

Cove Commission meeting notes

Date- 5/9/2016 at 5:00 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Mark Shapiro, Steve Mendes, Ken Powell, and Nicole Rainville.

Commissioners Absent: Barbara Brusini and Bethany Warburton

Staff Present: Lea Anthony Hitchen, Assistant Town Planner and Jim Cullen, Harbormaster.

Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Powell motioned to approve the April 19, 2016 minutes as written. Seconded by Mr. Shapiro.
Approved 4 – 0.

Mooring Fee Discussion

Ms. Hitchen informed the Commission that the Town Council is reviewing all fee charges the Town has and was analyzing the mooring fees; they would like the Cove Commission to make a recommendation. The current fees are as follows: in-town \$160, out-of-town \$300, commercial \$300. The fees were last increased in 2002; are more expensive than Warwick, but essentially EG's fees are the median cost amongst other RI municipal mooring fees. Staff passed out a worksheet created by Cathy Bradley, Parks & Recreation Director, indicating how a proposed fee increase at different increments would affect the budget revenue.

The Commission recommended a small increase for pleasure boaters was practicable considering it would still position EG within the median price for a mooring. The Commission did not want to put the financial burden on commercial fishermen by adding an increase to their mooring fees. The Commission recommended to the Town Council leaving the commercial rate at \$300 while increasing the in-town/residential rate to \$175 (an increase of \$15.00) and increasing the non-residential/out-of-town rate to \$350 (an increase of \$50.00).

The Commission also suggested increasing the dinghy rack spaces from \$50.00 to \$75.00 for mooring holders and \$75.00 to \$100.00 for non-mooring holders.

Mr. Cullen mentioned that there is space in the EG mooring field for an additional five moorings; that could fundamentally bring in over \$1100 in additional revenue for the Town.

The Commission recognized that a marina has the potential to bring in revenue if executed correctly. The Commission discussed a preliminary system for managing it, assumed there would be no mechanic on duty and would perform no shipyard or paint work. Another option would be to lease town land to a professional marina manager. The Town should start logistical discussions that would support marina, i.e. moving transfer station out of the waterfront in order to provide plenty of space for a greater and better use.

RI DEM Grant Applications:

Ms. Hitchen informed the Commission that Town Staff has compiled and prepared three applications to submit to RI DEM, those being for an 9'x24' observation deck at the Barbara Tufts playground/London Street ROW at the bottom of the stairs to the water. The observation deck will provide a viewing area of the cove. The second application is for an aluminum kayak launch at Scalloptown Park which incorporates handicap accessibility; the launch will be located 30' south from the small parking area at the bottom of the entrance road near the grass walking path. The third application is the re-construction of the small Town Dock; the dock was installed more than 30 years ago and is heavily used.

The Commission suggested constructing more dinghy/kayak racks if the funding for the kayak launch were approved; this would bring in more town revenue.

Potential Meeting with CRMC re: Town Marina & Goatscaping:

Ms. Hitchen informed the Commission she is in the process of coordinating a meeting with CRMC staff to include them on the idea of a town marina at the existing town dock; after an initial phone conversation with Dan Goulet of CRMC, he was not aware of any municipal owned marinas, but was willing to help the Town and Commission out however possible. Ms. Hitchen also noted she is in contact with CRMC to incorporate "goatscaping" at the London Street ROW/Barbara Tufts playground area; this project is to eliminate the Japanese knotweed covering the walkway leading down to the Cove and will tie into the RI DEM grant application.

Update re: Town Boat Ramp "Hole":

Ms. Hitchen completed and submitted a CRMC Maintenance Certification request in order to fill in the underwater hole at the bottom of the boat ramp. Once the permit is issued, town DPW will haul in rip rap to be between 6"-12" in size. The work is to happen before the boating season begins; signs will be posted before work begins notifying boaters.

Harbormaster Report:

Mr. Cullen noted he is in the process of marking moorings. The patrol boat is not ready yet; he has been using his own boat. The Town has finally agreed to sell the federally funded patrol boat.

Mr. Cullen described the perfect harbormaster boat as a 24' fiberglass, deep v center console, Yamaha, t-top, with hydraulic steering.

Public Comment

The Commission discussed obtaining a formal timeframe from town officials as to when the Harris building/shack will be removed from the Rocky Hollow ROW; the liability assumed to the Town to not take immediate action is too great. Motion by Mr. Powell to obtain timeframe for Harris structure removal from town officials. Seconded by Mr. Shapiro. Approved 4 -0.

Elections:

Tabled until the following meeting.

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Powell, seconded by Mr. Mendes.

Meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.