

## **Milford Harbor Management Commission**

December 17, 2015

### **Board Members, Liaisons & Staff Present:**

Robert Post, Chairman  
Nancy Bennett, Secretary  
James Beard  
Robert Brennan, Vice Chairman  
Raymond Kirmaier  
John Nevin  
Ray Oliver  
Ray Swift, Operations Director  
Bruce Kurlya, Harbormaster  
Lee Henschman, Deputy Harbormaster

### **Board Members, Liaisons & Staff Absent:**

Robert Pacelli  
Brian Bier, Board of Alderman  
Nick Veccharelli Board of Alderman  
R. Post, Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

### **Consideration of Minutes of November 19, 2015**

J. Nevin made a motion to approve the minutes of November 19, 2015 seconded by R. Brennan. The motion carried unanimously.

### **Public Comments:** *None*

### **New Business:**

*Port Authority legislation – Agency Representatives*  
*Pam Staneski, State Representative*  
*Charles Ferraro, State Representative*  
*Kim Rose 118<sup>th</sup> district*  
*Brian Thompson, CT DEEP (card submitted for contact info)*  
*Rob Michalik, DECD*  
*Garrett Eucalitto, OPM*

Pam Staneski introduced everyone explaining that she forwarded the questions from the Harbor Commission to the various agencies regarding their concerns how the new Port Authority will affect the Milford Harbor.

- Mr. Eucalitto, explained that the DOT functions will be split into two agencies, Harbormaster provision will be DEEP and Maritime will be the new Port Authority. The DOT stills hold authority till July of 2016 to allow the agencies to appoint staffing. The new Port Authority will consist of a 15 member Board, they will have a director, staff and funds. The DOT Staff will be moved over to Port Authority. The Port Authority does not report to the Governor, legislature has final say over the Port Authority, the Director reports to the board. Quasi-Public agency, should be more efficient less red tape.
- R. Brennan questioned where the funding for this new Port Authority comes from. Mr. Eucalitto responded that some is state funded, and some coming from the state piers in New London to support the operations. Mr. Brennan explained that the city used to get Pilot Funds and those were taken away, and Milford Harbor Commission felt the loss of up with close to \$74,000. He

expressed concern over the funding. Mr. Eucalitto explained that the Port Authority cannot impose taxes. R. Brennan added that boat owners are leaving state because the cost to keep the boat is more than the actual boat. Mr. Eucalitto explained that the Port Authority will support the industry so there will be more of a spotlight on it. The DOT is a huge operation and the maritime did not get the attention. He added that the Port Authority will bond projects.

- Mr. Brennan expressed concern over dredging and the problems with the agencies that Milford has experienced. Mr. Thompson responded that the DOT dredge monies will move over to the Port Authority. Mr. Eucalitto responded that he is hopeful the same person will be in charge, because of the large learning curve. Mr. Michalik added that the Authority will help address the smaller ports not just the larger ports.
- R. Brennan explained that problem with the Oyster Beds in navigable areas along with seaweed farming and the amount of buoys and they continue to get approved, what is the Port Authority position on these. Mr. Thompson explained that this is more regulatory under DEEP. He then referenced the Blue Plan, which is a plan for those kinds of activities and multiple uses and working to make sure that they fit together, however, they have not convened a working group yet. This group will identify concern ahead of time. Mr. Michalik offered to send a link regarding the new Port Authority, Ms. Staneski asked that he send the Blue Plan link as well.
- Mr. Eucalitto explained that the Port Authority will have 17.5 million dollar budget, due to the demand for dredging, make sure it goes to all the ports not just the large ones, 5million dedicated to the smaller ports. B. Kurlya added that the Army Core approved their project for dredging; they are ready to go in May if the State is behind us how do we get everyone behind us. Mr. Thompson responded that DEEP has to approve the dumping site. Mr. Post responded that the Currituck was sitting idle wasting an asset, this project been in the works for 3 years. Ms. Staneski asked Mr. Thompson to look over and see if we could get it approved quickly so it can be one for May. Mr. Thompson responded that he could have the permit ready for February.
- Mr. Thompson explained that the Blue Plan is that similar in Rhode Island and Massachusetts. The idea is the identify water body uses, recreation, fishing, boating, shellfish, etc. and create a process for GIS mapping to look at all in place to identify areas that or more or less suitable for specific uses. They have some regulatory weight but do not limit areas. He explained for example aquaculture mostly has have been on the bottom and seaweed farming is on top, identify more suitable areas and fit it all together to make it more harmonious. They have not appointed a group to start the process which will take up to 4 years.
- J. Beard explained the Harbor Plan in 1990 helped develop downtown Milford as a harbor destination point. The Pilot funds have been taken away and used elsewhere and two full time people are gone. R. Brennan continued that Milford remains a great asset between Bridgeport and New Haven and a grounded boat in the harbor will cost us lots of business. Mr. Post explained that in the mid 80's the full channel was dredged. He explained that they used to be on a 10-12 year cycle for dredging but now with the tidal action and the various storms are putting us on a 5-7 year cycle. He added that it is not a large amount to remove and if we could get an approved near shore dumping site we could get the core in every 2-3 years and just renew it like an annual permit. The sampling and the testing is very costly and whole process is very frustrating. Mr. Thompson explained that a dredging permit can be processed fairly quickly once a dumping site is established.

The commission thanked the members for coming to answer questions regarding the Port Authority.

#### **Chairman's Report**– R. Post

- Army Core took additional samples. He passed out map depicting more disposal sites to the northwest a bit. J. Nevin questioned what the Commission do if May comes and nothing happens. R. Brennan responded that we must be persistent as DEEP is holding it up.

**Director's Report – R. Swift**

- Budget – met with Mayor Blake and Finance Director, Peter Erodici to go over the budget.
- Public Works is finishing up other project and is still going to be coming to landing to fix patio, and will use the existing blue stone, and replace with a more stable base.
- J. Beard asked about claims, R. Swift responded that there had been some in the past 3 years, however, he may need to adjust the budget and he will let him know when it comes up.
- Most of bubbler system in and the ice eaters have been delivered, so they are ready for the cold weather.
- R. Swift requested that N. Bennett research regarding the history of CHUM to acknowledge them during the rededication of the Gazebo. He explained that Tom Flowers is in charge.

**Harbormaster's Report-B. Kurlya – None**

**Permit Reviews– R. Post-None**

**Report of Standing Committees**

Milford Landing–none

Finance– R. Swift

Savings	\$268,447.00
Checking	<u>\$ 137,969.39</u>
Total	\$406,416.39

Harbor & Mooring- None

Housatonic, Amendments- L. Henchman

- L. Henchman stated he has 8 people on the waiting list. B. Kurlya stated he has 15. Bills go out January 15, 2016.

**Correspondence: R. Swift**

**Old Business:**

Pond Dredging – J. Brennan noted they were surveying the duck pond behind City Hall.

Milford Harbor Federal Channel Dredging – see Chairman's report.

**Motion to Adjourn**

R. Brennan made a motion to adjourn at 8:10 seconded by N. Bennett and carried unanimously. The meeting closed at 8:10pm.

Beverly A. Hayes  
Recorder