

MINUTES OF WATERWAYS MANAGEMENT COMMISSION MEETING

PUBLIC HEARING

DECEMBER 18, 2007

At 7:03 p.m. on Tuesday, December 18, 2007, Mr. Peloquin moved to go into a public hearing of the Waterways Management Commission. Mr. Hemingway seconded, unanimously approved. So Moved.

The public hearing was called to order by the Chairman, Gerald Hickey. The following people were present: Robert Metcalf, Roger Race, Warren Hathaway, Norman Peloquin, Ira Perry and Chris Hemingway. Also present was Mr. Steven Melo, Harbormaster.

Mr. Melo explained the establishment of the Waterways Management Commission by Town Meeting and its right to set the rates for and rules of the waterways. Mr. Hickey explained the money for the Waterways Enterprise fund comes from half the boat excise taxes collected and from the waterways fees collected. Mr. Race presented a power-point presentation to show the old rates and the new rates. The new rates will be based on the size of the boats and if a resident or non-resident as defined in the 1991 by-law. Resident boats would be charged \$2.60 per foot, length overall, non-residents would be charged \$6.20 per foot. The different rates reflect the factors upheld in the federal court cases previously decided in Dartmouth's favor. Mr. Race stated that this per foot charge is fair to all people. Mr. Melo said that this system is fairer to all as it is based upon size of the boats serviced, bigger boats needing more assistance, and will bring in more income to the Department. No longer would there be significant jump in rates between a 16 and 17 foot boat. Some boat owners will actually see their rates reduced for 2008 based upon this new policy.

The mooring permit fee was started in 1991. He said that by Mass. Law this mooring permit rate has to be consistent regardless of resident or non-resident status, and based upon the cost to issue these permits. The old rate was \$20.00 per mooring permit. The new rate will be a split rate with commercial mooring paying \$60.00 and recreational moorings will be \$30.00. The commercial mooring permit requires extra office work due to the different billing parties. The manpower needed to mail and process these permits, checking for compliance and proper use requires the additional fees.

The dingy racks fees will increase from \$35.00 to \$40.00 per season. Mr. Hickey said that the goal is to have racks at all landings possible. It has been successful in the past with all the racks being sold out each year. He said that the new cost would cover the permit and the maintenance for the existing racks. The racks have been able to double the amount of dingys stored in the given area.

Mr. Hickey opened it up to Public Comment. Mr. Don White said that his boat is 12'4" what would be it charged at. Mr. Melo replied it would be the 12' charge. He said that they are using the size that the boat is registered with the state and the registered length is rounded to the nearest whole foot.

Mr. Melo said that the new rates would be used for the 2008 boating season billing due March 31, 2008.

Mr. Metcalf moved to adopt the new rates. Mr. Peloquin seconded. All were unanimously in favor of the new rates.

It was moved by Mr. Peloquin and seconded by Mr. Metcalf to adjourn the public hearing at 7:15 p.m. and return to the regular WMC Meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane L. Vieira