

CITY OF PORT WASHINGTON
HARBOR COMMISSION MEETING
Monday September 14, 2015, 7:00 P.M.
City Hall, Lower Level Conference Room

Members Present

Jerry Baganz, Dan Herlache, Jerry Gruen, Sue Knauer, Dave Larson, Tony Matera

Others Present

City Administrator Mark Grams

Harbor Master Dennis Cherny

1. **Roll Call: (Absent: Bill Driscoll)**

2. **Approve Minutes Of Previous Meeting**

Member Baganz had some follow up questions regarding the last meeting's minutes. He asked Harbormaster Cherny if the marina had implemented the 15% discount for tenants who bring in new business or if we were going to include that for next year. Member Matera said that he dropped the ball on getting a memo written and will get that to the Harbormaster Cherny. Member Baganz also wanted to know if any money was donated to offset the \$8,000 cost to repair the fish grinder by the Lion's or the GLSF. Harbormaster Cherny said that he did talk to the groups and never heard anything back. Member Baganz mentioned that maybe we should follow up with them. Member Baganz also wanted to follow up on the Marina Tenants Association's concerns regarding the parking at the marina. Mayor Mlada had said at the last meeting that the Main Street Design Committee was working on a plan to effectively mitigate the loss of parking by coming up with a plan to enhance the marina experience by making the flow and the functionality of the parking lot better than it is now. Member Larson said that they didn't come up with any additional parking spots. Administrator Grams said that they are still fooling around with design concepts. Member Baganz said that he feels that it does behoove the Harbor Commission to be sensitive to the parking for the fishermen and Charter Fishermen Association and feels that the commission should keep an eye on what is happening with the parking on their behalf.

Jerry Baganz made a motion to approve the minutes as written and Tony Matera seconded. Motion Carried.

3. **Monthly Financial Report**

City Administrator Grams said that the revenues were down and also the expenditures were down. Right now we are netting about \$311,886.93 but we still have a debt service payment as well as utilities and wages.

Harbormaster Cherny added that he does anticipate some expenditures under repairs as the lift pump that controls the restrooms at the control building and the pump out system on the fuel pier went out. That could be a \$10,000 repair. The marina just replaced the other lift pump a couple of years ago.

Member Matera wanted to know why there was a discrepancy of \$100,000 from last year to this year in gasoline sales. It's not selling per Harbormaster Cherny. We're selling gas, but diesel sales are way down.

City Administrator Grams said that there is additional money left over in Capital Improvements. The marina was giving \$3,000 of that money to the Denis Sullivan, but there is still \$12,000 available.

4. **Update on Slip Rentals, Boat Launches, And Transient Boaters**

Harbormaster Cherny said the slip rentals are about the same as last year. We still have 20 slips or so that are open. Transient fees are up a little compared to last year. It has been a slow year. April, May, and June were just absolutely zero for us he said. We usually have several \$30,000 dollar weekends, and this year we didn't have one. Overall fishing has not been good this year. Member Matera questioned if we are still getting fish stocked. Harbormaster Cherny said that they are still stocking, but we are getting as many fish stocked as they are to the north and the south. He said that he keeps telling the fishermen to get some lobbying going on. We need to get our state representatives to lobby for more stocking. Member Larson said that he would reach out to State Representative Robert Brooks and ask some questions about the stocking of fish in Port Washington.

Member Herlache asked if we are getting fewer fishermen because we are taking away places for them to park. He mentioned that as he looks around, he doesn't see a place for a guy to park his truck and trailer when it's busy. If we continue to lose parking where are they going to go? Member Larson said that he would much rather be dealing with parking problems than the lack there of, because that means the marina is busy. Harbormaster Cherny said the only other places for them to go is the street and the county lot across from the old court house.

5. **Preparation Of 2016 Marina Budget**

Harbormaster Cherny said that the other marinas in the area are looking at raising their rates anywhere from two to five percent for 2016 as their philosophy is to raise rates a little every year so you don't shock your customers all at one time. Member Matera questioned if we raised rates last year and Member Gruen said that it was discussed but the Harbor Commission decided against it. Member Larson said that we still aren't full, so why should we raise the rates. He said that we are in the black, we still have slips open, and the charter captains are begging us not to, and to him, those are three good reasons not to raise rates. Member Knauer added that there are many tenants so wildly upset at the possibility of the potential loss in parking that they are threatening to leave because of it and if we have a rate increase on top of that, we just might lose tenants. Member Matera said that he doesn't see a need or a reason at this point to raise the rates. Member Baganz said that he was the one advocating for a raise last year as he feels sooner or later the dogs going to catch you. He said that if you have a 2 or 3 percent raise now and a 2 to 3 percent raise later, you have an accumulated positive financial effect. He's not going to oppose, he said, as everyone has raised some very valid points. But, those points when it comes to having to make a 10 percent increase if we have to, will then be difficult.

City Administrator Grams said that next month is when you will have to make a final decision about the rates.

6. **Harbormaster's Report**

Harbormaster Cherny said that it was a slow year. GLSF Derby was successful, Fish Day wasn't as good as last year, and the Lion's Derby was a flop. Poor fishing and weather had a lot to do with it. Labor Day weekend was one of our best weekends last year but this year unfortunately due to a power outage Friday night and bad weather and fog all weekend long, we lost a lot of business.

City Administrator Grams mentioned that the city is still working on getting the USS Milwaukee, a military ship, to stop in Port Washington. Harbormaster Cherny said that they contacted him to do soundings to check water depth. They need 18 feet of water and we have 22 feet of water he said.

Harbormaster Cherny informed the commission that Port Washington is now considered a commercial port thanks to our partnership with Discovery World and the Denis Sullivan. He said that he was asked to sit on the Wisconsin Commercial Ports Association's Board at their last meeting. It was then that he found out that Port Washington is now eligible for additional grant money for the breakwater project thanks to our commercial port designation. City Administrator Grams mentioned that we have good news on the breakwater project. We have finally raised the 1million dollars needed to get the project started on sections D1 and D2. We are also working on sections E and F, which is the entry way, we have 300-400 thousand dollars in grant money for that. We also just applied for a grant for 1.25 million dollars to basically cap the section out to the lighthouse (sections A, B, and C). Things weren't going good for a while there, but they have finally turned around in the last couple of weeks City Administrator Grams said.

7. **Marina Tenants' Comments**

Marina Tenants' Association representative Paul Markworth wanted to mention that the new NO WAKE signs that the marina put up have been doing their job. He said that he has definitely noticed a decline in the amount of boats causing a wake in the marina, but there are still several violators, with charters being some of the worst offenders. He said that early morning and later in the evening hours are the worst times of day for boats causing wakes. Harbormaster Cherny said that the marina is working with the police department and the local DNR Warden to catch violators of the *No Wake* rule.

8. **Any Other Business That May Come Properly Before The Commission**

No Comments.

9. **Adjournment**

Tony Matera made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:00pm and Sue Knauer seconded. Motion Carried.