

HARRISVILLE HARBOR COMMISSION
Regular Meeting June 2, 2011

Chairman Laatz called the regular meeting of the Harrisville Harbor Commission to order in the Harbor Building at 7:00 p.m. on June 2, 2011.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll call found six commissioners present.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Arthur Laatz, Vice-Chairman Daniel Bruske, Secretary Robert Schemanske, Commissioners: Marion Tartaglia, Neal Gehring, and Robert Sanderson.

ABSENT: Treasurer J. Michael Crick

GUESTS: Deputy Chris Wright & Boy Scout Leader Denise Powierski.

ALSO PRESENT: Harbormaster Jerry Brown; Steven Baksis, and Recording Secretary/Bookkeeper Jeannette Schultz.

Minutes of the May 5, 2011 regular meeting, having been emailed to each commissioner, were presented for approval. Minutes were reviewed. MOTION: Schemanske/Sanderson to approve minutes as presented. Motion passed and minutes were adopted.

Financial Reports:

The monthly summary of accounts for May 2011 was presented and reviewed. MOTION: Tartaglia/Bruske to accept report as presented. Motion carried. Report was adopted and placed on file pending audit.

Deputy Chris Wright addressed the Commission with an offer of conducting a six-hour first aid and CPR training program for harbor employees at a fee of \$50/per person. No action was taken by the Commission.

As leaders of Boy Scout Troops in Harrisville and Spruce, Wright and Powierski explained that the Sea Scouts have sailboats for use in the Sea Scouting program. They requested permission to moor the boats in our Harbor. They explained that they need space to dock two boats. Chairman Laatz explained that dock usage is governed by the Waterways Commission and we would need to get their approval. He suggested that they put their proposal in writing and submit it to our Commission. This Commission would then consider submitting the request to the Waterways Commission.

Harbormaster Report:

Harbormaster Brown reported that:

- We have all new flags at the Harbor, which were provided by Robert & Karen Sanderson.
- Flowers have been planted on the harbor grounds. Any donations of more flowers will be welcomed
- Dredging of the harbor has been completed.
- Mr. Fowler will be sealing the parking lot next Monday. He also agreed to lower his bid by \$75.
- DNR officer, Warren McNeil, conducted a two-hour boat training session with the dock hands.
- The roof has been painted on the gas shack; and improvements continue to be made. There is still a need for pipe to construct new buoys.
- He expressed an urgent need to request a reduction of dockage rates from the Waterways Commission to encourage more boaters to come to our harbor.
- The EZ Energy Savers have still not been returned to the vendor yet. A company representative will be here in 3-4 days to uninstall them. The company is urging us to try them for another winter.
- The kiosk is now attractive and appealing to boaters.

STEVE BAKSIS reported that the season start-up is complete and operational improvements are being made. The new registration forms are working well. The new employees are enthusiastic and doing well. He asked the Commission for permission to purchase additional yellow shirts and sweatshirts for the dock hands. Permission was granted. He also reported that the pest spraying has been completed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Chairman Laatz reported that he; Brown; Baksis; and Commissioner Gehring had met with Paul Peterson from the Department of Natural Resources. Commissioner Gehring added that he is now prepared to formulate a proposal for the various steps needed in the process of requesting a grant for dock replacement. The first request will be to have a feasibility study conducted to determine efficient utilization of space. Phase II would be for construction/replacement. There was a 20-year life expectancy on our docks, which are approximately 25 years old and in much need of repair. It was also suggested that mortgaging our harbor building to secure funding for dock repair/replacement might be an option if we can't obtain a grant. The anticipated cost of new docks is \$800,000.

NEW BUSINESS:

Much discussion was had regarding the dramatic drop in business revenue to date in 2011. Economic trends in Northeast Michigan, especially in the Harrisville area, have deteriorated from 2010. It is the consensus among Commissioners that the current economic climate and the rise in fuel prices are having a continued negative impact on harbor revenue. The topic was once again raised whether now is the appropriate time to communicate the Commission's concern to the Michigan State Waterways Commission and request a variance in the fees for dockage. Commissioner Schemanske moved that the Chairman be authorized to sign and present the following resolution to the Michigan Waterways Commission. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bruske.

WHEREAS, the current economic climate in Northeast Michigan and rising fuel prices are believed to be the catalyst for the drop in overall harbor business by some 66% for the year 2011, and

WHEREAS, the Michigan State Waterways Commission regulates fees for dockage for transient and seasonal boaters for grant-in-aid harbors, and

WHEREAS, the consensus of the Harrisville Harbor Commission is that amending the dockage fees structure to permit the Commission to charge a monthly fee based on the standard seasonal rate divided by three (3) plus twenty-five (25) percent commensurate with the several categories for vessel length¹ for the remainder of the 2011 boating season would serve to attract some portion of those boaters who have chosen not to purchase their seasonal slips for openly stated financial reasons, now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Harrisville Harbor Commission, by way of this resolution, petitions the Michigan State Waterways Commission to grant the Harrisville Harbor Commission authority to set slip fees for the remainder of the 2011 boating season as described in the foregoing paragraph.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Commissioner Tartaglia – Aye
Commissioner Sanderson – Aye
Commissioner Bruske – Aye
Commissioner Gehring – Aye
Commissioner Schemanske – Aye
Commissioner Crick – Absent
Commissioner Laatz - Aye

Given under my hand this second day of June, Two Thousand and Eleven.

Arthur K. Laatz
Chair of the Commission

Next Meeting:

The next meeting is scheduled to be held at the Harbor at 7 p.m. on July 7, 2011.

Adjournment:

MOTION: Sanderson/Gehring to adjourn at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

N. Jeannette Schultz
Recording Secretary/Bookkeeper

¹ Schedule attached.