street and if it could be closed off. Mr. Melo will be checking with Mr. O'Reilly on any progress.

Public Comment.

Mr. Don White said that the presentation at the Public Hearing should be simple and easy to understand. It was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Diane L. Vieira