



# SALEM HARBOR PORT AUTHORITY

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## MEETING MINUTES: February 3, 2022

A public meeting of the Salem Harbor Port Authority was convened at 5:00 pm via Zoom web conference.

**Members present:** Mayor Kimberley Driscoll, Michael Rutstein (Chairman), Councilor Bob McCarthy - Ward 1, Fred Atkins

**Members absent:** None

**Others Present:** Capt. Bill McHugh – Harbormaster, Seth Lattrell – Port Authority Deputy/Planner, Jeff Cohen - Ward 5 Councilor, Andy Varela – Ward 7 Councilor, Hannah Morri – Sen Lovely’s Office, Bob Blair – Eastern Point Pilots

Chairman Rutstein called the meeting to order at 5:05 pm and outlined the format for the meeting, indicating that members of the public may provide comments during the period of the meeting designated for public comment.

Mr. Lattrell started by acknowledging that they are still searching for a 5<sup>th</sup> member of the Port Authority. An application was circulated broadly, including to the SHPA members.

Mr. Lattrell provided an update on offshore wind. The RFP’s from Crowley for design, engineering, permitting, and environmental are out for solicitation. The PSA is still being finalized. The Crowley/Avangrid communications teams are online and coordinating around a strategy for community outreach. The project schedule remains the same with close on the property scheduled for late summer and a project completion date of Q1 2025. Chairman Rutstein inquired about whether delays in the PSA reflect a delay in the Project. Mr. Lattrell responded that the project is so far still advancing on schedule, but that schedule/timeline will need to be refined when the consultant team is onboard.

Mr. Lattrell provided an update on funding opportunities for the offshore wind project. The current priority has been the \$90 million that is being dedicated to offshore wind ports and distributed through an RFP process by the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center. Additional opportunities being tracked include the state’s offshore wind bill which is under debate by the legislature and federal opportunities. Mr. Lattrell summarized the funding needs of the offshore

wind project, including a breakdown of what is being requested for state vs. federal grant funding. The city hosted a meeting/site visit with state legislative leadership to advocate on behalf of the project for legislative support. There was a discussion regarding comments made at that meeting about removal of the price cap for offshore wind procurement. Mr. Lattrell clarified that there is no direct impact on Salem, but that the removal of the price cap was included in the current draft of the offshore wind bill before the legislature.

Mr. Lattrell shared that he is pursuing funding for technical support around the offshore wind development, including an amendment with the Seaport Economic Council to the existing MHP. One broader aspect of that support is a regional coalition for engaging local leadership. Mr. Lattrell introduced the anticipated format of that regional coalition but acknowledged that more coordination is needed with Crowley/Avangrid.

Chairman Rutstein introduced a motion to initiate a selection process for an executive director and/or additional staff for the Port Authority. After discussion, the commissioners agreed that more information was needed regarding the ownership structure, role of the port authority, and funding sources prior to adding additional staff.

Mr. Lattrell provided an update on the grants being pursued. The \$2.4M MARAD grant was awarded in December. An additional \$2.9 million was awarded to the USACE for the dredging of Salem with thanks to a push by the local port pilots. The city is no longer pursuing an EDA grant due to feedback from EDA directly. Mr. McHugh provided additional information on the dredge need. Mr. Rutstein asked about coordinating the dredging of the south river and Mr. McHugh and Mr. Lattrell responded with acknowledgement that they continue to explore opportunities for coordinated efforts.

Mr. Lattrell shared that the MHP and DPA Master Plan are ongoing. The consultant team continues to make progress on the draft of the document while the state is reviewing individual sections as they are complete.

Mr. McHugh provided the Harbormasters report. American Cruise Lines is still interested in establishing a contract with the City of Salem for expanded cruise access. Mr. McHugh is coordinating logistics and details prior to presenting a proposal to the Port Authority. The Scarlett Isabella has been staging out of the port to service an LNG vessel at the North Shore Gateway. Mr. McHugh is coordinating with the Transportation Director David Kucharsky on parking management at Blaney and indicated that Mr. Kucharsky will be coming to a future meeting to discuss potential signage options. Mr. McHugh shared his thoughts on staffing and reiterated that he sees the greatest value in consultant support in the near term rather than full time staff.

The meeting was opened for public comment. Bob Blair, from Rowley, shared that he feels that the Port Authority needs an operational budget, and supports efforts to get funding and staff support.

Meeting minutes from the December 2 meeting were unanimously approved by all members present.

Salem Harbor Port Authority adjourned @ 5:55 pm.