

Minutes of Bay St. Louis Municipal Harbor Commission

Date: Tuesday, December 10, 2013

Location: Bay St. Louis Central Fire Station Training Room, 543 Main Street, Bay St. Louis

The meeting of the Bay St. Louis Municipal Harbor, Marina and Pier Commission convened at 3:00 p.m.

Commissioners Present:

Chairman Lee Seal presiding, J.P. Compretta, Charles LaFleur, Rod Ward, Ken Barbor, Chris Roth, Chet LeBlanc and Mike Hemsley (alternate).

City Officials Present: Buz Olsen, Paula Fairconnetue, Don Rafferty

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RE: November 19, 2013

Commissioner LaFleur moved, seconded by Commissioner LeBlanc, to approve the minutes of the Harbor Commission meeting held November, 19, 2013, as presented.

A vote was called for with the following response:

VOTING YEA: LaFleur, LeBlanc, Roth, Ward, Barbor, Compretta and Seal

VOTING NAY: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RE: November 26, 2013

Commissioner LaFleur moved, seconded by Commissioner Roth, to approve the minutes of the Harbor Commission meeting held November, 26, 2013, as presented.

A vote was called for with the following response:

VOTING YEA: LaFleur, LeBlanc, Roth, Ward, Barbor, Compretta and Seal

VOTING NAY: None

Guest: Jason Chiniche

RE: Harbor Update

Jason stated that a site visit is planned for Thursday, December 19th at 4pm for the Harbor Commission and city officials to take a walk through of the harbor. He also reported that the contractor is approximately 70% complete and the breakwater is complete. The events deck is poured.

He submitted drawings of the electrical plan for the Harbor and Pier for review and discussion.

Commissioner LaFleur inquired about a foam substance floating in the water,

Jason explained that the contractor is using the foam material around the cylinder piles and will clean up the material when the job is complete.

Commissioner Ward stated that a lot of people are inquiring about the status of completion of the Harbor and suggested putting out a press release to inform the public about where we are on the project.

After discussion, it was the consensus of the Commission to form a committee to draft a press release for approval by the mayor and council.

MOTION TO FORM PR COMMITTEE

RE: Harbor Update

Commissioner LaFleur moved, seconded by Commissioner Roth, to form a committee to draft a press release to update the public on the status of the harbor for approval at next week's Harbor Commission meeting and submittal to the city for approval. Commissioners LaFleur and Ward and will serve on committee.

A vote was called for with the following response:

VOTING YEA: LaFleur, LeBlanc, Roth, Ward, Barbor, Compretta and Seal

VOTING NAY: None

Guest: Willie Davis

Re: Harbor Master, Pass Christian

Chairman Seal went around the table giving each commissioner an opportunity to ask Mr. Davis questions regarding the responsibilities and duties of a Harbor Master.

Commissioner Barbor asked Mr. Davis what is the number one issue the Harbor Commission should accomplish.

Mr. Davis stated that it's important to have commercial boats in the harbor, because they bring in the tax dollars. Pleasure boats will rent a slip and sit there. Pass Christian has a larger harbor with approximately 400 slips and he's working with a \$400,000 budget. He has 24 hour security at the harbor. Security is needed, because it makes people feel safe. Also, someone is needed for fueling. He explained that handling the fuel could be a liability with DEQ, so Pass Christian hired a company to work with the fuel. If fuel spills into the water the city is responsible to clean it up and the situation could become costly.

Budget

Mr. Davis stated that Pass Christian did a comparison to see what it would cost to hire a management company compare to having a harbor master. It was determined that a hands on person is needed. A lot of cash money is used at the harbor and you need someone that can be trusted and someone to manage the cash. It's. The pleasure boats and commercial boats both deal with mostly cash and it's easy for someone to take money under the table.

Staffing

Mr. Davis stated that he's working with a staff of 5 patrolmen on 12 hour shifts with 3 ½ days on and 3 ½ days off. The 12 hour shifts yields less man power and less insurance cost. One patrolman and one maintenance person per shift.

Carrying Weapons

Mr. Davis stated that there are felons in the harbor all the time. It doesn't matter if it's commercial or pleasure boats and some of them carry weapons. There's also the opportunity for theft. You don't know what you're going to run into at a harbor. A lot of drifters hang out at the harbor looking for somewhere to sleep. You will need someone at the harbor to move them on. The boats that rent slips at the harbor are worth millions of dollars and are a huge liability. The boat owners are expecting you to secure their property. Mr. Davis explained that he was on the police force before he became the harbor master and was aware of the type of problems that occur at the harbor.

Revenue

Commissioner LeBlanc inquired if revenue made from the harbor has to be sent to the State and the State would then send us a percentage back.

Mr. Rafferty stated that the City has the right to deduct certain operational costs of the harbor, including manpower. Any surplus is then sent to the Secretary of State and he will retain a 75-25% split of the profits with the city.

Commissioner LeBlanc stated that our revenue strengths are slip rentals, fuel sale, storage box rentals and the events deck rental.

Mr. Davis stated that revenue can also be made on the recycled oil bin.

Operations

Mr. Davis stated that he was able to manage the slips through a Quick Books program. The program actually pulls up the harbor and sees which slips are vacant and available for rental. All receipts are handwritten to prevent false claims of payment.

Chairman Seal thanked Mr. Davis for coming to the meeting and for the information he provided.

Guest: Myrna Green, Tourism

RE: Marketing

Chairman Seal introduced Ms Green and requested her input on how best to market the harbor.

Myrna stated that in order to market the harbor the commission needed to set goals and objectives and begin advertising and selling the harbor now. She stated that the Tourism Bureau had pledged support to the Harbor by committing \$5,000 cash, but she was not sure about the cash commitment and would check to make sure, an in-kind match was pledged as well. She also stated that the time to sell is now, and Tourism would provide brochures with information about the harbor including opening date, slip rental information and all amenities the harbor has to offer and distribute brochures in important locations. She suggested offering a grand opening incentive package, billboard advertisement and inquired if a website had been established for the harbor.

Myrna stated that her office is open six days a week and her staff could serve as the information center until the harbor opens. She inquired if the Commission had a marketing budget available.

Chairman Seal stated that he would look into how much marketing money is available.

Myrna stated that once she received information on the harbor regarding slip rental cost, amenities and all other information that would serve as a selling point, she would meet with her advertising agency and begin the process of drafting a brochure. Once, the brochure is drafted she will submit a proof to the commission for approval.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Commissioner LaFleur moved, seconded by Commissioner Ward, to adjourn the December 10th Harbor Commission meeting, there being no further business to discuss.

A vote was called for with the following response:

VOTING YEA: LaFleur, Ward, Compretta, Barbor, Roth, LeBlanc and Seal

VOTING NAY: None