

HARBOR COMMISSION  
MINUTES  
June 18, 2008

I. Roll Call

Jim Bartlett	Present
Yvonne DeWindt	Present
Al Dika	Present
Tom Graham, Jr.	Present
Bill McCullough	Present
Keith McGlaughlin	Present
Jim Offield	Present
Fred Rachwitz	Present
Jane Ramer	Present
Dick Schiller	Present

Also present: Harbormaster Mike Johnson and City Manager Fred Geuder.

Chairman Jim Bartlett called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

II. Minutes

Motion by Dika, seconded by Schiller, to approve the minutes of March 19, 2008, as presented.  
Motion carried.

III. Public Comment and Correspondence

Mike Esposito of Irish Boat Shop (IBS) told the Commission that he apologized again for power loading at Ford Park last year, and that he had reviewed the policies for boat launching with his staff again this year.

Esposito also noted that with the City Manager's permission, IBS had installed a fishing line recycling container at the Ford Park Launch Ramp, and that IBS will service the unit.

Finally Esposito introduced John Booth as the new General Manager of the Harbor Springs location.

Bartlett thanked Esposito and welcomed Booth to his new position.

IV. New and Old Business

A. Harbormaster Report

Harbormaster Mike Johnson reported on a number of items:

1. Flotation Docking had been in Harbor to do their annual inspection, and will be replacing the hinges on the ramp transition.

## Harbor Commission Minutes

June 18, 2008

2. Johnson noted that the dock improvements for the courtesy dock at Ford Park are on order, and Flotation Docking had looked at how they will do this work.
3. Johnson and staff painted boater and public restrooms and installed some new lighting in the boater restrooms.
4. Johnson noted that he and the City Manager had begun re-assigning moorings to get boats “right-sized” to their moorings.
5. Johnson noted that 83 boats were currently registered for the Regatta, and he is working with IBS to get them all in for the event.
6. The Walstrom/Tiara rendezvous is set for July 30<sup>th</sup>, and looks to be a success also.

McGlaughlin noted that the number of boats for the Regatta was up considerably.

Johnson noted that Dave Irish had worked to make this event an IRC National Championship race; Bartlett noted also that this was the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Chicago-Mackinac race, and we might be getting a boost from that.

Bartlett asked Johnson about some anchor dragging issues.

Johnson said he had scheduled a diver to do the annual 1/3 inspection. And in addition the diver will look at #20 and #57 to see if there are chain or anchor issues.

### B. Transient Length of Stay Policy Review

Bartlett noted that Fred Rachwitz had requested that this item be included on the agenda.

Rachwitz was concerned that the rules for extending a transient stay were being applied in error. When a transient customer reaches the seven-day limit, the stay can be extended on a daily basis, but he felt that the customer did have to leave for two days, before a new seven-day commitment could be made. He was asking if the staff was committing to a new seven-day period after the two-day extension.

Bartlett said that if docking space were available, and a transient boater who would have otherwise departed stayed on for an additional two days, why not let that boater then re-apply for a new seven-day period.

Rachwitz said that was not how he read the rule.

Bartlett asked, the language of the rule aside, what should the policy be, given the current state of the economy in boating and the very limited waiting lists that have been experienced.

Rachwitz noted that he felt the reason for the rule to vacate was to encourage new boaters to have a chance to fill the facility, not to effectively allow consecutive seven-day stays. Rachwitz said he had no problem with the one-day extensions, no matter how many, but that the boater should leave for the 48 hours before being guaranteed a new seven-day stay.

Tom Graham said he felt the idea was to keep the slips full to the extent possible.

Johnson was asked how long the waiting list really has been.

## Harbor Commission Minutes

June 18, 2008

Johnson noted that in 2006, his first year, there were usually 4-5 boats on the waiting list, but this compared to prior years of lists of 20 or more boats. In 2007, there were really only three days during the peak season when there was a waiting list after 12:00 noon, check-out time.

Bill McCullough asked Johnson whether he did re-up boats for new seven-day periods after a two-day extension. Johnson said yes.

Jim Offield has Johnson whether there seems to be a problem with the waiting list or the rule.

Johnson did not think the waiting list had been a problem, nor had the way he had applied the rule been a problem.

Rachwitz felt the goal should ultimately be to keep the seven-day rule in force, and require two days away before giving a new seven-day reservation.

McCullough said he generally agrees with Rachwitz.

Al Dika noted that the reason originally for a seven-day rule had been because there were very long waiting lists, which was not the case at the present time.

Jane Ramer noted that the rule did leave the Harbormaster some discretion in how to apply the rule.

It was generally noted that the issue will be somewhat a moot point given the limited waiting lists and the price of fuel limiting transient boating.

Bartlett noted that the customer would effectively be penalized if he was forced to leave and the City may lose revenue, and by making the customer leave, in order to re-apply for seven days, we may be unfair to the customer. And if there is a waiting list, the customer will ultimately leave.

Rachwitz noted that he was not concerned with the revenue aspect.

Bartlett asked if there were any motion on how to resolve this issue.

Motion by Graham, seconded by Offield, to treat a two-day extension of the seven-day rule, when there are not boats on the waiting list, as time vacated, so that after a two-day extension, a boater may then re-apply for a new seven-day period. Motion carried, 8-2, Rachwitz and McCullough dissenting.

### C. Ford Park Lighting

The City Manager said he had been asked whether or not some type of lighting should be put on the end of the Launch Ramp dock to help boaters find the dock easier when it gets dark. He did note that there is not electricity to that dock, because it is taken out each year, but that perhaps a solar powered light might work.

Harbor Commission Minutes  
June 18, 2008

Graham commented that when he uses his own dock next door, the light from the parking lot is adequate.

A suggestion was made to potentially add reflectors on the end.

McGlaughlin said he launches in and out of Ford Park regularly and has never had a problem.

The City Manager thanked the Commission for their comments.

V. Meeting Schedule

Bartlett noted that the next meeting is July 16<sup>th</sup>, at 4:00. The August meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, August 13<sup>th</sup>.

VI. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

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Frederick W. Geuder, City Manager