



City of Racine

City Hall
730 Washington Ave.
Racine, WI 53403
www.cityofracine.org

Meeting Minutes - Final

Board of Harbor Commission

Thursday, September 20, 2018

4:00 PM

Fifth St. Yacht Club - 761 Marquette St.

Call To Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 P.M.

Present: Mike Fox, Sherman Foertsch, Tom Ryan, Richard Hynek, James Rooney, Lynn Monroe, Tony Herrmann, Alderwoman Tracey Larrin
Excused: Dan Strommen

Also Present: John Rooney, Sgt. Dan Hogan, Tom Molbeck, Jim Poplawski, Bob Jaeck

Approval of Minutes for the August 16, 2018 Meeting

The minutes of the August 16, 2018 meeting were approved as printed. Passed unanimously.

Racine County Sheriff's Department Water Patrol Report

Sgt. Hogan appeared before the Commission and noted there were a few crashes since the last time he reported. Notably one from a charter captain from Kenosha who crashed a 33 foot powerboat near Sam Myers Park. He did note they are preparing for the winter as the season has ended. He also noted he will be working with the Racine County Public Works Department to remove piers the first Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of November, along with the City of Racine Public Works Department to remove bridge pier markers.

Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department Report

Tom Molbeck appeared before the Commission and spoke of the new position that was used in the area of the 5th Street Boat Launch for the kiosk, the washdown station, the ADA chair lift and just general help provided to boaters. He noted the employee, through the DRC Ambassador Program, will cost the Harbor Commission approximately \$2,000 for their share of the seasonal service. He did note there were few complaints regarding the handicap access chair or the kiosk. He noted they are considering advertising on the kiosk screen for additional revenue.

Secretary Rooney distributed the revenue report through August. He noted that revenue was \$24,016.88, of which \$16,990 was the sale of daily passes at the kiosk.

Secretary Rooney also distributed some bar charts based on boat launch sales dating back to 2011. He noted he had spoken with the Chairman of the Commission and the Chairman believes the boat launch sales have been declining in recent years and wanted to share that information with the Harbor Commission.

The information that was distributed shows that boat launch sales peaked around \$50,000 soon after the kiosk was installed, almost 10 years ago. The records that are available from 2011 show the boat launch sales at just over \$41,000 and declining to around an average of \$28,000 from 2013 through 2018. The same pattern of boat launch sales appeared to occur with both daily passes and seasonal passes, as well.

Secretary Rooney noted using some simple linear regression, it could be expected that boat launch revenues could be somewhere around \$26,000 in 2019 with about \$18,000 being that from daily passes. He noted, however, that information includes the drop-off after 2012. If revenues are remaining fairly flat over the last five years, the boat launch sales could probably be closer to \$28,000 to \$29,000.

There was discussion about why boat launch revenues are decreasing.

Lynn Monroe noted the repairs that were done in 2013 and 2014 to the boat launch.

Secretary Rooney noted that in 2013 the boat launch temporary repairs were done by Memorial Day and in 2014 all the boat launch ramps, all 12 lanes, were replaced by the end of June. Those are the 2 years the revenue dropped over \$10,000 from 2011 and 2012. There was discussion that perhaps that construction drove away some boaters to use other public launch access to the south in Kenosha or to the north in Milwaukee County.

Tom Molbeck noted they are looking at the potential fee increases and that will have to be something discussed with the Wisconsin DNR. He also noted there appears to be an issue where people are interpreting using the boat ramp as a parking fee, as opposed to a launch fee. He feels that many boaters are launching and then parking their boat launch trailers down on the gravel, east of Pershing Drive, believing that since they are not parking in the parking lot, they don't have to pay the fee. This is something that he and staff are going to look at very closely with enforcement to make sure this does not occur in 2019.

Racine Harbor & Root River Water Quality Issues

The Chairman noted the issue of the Racine County Public Works north breakwater has not been brought to the attention of the Wisconsin Waterways Commission for funding. There has been no contact by Racine County to DNR staff on putting in an application. He noted this was of great concern to everyone in Racine County that there is not a plan to address some of the deficiencies that were noted in the north breakwater by the consulting firm that was hired by Racine County to assess both breakwaters as well as lake levels and sediment depths within the harbor and around the outside of the harbor.

Chairman Rooney asked the Secretary to draft a letter that could be sent to the Racine County Public Works Committee to have this item discussed before the Committee and hopefully the entire County Board. He believes this issue needs the attention of the full County Board for it to be addressed. There is also concern about some of the safety issues on the existing north breakwater and its state of disrepair.

Reef Lighthouse

Tony Herrmann spoke of the letter that was sent to the Federal Government, including the US Army Corps of Engineers and Representative Ryan, regarding the deterioration of the Reef Lighthouse that was rebuilt only a few years ago. He noted they are still

demanding that a redesign be considered to go back to the octagon shape that has lasted for the better part of a century. He noted he will continue to monitor the response and report back to the Commission. He also made mention of some of the Root River water quality issues and how the City of Waukesha is still looking at discharging treated sanitary sewer effluent into the head waters of the Root River near 68th and Oakwood with a 19 mile pipe, as opposed to piping it two miles to the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewage District. He will continue to monitor what is happening with Waukesha's request and report back.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Lake Level Bulletin for September 2018

Secretary Rooney submitted the report and noted it was information only and no action was required.

Jim Poplawski reported that Salmon Unlimited has provided three life rings along the south pier and that life jackets have been added at the boat launch ramp as well for use, as long as they are returned. He also indicated there is an open house for the Wisconsin DNR Steelhead Facility on October 13, 2018 and invited Harbor Commission members to attend.

Bob Jaeck commented on some potential failures along the south breakwater with some rock settlement.

Chairman Rooney noted those areas were looked at in the report that was commissioned by Racine County to study both breakwaters and understood those areas have been addressed in that report.

Bob Jaeck also noted the #18 red buoy will be moved from the Reef Lighthouse at the end of the season and noted there would be nothing in place until the spring of next year. He noted that would be a concern to the Harbor Commission.

Next Meeting Date - October 18, 2018 at 4:00 P.M. - Harbor Lite Yacht Club, 559 State St.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 P.M.

If you are disabled and have accessibility needs or need information interpreted for you, please contact the Department of Public Works, (262) 636-9122, at least 48 hours prior to this meeting.