



# SALEM HARBOR PORT AUTHORITY

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98 WASHINGTON STREET, SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS 01970

(978) 619-5685 | PLANNING  
(978) 741-5685 | HARBORMASTER

## MEETING MINUTES: Aug 6, 2020

A public meeting of the Salem Harbor Port Authority was convened at 5:05 pm via Zoom web conference.

**Members present:** Chairman Michael Rutstein, Mayor Kimberley Driscoll, Bob McCarthy - Ward 1 Councilor, Meaghan LeClerc

**Members absent:** Fred Atkins

**Others Present:** Capt. Bill McHugh – Harbormaster, Seth Lattrell – Port Authority Deputy/Planner, Senator Joan Lovely, Hannah Mori, Alan Hanscom - SATV.

Meeting called to order at 5:05pm.

Chairman Rutstein opened the meeting and outlined the format for the meeting, indicating that members of the public would remain muted until the public comment period, during which each participant will be unmuted by the host and given an opportunity to speak.

Mr. Lattrell provided an update on the Municipal Harbor Plan/DPA Master Plan. The Request for Notice to Proceed (RNTP) is under state review with a decision anticipated on Monday, August 10. Public meetings are scheduled for August 19 for the Harbor Plan Committee and August 25<sup>th</sup> for the public kickoff. Mr. Lattrell provided a summary of the makeup of the Committee and the expected agendas for the meetings. Both meetings are anticipated to be introductory in nature and will be announced to the public within the coming week through notices and a press release. Mr. Lattrell then presented a 16-month schedule for the Harbor Plan which outlines the timing of future meeting and summarized key steps in the process. Among those key steps, Mr. Lattrell indicated that he recently met with MassCEC and RKG associates to again discuss the status of the wind industry in Massachusetts, and that MassCEC is advancing an engineering analysis for select north shore ports to assess the feasibility of the site to support wind industry uses. Mayor Driscoll shared comments on the importance of the plan to Salem and the City's excitement for initiating this process. Mr. Rutstein asked whether the public meetings would be daytime or nighttime meetings. Mr. Lattrell stated that the Committee meeting will likely be at 3pm and the public kickoff will be at 6pm. Both meetings will be hosted on Zoom.

Mr. Lattrell provided an update on the Deepwater Berth assessment and repair. The design of the repair work continues to progress based on the structural assessment completed by Collins Engineering. Collins has provided conceptual plans for a near term fix to stabilize the pier by bracing the concrete span between the bulkhead and key wall. These proposed repairs can be implemented using the funding received by the Seaport Economic Council. Mr. McHugh shared that he was encouraged with the findings from Collins that the carrying beams were of sufficient capacity and could be reused for this repair, rendering the solution more cost effective.

Mr. Lattrell reported that the work on the North Berth is pending approval from the finance department. The initial inspection has been received, but work is on hold until a contract and purchase order are finalized.

Mr. Lattrell indicated that the website work is also pending approval from the finance department.

Mr. Rutstein asked for an update on the conveyance/wharfing agreement and raised a question regarding the environmental concerns highlight in prior reporting from Mr. Lattrell. Mr. Lattrell shared that the negotiations with Footprint on a long-term lease of the property are ongoing and environmental liability is a primary focus for both parties. Balance is needed to ensure that the city does not take on unnecessary liability while also providing Footprint with protections they are comfortable with. Mr. Rutstein asked for clarification on whether the Port Authority is reconsidering the conveyance based on these environmental liability concerns. Mr. Lattrell indicated that the City/Port Authority is still pursuing this conveyance fully, but need to come to agreeable terms on an interim long-term lease of the berth and wharfing agreement for the 3-5 upland acres that would then convert to ownership in the future upon some trigger (i.e. approval of master plan). Mr. Lattrell shared that Footprint's licensed site professional has indicated that the likelihood of encountering contamination in the area of our current work is low, so this is largely a precautionary discussion. Mayor Driscoll added that the future harbor planning efforts need to advance to develop the location of the 3-5 acres, which is the primary reason why we are not advancing the actual conveyance. The lease/wharfing agreement are an interim step until that can be determined. Harbormaster McHugh echoed Mayor Driscoll's comments and added that the priority of this liability discussion changed when we discovered that the pier had shifted. We were initially interested in constructing bollards on the landside of the property which necessitated larger test pit excavation, but are now focused more on stabilizing the structure, so in-groundwork will likely be limited to geotechnical borings.

Mr. McHugh provided the Harbormaster's report.

Mr. McHugh shared that he is coordinating with the City's engineering department on a request by Footprint to discontinue the potable water line that runs to a fire hydrant near the pier. He

noted that there is value to maintaining that line at the pier, so coordination will continue with Footprint to keep the line in place in the interim while the future use of the site is determined. Mr. McHugh shared that due to COVID we are not anticipating any cruise ships this year; however, assuming no major upsets to the industry we have five vessels lined up for 2021. We have also had inquiries from excursion-type businesses which he is vetting further and will share with the Port Authority when more details are revealed.

Mr. Rutstein asked if the recent storms impacted the Blaney Street facilities. Mr. McHugh confirmed that there was no damage as sufficient precaution was taken.

The meeting was opened to public comment. No comments were provided.

Mayor Driscoll asked Harbormaster McHugh to provide an update on access to the South River floats. Mr. McHugh indicated that the gates were opened a week ago and some tenders have used it, however it is subject to tidal constraints, so more vessels are using the facilities at central wharf. All three of the new facilities are receiving use.

Meeting minutes from the June meeting were unanimously approved.

Salem Harbor Port Authority adjourned @ 5:35 pm.