



**TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK  
Harbor Management Commission**

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**302 Main Street • Old Saybrook, Connecticut 06475-1741**

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**HMC MEETING MINUTES  
September 10, 2018 7:00 P.M.  
TOWN HALL EMPLOYEE CAFETERIA**

**1. Call to Order**

Chairman Robert Murphy called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

**2. Roll Call**

Present: Robert Murphy, Chair; Paul Connolly, Secretary; David Cole; Dick Goduti; Robert Soden; Scott Mitchell, Harbor Master; and Jennifer Donahue, Clerk. Bill O'Shaughnessy attended as a citizen.

**3. Citizens with Business before the Commission**

Mr. O'Shaughnessy noted that since the North Cove dredging he cannot get to the dock with his sailboat, which has a 4' draft, without running aground in the mud. He has never had this problem before. He stated that from his measurement there is only 20" of water extending 6' out from the dock. He also noted that there is no sign to alert visiting boaters to this situation so that they can avoid getting stuck in the mud. Mr. Mitchell reported that he has had complaints related to the inability to reach the dock from other boaters as well.

Mr. Goduti explained that the dredging of the cove is not authorized up to the dock. He added that there are restrictions as to how close to a federal navigation area that a structure can be built, which does not allow for the dock to be built to the edge of the dredged area. Mr. Mitchell added that the dredging has formed a ledge between the dredged area and the dock. Under normal conditions this usually dissipates over time and resolves itself, but so far that has not happened this season. Mr. O'Shaughnessy stated that he will have to leave the cove if there is no way to rectify this situation as he cannot reach the dock to load and unload his boat.

Mr. Murphy thanked Mr. O'Shaughnessy for bringing the issue to the attention of the commission. He noted that it is not a problem that can be fixed quickly, but stated commission members will review the pre- and post-surveys for the dredged area and discuss the issue again at the October meeting. He invited Mr. O'Shaughnessy to attend.

Mr. O'Shaughnessy stated that he felt that boaters in the cove should be sent a letter about the problem so that they could consider their options for the spring. Mr. Murphy stated that the commission will consider including the information in the renewal letters.

**4. Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the regular meeting of August 13, 2018 were considered. A motion was made by Mr. Cole and seconded by Mr. Soden to accept the minutes as submitted. The motion was so VOTED 3-1-1 to accept the minutes as submitted with Mr. Connolly abstaining because he was not present for the meeting and Mr. Goduti voting against the motion.

**5. Clerk Report**

Ms. Donahue's written report was reviewed by commission members. Updates were provided on wait list numbers, those awaiting spots on the wait list, and number of applications received for moorings outside of North Cove. Ms. Donahue also noted that the town website had undergone a conversion. She asked that if anyone notices anything on the HMC webpage that is no longer accurate because of the conversion to let her know.

**6. North Cove**

Mr. Murphy made a motion to add Jeffrey Palazzo of Simsbury, William Porter of Killingworth, Terence Frimmet of Glastonbury, and Bridget Riordan of Old Saybrook to the North Cove wait list. Mr. Connolly seconded the motion and it was so VOTED unanimously 5-0-0.

Mr. Murphy questioned whether wait list people should be offered a spot now for next season. Mr. Mitchell noted that would give them a chance to plan. Mr. Goduti asked how splitting up the wait list by asking some people now and

others later would affect their date of addition to the cove. It was noted that that date is no longer included on the spreadsheets for North Cove holders. Ms. Donahue and others on the commission with access to historical data related to boaters' date of addition into the cove will try to recreate the information so that it can be added back into the spreadsheet. After further discussion it was agreed that North Cove holders should receive renewal letters in early October. Those on the wait list will receive invitations and applications at the same time.

Mr. Connolly reported on the North Cove sign. He had received suggestions from commission members to add the harbor master's phone number, the website address, and how many hours a boat can be left unattended. He noted that the original sign was 4' x 8', but the type face was too small to read. Mr. Soden noted that if the sign was to be mounted in the water again multiple permits and approvals from multiple organizations would be necessary as the sign would be considered an aid to navigation by the Army Corps of Engineers. At the August meeting it was suggested that the sign might best be posted on the Town Dock. Mr. Murphy asked Mr. Connolly to spearhead a final draft of the sign and get some cost estimates. If the sign is to be posted on the Town Dock it will need to go through the Architectural Review Board and the Zoning Commission. Mr. Mitchell also suggested putting a simple sign that says "North Cove" or the website address on the existing pilings in the water.

Ms. Donahue passed out the completed, updated brochure. Mr. Murphy took some for the North Cove Yacht Club launch operators and Mr. Mitchell took some to put in the dispenser on the Town Dock.

## **7. Clothesline**

Mr. Murphy made a motion to add Charles Hummel and Bridget Riordan to the Clothesline wait list. Mr. Cole seconded the motion and it was so VOTED unanimously 5-0-0.

Ms. Donahue asked Mr. Mitchell if the pole number issues had all been sorted out. He said they had. Ms. Donahue asked to compare notes with him to make sure the spreadsheets are accurate. Mr. Mitchell will bring a list to the October meeting with the names of individuals who should receive letters for lack of use of their spot over the season.

## **8. Ferry Road**

Mr. Murphy made a motion to add David Colvin of Old Saybrook and Jeffrey Palazzo of Simsbury to the Ferry Road Dock wait list. Mr. Cole seconded the motion and it was so VOTED unanimously 5-0-0.

Mr. Murphy noted that there are two pilings remaining that are not serving a purpose and need to be pulled because they limit the size of the boat that can be docked in the slip formerly known as the "canoe slip." If the commission decides to rebuild a t-dock, the pilings could stay. Discussion then commenced about whether to rebuild the t-dock or half the t-dock. Mr. Murphy noted that it didn't seem like there was a great demand for the t-dock to be added. Mr. Cole agreed that those on the Ferry Dock are happy with the new dock. Mr. Soden suggested that the permit be closed out with the specification that the commission retains the ability to cap off the sea wall as specified in the permit. Mr. Goduti noted that there has been a public place to dock at the Ferry Road area since 1662. That no longer exists now that the t-dock is gone. After further discussion, Mr. Goduti made a motion to table the t-dock project. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion and it was so VOTED unanimously 5-0-0. In addition, it was agreed that commission members would go down to the Ferry Dock before the next meeting and familiarize themselves with the wall area so that that part of the project could be discussed at the October meeting.

## **9. Sheffield Street Project Planning, Bidding and Execution Discussion**

Mr. Mitchell suggested that a floating dock be added off of the Town Dock to give boaters an alternate area to load and unload.

Mr. Murphy gave a recap of previous discussions of the project to date. Mr. Soden reported he had not been successful in getting more feedback on the project from Sullivan. He suggested the possibility of requesting an RFP so that dock builders could make some creative suggestions. Mr. Murphy queried whether it would be worthwhile to pay for some consulting design services. He asked whether the existing pier is worth saving or if it should be used until it wears out. Mr. Mitchell noted that there are a couple of pilings that need replacing. He also noted that floating docks are nice, but would require a bubbler for the winter months. Mr. Goduti noted that some repairs are needed, but the bigger issue is to decide whether it is time to upgrade to more modern standards, which means moving from a fixed dock to a floating dock. He noted that the fixed dock project is really the second phase of the Sheffield Street project. The immediate issue that needs to be addressed as phase 1 is the land-side elevation and the dinghy dock. Mr. Murphy agreed that the fixed dock will be left for the time being and that the commission will focus on the land-based work and the dinghy dock. He will contact Mr. Rutan to go down and give suggestions for repairs. Mr. Mitchell pointed out that whoever repairs the dinghy dock needs to make it lower. Mr. Murphy and Mr. Soden will review the plans for the floating dock that were not used for Ferry Road to get some ideas for Sheffield Street. Mr. Connolly will speak with Larry and give him a copy of the land-based part of the permit and invite him to the October meeting where plans for the land-based work will be finalized.

## **10. Harbor Master/Dock Master Report**

Mr. Mitchell reported that on July 22 on Ragged Rock Creek two sailboats were in distress and the boaters were rescued by the town police. One of the sailboats has since sunk and is still there with only the mast remaining visible above water. Mr. Mitchell has tried to get the owner to remove the boat without success. The police department has not been cooperative about assisting him to get the owner to remove the boat. Mr. Goduti will call the police department and help to resolve the situation.

Mr. Mitchell reported that he has called Dan Rutan three times to see if he is willing to pull the moorings from North Cove in early November as he has done in the past; he has received no response. Travis is willing to pull the moorings for \$6,000 at the specified time. Mr. Soden noted that the old sign pilings should be pulled at the same time so as not to pose a hazard. Mr. Murphy agreed to follow up with Mr. Rutan about pulling the moorings.

#### **11. Correspondence**

There was no correspondence or Rule 11 requests to be reviewed.

#### **12. New Business**

Mr. Goduti stated that the commission had more authority before Attorney Cronin issued a report stating that it only had authority below the mean high water mark. He disagreed with that characterization and suggested that the commission seek another legal opinion, perhaps from Attorney Royston, as to whether the commission's authority might have been improperly removed from the Town Code. Mr. Murphy asked Mr. Goduti to provide commission members with copies of the documents he is referring to before the next meeting so that they can be considered.

Mr. Goduti again expressed his displeasure over the pilings that are left over from the Ferry Road reconstruction project as well as the price paid for the construction drawings related to that project. He reiterated his opinion that the commission is not functioning properly and is unaware of its charge. Mr. Murphy stated that every commission member has the opportunity to vote freely at all meetings and asked Mr. Goduti to acknowledge that he has had full opportunity to bring his issues before the commission without limitation.

#### **14. Payment of Bills**

Mr. Murphy made a motion to pay the dock master (Scott Mitchell) \$3,000 for use of his boat in keeping with previous years, to pay Olsen's Sanitation \$166 for portable toilet rentals, and to pay Robert Beck \$558.34 for mowing. Mr. Cole seconded the motion and it was so VOTED unanimously 5-0-0.

Mr. Murphy asked Mr. Mitchell to ask Mr. Beck to include the dates and times he performs the grounds keeping work on his next bill.

#### **14. Adjournment**

Mr. Connolly made a motion to adjourn at 10:09 p.m. seconded by Mr. Soden which was so VOTED unanimously 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Donahue  
Clerk, OSHMC