

Sitka Port and Harbors Commission Minutes

Wednesday February 10, 2021 6:00PM
Harrigan Centennial Hall

Port and Harbors Commission Members:

Dave Gordon, Chris Ystad, Shauna Thornton,
Tyler Green, Michael Nurco, Tamy Stevenson
Kevin Knox (Assembly Liaison)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Gordon called the meeting to order at approximately 6:00pm.

II. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Dave Gordon, Mike Nurco, Shauna Thornton, Tamy Stevenson, Chris Ystad.

Assembly Liaison: Kevin Knox joined the meeting at approximately 6:12pm.

Staff: Harbormaster Stan Eliason, Deputy Harbormaster Jeremiah Johnson, Finance Director Melissa Haley. Harbor Office Manager Alicia Soto participated by videoconference.

III. CORRESPONDENCE

Harbormaster Eliason informed the commission of an upcoming seaplane base teleconference, an email with meeting details was sent to all commission members.

IV. AGENDA CHANGES

None.

V. PERSONS TO BE HEARD

None.

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approval of the January 13, 2021 meeting minutes

M – Nurco / S – Ystad motioned to approve the January 13, 2021 meeting minutes.

Motion passed 5/0.

VII. REPORTS

Harbormaster – Harbormaster Eliason made note that the current freezing weather conditions could become problematic to harbor water lines. There would be an auction held on February 19, 2021 for five impounded vessels, if the vessels were not purchased at the auction the Harbor Department would move forward with disposing of the vessels. Eliason would be meeting via teleconference with Professional Technical Services on February 16, 2021 to discuss repairing the Crescent Harbor loading dock, Eliason hoped to have the project completed before the fishing season begins. A pre-bid meeting for the Thomsen Harbor anode project would take place on February 11, 2021, bids would be due by February 25, 2021 with a substantial completion date of October 31, 2021.

City Staff – None

Chair – None

Assembly Liaison – Kevin Knox informed the commission that the vessel haul-out RFP had been finalized and would be sent out soon. An Enterprise fund budget review would take place next week.

Other (s) – None

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

B. Support to approve \$100,000 for FY22 master plan update.

During the January 13, 2021 Port and Harbor Commission meeting, Finance Director Melissa Haley had recommended that the Harbor Master Plan be updated. Haley had made note that some harbor infrastructure projects had cost more than projected in the Harbor Master Plan created in 2012. The purpose of updating the Harbor Master Plan was to increase accuracy of infrastructure project costs and provide an updated timeline for when infrastructure projects would be needed. Haley stated that having an accurate Harbor Master Plan was critical to the future of the harbor system and was hopeful the cost of updating the Mater Plan would cost less than the estimated \$100,000.

M – Stevenson / S – Nurco made a motion recommending the assembly approve an appropriation of up to \$100,000 from the Harbor fund to update the Harbor Master Plan. Roll call vote as follow: Gordon-yes, Nurco-yes, Thornton-yes, Stevenson-yes, Ystad-yes. Motion passed 5/0.

C. Discussion on moorage rates/infrastructure.

Chairman Gordon noted that last year the Port and Harbor Commission had recommended a 5% harbor rate increase for FY21, FY22, and FY23. The Assembly had approved a 5% harbor rate increase in FY21. The commission discussed whether to continue to recommend another 5% rate increase or propose a lesser or greater increase.

M – Nurco / S – Stevenson motioned to reaffirm the previous recommendation of a 5% harbor rate increase for FY22 and FY23. Roll call vote as follows: Gordon-yes, Nurco-yes, Thornton-yes, Stevenson-yes, Ystad-yes. Motion passed 5/0.

The commission discussed how harbor infrastructure projects and future harbor replacements were driving the harbor rate increases. Melissa Haley outlined how postponing projects or harbor replacements can play into future harbor rate increases, harbor rate increases could be lower if infrastructure repairs and replacements could be delayed. Without an updated Harbor Master Plan, it was too early to predict how delaying projects could play into long-term harbor rate increases.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

D. Elect Chair and Vice Chair.

M – Nurco S/ - Thornton motioned to re-elect Dave Gordon as the Port and Harbor Commission Chairman and Chris Ystad as Port and Harbor Commission Vice Chairman. Motion passed unanimously.

E. Discussion Fuel Tax.

In February of 2019, the Port and Harbor Commission discussed initiating a tax on marine fuels as a way to generate revenue to support the harbor fund. At that time, assembly

member, and commission liaison, Knox was unable to find another assembly member to co-sponsor the proposal. Knox voiced that it may be worth revisiting the idea with other assembly members.

F. Discussion on liveaboard garbage fees.

Commission members reviewed monthly garbage rates in Sitka. Currently, harbor liveaboards were required to pay a \$56.29 per month garbage fee, equal to the price of a 96 gallon waste bin at one's residence. Mike Nurco felt that most liveaboard vessels had less people residing on them, and generate less trash, vs a home in Sitka yet were required to pay the same garbage fee. Upland residents also have the option to pay a lower monthly garbage fee (\$37.03) for a smaller sized waste bin. Sitka residents residing on outlying island properties were currently charged a \$27.83 per month garbage fee, with much of their trash getting deposited into the same harbor waste bins as the harbor liveaboards.

M – Nurco S/ - Ystad made a motion recommending decreasing harbor liveaboard garbage rates from \$56.29 per month to \$37.03 per month and increasing island resident garbage fees from \$27.83 per month to \$37.03 per month. Roll call vote as follows: Gordon-yes, Nurco-yes, Thornton-yes, Stevenson-yes, Ystad-yes. Motion passed 5/0.

The commission also discussed the fact that revenue generated from liveaboard and island resident garbage fees do not go to the harbor fund, yet the harbor fund pays for the waste bins located at the harbors.

M – Nurco S/ -Ystad motioned to recommend that revenue generated from liveaboard and island resident's garbage fees go to the harbor fund. Roll call vote as follows: Gordon-yes, Nurco-yes, Thornton-yes, Stevenson-yes, Ystad-yes. Motion passed 5/0.

X. SET NEXT MEETING DATE AND AGENDA ITEMS

1. The next regular scheduled meeting would take place on March 10, 2021.
2. Discussion of Crescent Harbor rebuild-vacate process. relocating vessels, challenges.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Seeing no objection, Chairman Gordon adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:00pm.

Attest: Jeremiah Johnson, Deputy Harbormaster