**MEETING MINUTES: June 4, 2020**

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

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

**Members absent:** None

**Others Present**: Capt. Bill McHugh – Harbormaster, Seth Lattrell – Port Authority Deputy/Planner, Jeff Swartz – Salem Chamber of Commerce, Zack Jenkins – Collins Engineering, 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 City submitted the Request for Notice to Proceed (RNTP) on June 1. The RNTP will be noticed in the Environmental Monitor on June 10, initiating a public comment period which will end on July 10. Upon conclusion of the comment period the state will have 30 days to respond. Accordingly, the City is planning to hold an initial harbor plan committee meeting the week of August 17th and an initial community workshop the week of August 24th. Exact dates are to be determined and will be circulated once confirmed.

Mr. Rutstein asked for clarification with regard to the funding and payment of the work being executed through the Seaport Economic Council (SEC) grant, and specifically whether the Port Authority was utilizing its own funds for that work. Mr. Lattrell responded that the work is being paid for by city funds, as the Port Authority does not yet have its own separate funds. The majority of those city expenditures will be reimbursed by the state through the grant funding and the 25% match is coming from a combination of mitigation funding from the power plant development and capital improvement moneys that have been earmarked for the Salem Wharf. Mr. Rutstein asked for copies of the proposals from GEI and Collins engineering for review. Mr. Lattrell will resend.

Mr. Lattrell provided an update on North Berth inspection by GEI. The initial impressions from GEI were that the berth is in reasonably good condition. Site work and inspection by an electrical contractor have been completed and final inspection report is pending. Once the inspection report is received Port Authority staff will determine next steps for repair.

Zack Jenkins of Collins Engineering provided an overview of findings of their inspection on the Deepwater Berth. The inspection found movement of the concrete span away from the key wall toward the water. The exact cause of this movement is unknown, however it appears that the shifting vintage steel sheet pile wall is leaning outshore and pulling/pushing the concrete span. This is causing a bow in the timber pier and loss of bearing load on the shoreside. Additional calculation is needed to determine recommended repairs, however initial plans are to remove bearing on the center sheet pile and restore bearing on the landward side. The hope is that this will allow the timber pier to shift back close to its original position. Mr. Lattrell noted that this concrete span was initially intended to be a short term solution for cruise ship access, however the concern now is that it’s damaging the pier itself. Mr. McHugh shared that it was also never intended for more than pedestrian traffic, so load capacity is fairly limited. Cruise ship gangways typically don’t rest on the concrete span, but rest on the edge of the key wall. Mr. Jenkins asked if there was concern with restoring capacity of the vintage concrete deck to the north end. Mr. McHugh confirmed that this area is not necessary. Mr. Rutstein asked for the cause of the shifting. Mr. Jenkins noted that it’s not clear, but it’s possible that the drainage issues had either caused or exacerbated the loss of fill. Mr. Lattrell noted that we are working to advance a test bit to better understand those drainage issues behind the pier. Mr. McHugh asked Zack to confirm that it’s his belief that there is enough memory in the timber pier that relieving the pressure may allow it to rebound. Mr. Jenkins confirmed that timber does have memory, so it may partially rebound. Mr. McHugh asked if there was noticeable movement since the last inspection in March. Mr. Jenkins noticed that it doesn’t appear that has been considerable movement between March and May.

Mr. Rutstein asked for an update on the conveyance/wharfing agreement. Mr. Lattrell shared that he did exchange emails and speak with Scott Silverstein at Footprint regarding the conveyance, the harbor plan, and the need to dig a test pig on the landside of the pier. Mr. Silverstein noted that he had concerns with the test pit as it may expose Footprint to environmental liability. Mr. Lattrell indicated that the wharfing agreement has an indemnification section which appears to relieve this liability, however he has not heard back again from Mr. Silverstein. Mr. McHugh shared a recent email exchange in which it was made apparent that Mr. Silverstein is not comfortable advancing discussions of the proposed modifications to the wharfing agreement and pier lease until we have advanced the DPA boundary and Chapter 91 process. Mr. Rutstein asked if this was viewed as a reasonable request or an intentional delay. Mr. McHugh and Mr. Lattrell clarified that the initial pushback on a full conveyance prior to the harbor plan was reasonable, however staff feels that the revised proposal is worthy of further discussion. Ms. LeClerc asked for clarification on where Footprint stands on their Chapter 91 license. Mr. Lattrell noted that the power plant itself has a variance from Chapter 91 that came with conditions that are still under negotiation, particularly the original commitment of a crane pad valued at $2-3mil that was to be turned over to the Port Authority following construction. Mayor Driscoll noted that it seems necessary to have a meeting between the City and Footprint and suggested that Mr. McHugh call Mr. Silverstein to discuss. The Chapter 91 license for the development of the +/- 44 acres of land surrounding the power plant will not be reviewed until the harbor plan and DPA master plan are completed.

Mr. Lattrell provided an update on the progress of establishing a website for the Port of Salem. Mr. Lattrell submitted a proposed web map that he and Mr. McHugh developed to Sperling Interactive to formalize their scope of services. Sperling indicated that this web map would result in a considerable additional cost, so Mr. Lattrell is working to clarify whether the web map could be consolidated to reduce cost. If the cost cannot be lowered, the City may consider soliciting proposals from other firms. Mr. Rutstein requested Mr. Lattrell share a copy of the proposed web map with the Port Authority members.

Mr. McHugh provided the Harbormaster’s report.

Mr. McHugh began by noting that it is important to understand the full condition of the Deepwater Berth as the City has a responsibility for providing safe berthage. The first cruise ship is due in Salem on October 14th, however based on preliminary inspection it doesn’t appear that the berth is suitable. Additional inspection and/or repair is needed.

Mr. McHugh shared that continues discussions with the Coast Guard regarding the potential for “hot layup” of cruise ships within Salem Sound. He noted that if a vessel did come to Salem Sound, it wouldn’t use Salem for crew changes, but would require that the Harbormaster plan for any emergency service needs. The details continue to be worked out with the Coast Guard and Mr. McHugh will keep the Port Authority members apprised.

Mr. McHugh indicated that the new peristaltic pump for vessel pump out has been installed. The electrical work is completed and he is awaiting for the final work from a plumber. He is satisfied with the pump and think it will serve the city well. Anticipated to be up and running within a week.

Mr. Mchugh provided an update for other town-wide boating amenities. The new docks at Congress Street are being used and are popular. The Derby Wharf floats are receiving less use however it is anticipated that they will be used more once signage is complete. Signage is being coordinated with NPS. Two more floats are being added at Winter Island to replace previously damaged floats. Anticipated to be completed shortly.

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

Meeting minutes from the May 7th meeting were unanimously approved.

Salem Harbor Port Authority adjourned @ 5:48 pm.