



SALEM HARBOR PORT AUTHORITY

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MEETING MINUTES: November 5, 2020

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

Members present: Chair Michael Rutstein, Meaghan LeClerc, Fred Atkins

Members absent: Mayor Kimberley Driscoll, Bob McCarthy - Ward 1 Councilor,

Others Present: Capt. Bill McHugh – Harbormaster, Seth Lattrell – Port Authority Deputy/Planner, Kathy Winn – Deputy Director of DPCD, Hannah Mori - Senator Lovely, Alan Hanscom – SATV, Conrad Prosniewski – At-Large Councilor, Francesco Sabelli – FSAeronautics, Travis Burczak - FSAeronautics, Graham Hines – Salem Resident, Joe Kowalik – GM Marblehead Municipal Light, Kate Enderlin – Salem Resident, Kim Pappathanasi – Salem Employee, Carol Hautau, Meg Riccardi – Ward 6 Councilor, Pat Gozemba – Co-Chair SAFE, Stan Franzeen.

Chairman Rutstein outlined the format for the meeting and indicating that members of the public may provide comments during the period of the meeting designated for public comment period. Mr. Lattrell provided a roll call of attendees.

Chairman Rutstein called the meeting to order at 5:07 pm.

Francesco Sabelli of FSAeronautics presented a project concept for seaplane operations in Salem Harbor, an expansion of an existing charter businesses he operates out of Beverly Airport. Chairman Rutstein asked for clarification on the requirement for space for takeoff and landing, noting the potential for conflict with other uses. Mr. Sabelli noted that the operation would be just outside of Salem Harbor and that there is precedent in other ports for compatibility of uses. Mr. Atkins asked if support vessels were needed for traffic management. Mr. Sabelli indicated they could be, if needed. Ms. LeClerc asked what the needs are for dock space. Mr. Sabelli noted that any existing 50' dock that would be rated for a vessel would work for a seaplane. Mr. McHugh noted that this isn't a new concept, and that Cape Air is working through a similar use in Boston Harbor, but is working through Coast Guard challenges which would also be present here. Travis Burczak, Mr. Sabellis business partner, added for clarification that there is proven precedent concept in St. Croix of similar size seaplanes operating in busy ports.

The meeting was opened to public comment specific to this concept proposal. Councilor Prosniewski asked for approximately timeline of the proposal and hours of operation. Mr. Sabelli responded 3-5 years and there would be no night flights into the Harbor. Stan Franzeen asked for information on air quality impacts of the seaplane. Mr. Sabelli responded that seaplanes are no different than other airplanes, and they have not determined exactly what type of plane they would be operating. Mr. Burczak added that if they choose an aircraft which utilizes jet fuel, it could be more efficient than 2-3 cars taking a similar trip. He also added that having the propulsion system out of the water reduces direct emission of oil into the water.

Mr. Lattrell provided an update on the Municipal Harbor Plan/DPA Master Plan. Since the Authority last met, a second meeting of the harbor plan committee was held on October 7 and included a presentation by RKG Associates on the market analysis for Salem, with a focus on the undeveloped Footprint property. The RKG study concluded that there continues to be high demand for affordable and age-restricted housing, however demand for industrial uses, specifically water-dependent, continues to be limited to specific one-off uses. The meeting also provided more detail on the Chapter 91 requirements in the DPA, and an overview of the Social Pinpoint online interactive mapping tool that was released to support the Harbor Plan. Mr. Lattrell noted there is another Committee meeting on November 10 and a public meeting scheduled for November 18.

Mr. Lattrell provided an update on the North Berth and Deepwater Berth assessment and repair. The North Berth work is advancing through permitting. Regarding the Deepwater Berth, Collins Engineering observed some additional recent movement of the concrete infill span. Based on the observed acceleration in movement, Collins is modifying their design to try and stabilize the structure further. Permitting has advanced through the Conservation Commission and is under review with Chapter 91 and will be subject to a notification to the Army Corps once a contractor has been selected. Mr. McHugh added that the failure is not an indication of a failing key wall or berth, but a failure of a specific portion of the sheet pile bulkhead. The repairs are anticipated to stabilize the structure to accommodate our existing and future anticipated uses. Mr. Lattrell confirmed in response to a question by Chairman Rutstein that we continue to anticipate having permitting complete by late December and construction complete this spring.

Regarding the conveyance/wharfing agreement, Mr. Lattrell shared that the negotiations with Footprint on a long-term lease of the property are ongoing. Comments were provided on draft conditions to Footprint by legal counsel, however we have not yet received a response. Mr. Lattrell added that these discussions need to ramp up given the observed increase in movement of the concrete infill spans. The Port Authority members voted to send a letter to Footprint encouraging resolution of the indemnification/liability issues in order to advance the upland portions of the repairs expeditiously. Mr. McHugh noted that this letter will be advised by a memo from Collins detailing the observations. Mr. Atkins requested a copy of the letter once submitted for informational purposes.

Mr. Lattrell indicated that a Purchase Order was received for the website, so that work will advance once contract details and schedules can be worked out.

Mr. McHugh provided the Harbormaster's report. Mr. McHugh continues to coordinate with Burke Insurance on details regarding the future policy after the wharfing agreement transitions to a lease/conveyance. Mr. McHugh provided a brief update on the state of cruise ship operations globally and how that may impact Salem as we currently have 4 scheduled arrivals.

The meeting was opened to public comment. Stan Franzen emphasized the success of the public access through Footprint and shared his hope that the connection would continue through the site. Mr. Lattrell agreed that is a priority for the City, specifically through the Harbor Planning process being led by the Planning Department. Pat Gozemba asked if MassCEC was still advancing work related to offshore wind port infrastructure. Mr. Lattrell confirmed that they are advancing that work and planning to present their findings at the December 3 meeting of the Port Authority. Ms. Gozemba added that SAFE is very interested in how this work advances and that SAFE submitted a letter to MassCEC to express their support of the wind industry in Salem going forward. Joe Kowalik added that he and Marblehead Municipal Light would also be interested in advancing wind power in Salem. Councilor Prosniewski asked if there was any update on the pipe beach project. Mr. Lattrell noted that this is out of the Port Authorities jurisdiction, but he can look into updates specifically from the Planning Department. Mr. Franzen asked for clarification on the November 10th meeting. Mr. Lattrell clarified that is a meeting of the Harbor Plan Committee, not the Port Authority. Mr. Lattrell added that the Port Authority Controls and operates the Salem Wharf facilities, whereas the Harbor Plan Committee is responsible for leading the City's Harbor Planning effort. The Harbor Plan is inclusive of the Port Authorities property, but also includes other portions of the Salem waterfront.

Meeting minutes from the October meeting were unanimously approved.

Salem Harbor Port Authority adjourned @ 6:16 pm.