

Fairhaven Marine Resources Committee
Meeting Minutes: September 2, 2021

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Present In Person & Via Zoom: Harbormaster Tim Cox, Chairman Mike McNamara, Robert Hobson, Andrew Jones, Selectman Keith Silvia, Eric Dawicki, & Dave Hebert

SEP 15 A 11:49
FAIRHAVEN,
MASS.

Absent: Michelle Potter

Chairman McNamara called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made to approve the meeting minutes from June 10, 2021, July 8, 2021, and August 23, 2021 by Mr. Hobson. Seconded by Mr. Hebert. Motion passed unanimously.

Union Wharf Feasibility Study:

Paul Foley, Planning Director joined the meeting to discuss a draft study done by FXM and Foth Engineering. Mr. Foley stated the Town was awarded a grant for \$50,000 and the Town matched \$10,000 for a total of \$60,000. Mr. Foley is looking for ideas from this committee on how the wharf can be better used. The committee continued to discuss different ideas from parking, to a Harbormaster's Office to seafood retail venues. The committee feels they cannot make any decisions regarding Union Wharf until all the details of the land swap have been shared. Mr. Foley ended by asking the committee members to take a look at his report he sent out and email with comments and suggestion. He is also willing to take a tour of the wharf the the committee members.

Aquaculture Updates:

Harbormaster Cox updated that all three aquaculture sites, Dennis Leahey, Darryl Klinka, and Northeast Maritime Academy, were approved at the Select Board meeting, public hearing, on August 23rd. He is seeking answers on some of the questions asked at the hearing and will continue to update the Select Board. He is waiting on an update from DMF on when they will be surveying the sites. David Bill from Northeast Maritime introduced himself to the committee and stated his intentions and ideas for the aquaculture program he will be running.

Harbormaster Cox updated the committee that he will be planting contaminated quahogs in North Cove within the next couple of weeks. 500 bushel. He is also meeting with DMF, South Terminal, and New Bedford Shellfish on September 14th, to discuss receiving 2000 bushel of quahogs next year that the city cannot utilize. He will update locations and other details to the committee at the next meeting.

Chairman McNamara asked Harbormaster Cox if there are currently any inactive aquaculture sites. The response was no there are not. They are all being actively worked on.

Chairman McNamara mentioned the distance to abutters that are notified when a site is being requested. He thinks perhaps it needs to be extended. Harbormaster Cox confirmed the notices were sent out to abutters within 300 feet of the sites. Harbormaster Cox agrees the distance should be greater. Mr. Hobson asked why the abutters were not notified sooner about the Public Hearing. Harbormaster Cox reiterated that the procedure was followed as written. Mr. Dawicki reminded the committee that this is an advisory committee only and not a decision bearing board. Their job is to advise the Select Board only. He also welcomes the idea of giving the abutters a bit more time before the Public Hearing to know where the sites will reside.

Harbormaster Cox noted that shellfishing is closed in Buzzards Bay per the Division of Marine Fisheries until further notice due to the rainfall during the last storm. 7.86 inches fell in Fairhaven, West Island alone got 8.22 inches, and 9.50 inches in New Bedford.

Harbormaster Updates:

There was a boat fire at Pope's Island at 5:20 on Monday night. 82 foot yacht. The fire was fought for six hours.

At 4:30 this morning a boat was wedged under the Causeway. Tow Boat came on scene and hauled it out. Mr. Hobson asked about damage to the causeway. The BPW will have a team of surveyors going out to look at the Causeway.

Waiting on the update from Foth Engineering on West Island Dredging in order to review, then submit to the Select Board and then also share with the West Island Improvement Association. Harbormaster Cox explained to Selectman Silvia that the Town needs the dredging to be a shovel ready project in order to apply for additional dredging grants. Mr. Dawicki reiterated that there is a ton of grant money out there for this type of work. Timing is of the essence.

Mr. Hobson asked if Harbormaster Cox noticed any issue with the Hoppy's gangway when it was lifted out for the storm. Harbormaster Cox responded that there were some minor issues. They will be doing some work on it next year. He also stated the materials are ready to be ordered for the Hoppy's building. They will be getting to work on that at the end of September or beginning of October. Northeast Maritime offered to donate materials and work on Hoppy's along with the Harbormaster. Mr. Dawicki feels like the building be utilized more. Harbormaster Cox stated what he uses it for at this time. Dave Bill said that it would be a great spot for a working community aquaculture center.

Harbormaster Cox stated that the slip at Union Wharf was leased out back in March per a vote a Selectmen's meeting in February.

He also noted a lot of boats came to Fairhaven with help for safe anchorage during the storms. One boat had an issue with faulty anchoring.

Business Not Anticipated Within 48 Hours:

Mr. Foley said the Harbor Master Plan was extended for the 11th time. It will have to be redone this year.

Harbormaster Cox had one more update regarding Union Wharf. The blacktop was peeled back and took away 9 inches of soil and regraded it. Base coat was put on. Top coat should be done on Tuesday.

The next meeting will be October 7, 2021.

Motion to adjourn made by Harbormaster Cox, Mr. Hobson seconded. Passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm.

Respectively submitted,
Sheri Souza
Recording Secretary

Approved, October 14, 2021

