



Stonington Harbor Management Commission



Special Meeting – October 21, 2019 Minutes by *(Melanie Degler, Secretary)*

1. Call to Order:

Chairman Spalding called the Special meeting to order at 7:04 PM.

Attending: Chairman Spalding, Vice Chairman Diggs, Secretary Degler, Treasurer Crites, Commissioners Johnstone, O'Neill, Rose, Smith, Harbormaster Donch

Absent: Commissioners Anderson, MacKinnon and Assistant Harbormaster Estabrooks

Guests: Scot Deledda, P.E., Stonington Town Engineer and Bill Heiple, StanTec

2. Minutes:

The Minutes of the October 7, 2019 meeting were reviewed. One correction was noted:

- The second #3 Action Item will be changed to read #4.

Acceptance of the minutes were so moved by Treasurer Crites, seconded by Commissioner O'Neill and the motion was approved unanimously.

The following ACTION ITEMS remain open:

ACTION ITEM #1: Harbormaster Donch has an appointment with Michael Peyton, CT DEEP, to review the permits for the four channel buoys located in the north area of the harbor and Mr. Peyton will then submit the paperwork for completion by the Federal Agency. *Still Awaiting a response from Mr. Peyton.*

ACTION ITEM #2: Harbormaster Donch will establish a DropBox account to add his Grid Worksheet for all Commissioners to review. This will be for reference only. This will allow all Commissioners to see an up-to-date version of the Harbor mooring field locations.

ACTION ITEM #3: All Commissioners will activate a DropBox Account to allow them access to view the above referenced Harbormaster Grid Worksheet.

ACTION ITEM #4: Secretary Degler will contact the Stonington Town Clerk's office to further discuss having the 2017, 2018 and 2019 SHMC Newsletters posted on the NEW Town website (previously sent via email to the Town IT department for posting).

ACTION ITEM #5: Harbormaster Donch will physically review both of the Project locations, channel levels, rock locations and public safety concerns expressed at the meeting, after Docko has installed the location markers in the channel area. He will then report back to the Commission at the next meeting.

ACTION ITEM #6: Harbormaster Donch asked all Commissioners to contact him if they are interested in attending with him, the Online Moorings Seminar and presentation of services, on Thursday, October 17, 2019, at the Portsmouth Police Department in Portsmouth, RI.

ACTION #7: All Commissioners are to send their end of year Harbor Surveys to the Harbormaster as soon as possible.

3. Breakwater Alternatives Discussion and Recommendation:

The SHMC recommends that StanTec proceed with Alternative #4 with a complete design to allow support in the future of a walkway/viewing area.

Acceptance of the recommendation was so moved by Commissioner O'Neill, seconded by Commissioner Smith and the motion was approved unanimously.

4. Online Moorings Conference Report and Discussion:

Approval was given to Treasurer Crites to pursue an agreement with Online Moorings for the 2020 Season.

- Treasurer Crites will be the business point of contact
- Harbormaster Donch will be the administrator
- Assistant Harbormaster Estabrooks will be the data point of contact

Acceptance of the next step with Online Moorings was so moved by Commissioner Smith, seconded by Vice Chairman Diggs and the motion was approved unanimously.

5. A special thank-you was given by Vice Chairman Diggs to Commissioner Rodney Johnstone for his eighteen years of service to the Commission and his abundance of local Harbor knowledge, as he is resigning his Borough representation on the Commission.

5. Adjournment:

Chairman Spalding so moved for the meeting to be adjourned, Commissioner Smith seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:07 PM.

Approved:  Date: 25 Nov 2019
Jay Spalding - Chairman SHMC

Attachments:

- Stonington Harbor Breakwater Project Statement from Commissioner O'Neill

SHMC Special Meeting October 21, 2019 Statement on Breakwater Project

I have been involved with discussions on the breakwater repair since the topic was first raised by SHMC. For the last two years have chaired the Breakwater Repair sub-committee.

Long before that, starting in 1976, I was fortunate to have a dinghy outhaul on the breakwater for about nine years and used it to access my mooring which is still just 40 yards to the north. My kids learned to fish there and my two daughters continued that tradition with children that they were sitting for.

The last half of my career was spent as a civilian engineer employed by Naval Facilities Command. We administered engineering projects and specifically hired and supervised the work of outside architect and engineering firms. My comments below are based on that experience.

An engineering study of the breakwater was completed in 2015 and resulted in a preliminary design, a CT DEEP permit and a construction estimate. Now a second engineering firm is working to complete the design but has requested a decision from the Town on the way forward. There are five issues to be addressed.

The first issue with the breakwater is the fact that two areas have been subject to progressive damage caused by waves washing over the structure and eroding the fill between the large rocks. One area is adjacent to the shoreline and the other is almost at the outer end of the breakwater. It is likely that wave energy is focused on these two areas by bottom topography and other effects.

This first issue is the most pressing problem that must be addressed as soon as possible in order to preserve the structure from further damage. It is also the least expensive portion of the estimated construction costs, repair of these areas would represent only about 5% of the total costs of about \$10M.

The second issue is the predicted extent and rate of sea rise over the next 50 years. This will require the addition of a layer of armor stone several feet thick extending from the deck to the toe of the existing structure on the south side. While this work is important and represents over half of the estimated cost, it can be deferred for several years.

The third issue is the expectation as shown on the DEEP permit that repairs will provide better access to the structure including handicap access.

This work would represent approximately 40% of the total. This portion of the project is a noble goal but it could serve to jeopardize obtaining repair funds due to the significant initial costs and the maintenance costs of a walkway in an intermittent surf zone. It also will consume far too much of the limited time available before design funds expire at the end of December.

A fourth issue is the fact that CT Port Authority has informed us that we can expect that the SHIPP grants would be less than \$2M and average about \$1M. The recent publicity surrounding CTPA and any reorganization of the agency might mean that future grants may not be available for some time, if at all.

The fifth and final issue is the expiration of the grant funding on December 31. That deadline was extended from July 1 of this year. There are only ten weeks left to complete the plans, specifications and the cost estimates. SHMC and Town review of these products and final revision and issue of the package will take at least two weeks of this time even if expedited. This is not enough time to complete an as yet undefined walkway system.

Based on the realities of these issues I recommend that Stantec be directed to complete the design for repair of the washed out areas as first priority. The armor stone design of Alternative 4 should be completed with the expectation that this phase will probably be shelved for several years while funding is sourced. Lastly I recommend that design of a walkway, viewing area and handicap access be suspended and be considered for inclusion in a future project.

Submitted by:
Paul O'Neill
SHMC