

HARBOR COMMISSION
MINUTES
October 19, 2005

I. Roll Call

Jim Bartlett	Present
Yvonne DeWindt	Present
Al Dika	Present
John Flemming	Absent
Tom Graham, Jr.	Present
Bill McCullough	Present
Jim Offield	Present
Fred Rachwitz	Present
Jane Ramer	Present
Dick Schiller	Present

Also present: Harbormaster Bob Bokram and City Manager Fred Geuder.

Chairman Jim Bartlett called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

II. Minutes

Motion by Offield, seconded by Dika, to approve the minutes of August 10, 2005, as presented.
Motion carried.

III. Public Comment and Correspondence

None.

The City Manager noted that in the audience was Dennis Wiggins, who is a candidate for the City Council. Wiggins and incumbent Laura Kors (also in attendance) are the two candidates on the November 8th ballot.

IV. New and Old Business

A. Preliminary Harbormaster Report

Harbormaster Bob Bokram reviewed the preliminary numbers for 2005. Total revenue is up about 5.7%, but most of that is from the increase in seasonal dockage rates, meaning that other revenues were essentially flat. Total boat days for transient dockage for 2005 are down.

Bokram said that he received a number of positive comments on the power upgrade to the floating dock and on the improved 2-hour dock.

It was suggested that Bokram check with nearby marinas to see how they fared in 2005.

The final Harbormaster Report will be distributed when it is available.

B. 2006 Seasonal Rates

Bartlett noted the correspondence from the State indicating that their seasonal and transient rates are being increased by 2.5% for 2006. The City Manager noted that the chart for transient rates does not appear to accurately reflect that increase, so it is being investigated.

In 2005, the City increase seasonal dockage rates by 10%, and seasonal moorage rates by an inflationary rate. Bartlett noted that he had heard Walstrom's was looking at 10% increases, and Irish 5-6% increases. Bartlett also noted that inflation is in the 3.5% range.

Yvonne DeWindt noted her concerns with security on the docks, because of a couple of incidents in the early 2005 season.

Al Dika noted that we do not have to follow the other marinas, but we need to have a fair rate. He also noted that while had tried to have rates at 80% of the private marinas' rates, we have probably fallen behind that again.

Tom Graham noted that it is a relatively small number of people who benefit from the use of the dock.

Dick Schiller noted that the Commission usually only looks at the rate side, not the expense side.

Jim Offield asked what the "return" to the City amounted to, and was advised that it is approximately 10%.

The City Manager noted that the City receives an administrative fee, and the Waterfront Fund transfers dollars to the General Fund for the Marine Patrol operation.

Fred Rachwitz said he generally agreed with Dika's philosophy, and felt the increase should at least be the inflationary amount.

Motion by Dika, seconded by Rachwitz, to recommend that City Council increase both seasonal docking and moorage rates by 3.5%.

Ayes: Dika, McCullough, Rachwitz, Ramer, DeWindt
Nays: Graham, Offield, Schiller, Bartlett

Motion carried, 5-4.

It was noted that three members of the Commission—McCullough, Rachwitz, and DeWindt—have seasonal slips or moorings.

The City Manager noted that this vote was advisory to the City Council.

Motion by Dika, seconded by Offield, to recommend that all other Waterfront fees remain the same for 2006. Motion carried.

C. Capital Improvement Recommendations for 2006

Bartlett noted that the City had spent a considerable amount on improvements in 2005, including the electric upgrades to the floating dock, the expansion of the 2-hour dock, and the re-decking of the main dock.

The City Manager noted that the finger piers off of the main dock should be reviewed at some point.

After a brief discussion, it was the general consensus of the Commission to not recommend any major projects for 2006.

D. Fall Transient Discount Rates

After reviewing the list of post-Labor Day transient customers (40' and under), it was determined that the newly instituted discount policy didn't hurt us financially, but it was suggested that the program be repeated to better gauge its impact.

E. Other Comments

Dika suggested we continue to look at whether a dinghy dock is needed. Bartlett said water levels appear to be low enough that a beach will still be available.

F. Regatta Issues

Bartlett reminded the City Manager to communicate with the Yacht Club concerning the skippers' meeting, so that the Harbormaster and Chief of Police can go over any rules that need to be enforced.

The Commission then discussed the issue of how much of the west dock should be reserved for the Regatta participants.

Two schools of thought were expressed. First, if we reserved too much of the space for Regatta participants, are we discouraging transient boaters? The second school of thought is that the Regatta is a tradition, and most people know that it is coming that weekend and avoid the marina anyway.

The question is whether the City continues to request of the State that we reserve the entire west dock (excepting seasonal slips), or whether we go back to the former policy of only reserving the wall slips for Regatta participants. The policy had been changed administratively about five years ago without Commission input.

Motion by Graham, seconded by Dika, to leave the current policy in effect, that is asking the State for approval to reserve the entire dock. Motion carried, 8-1, Rachwitz dissenting.

V. Meeting Schedule

The next meeting of the Harbor Commission is scheduled for January 18, 2006, beginning at 4:00 p.m.

VI. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Frederick W. Geuder, City Manager