

# Harbor Commission

## Regular Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, August 18, 2015, 5:30 p.m.  
Council Chambers, South Haven City Hall



City of South Haven

### 1. Call to Order by Arnold at 5:30 p.m.

Present: Pyle, Reineck, Silverman, Stegeman, Stephens, Sullivan, Arnold

Absent: None

Also present: John Marple, Marina Manager

### 2. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Pyle, second by Silverman to approve the August 18, 2015 regular meeting agenda with the addition of #3a Marina Reports.

All in favor. Motion carried.

### 3. Approval of Minutes: July 21, 2015 Regular Meeting

Motion by Pyle, second by Silverman to approve the July 21, 2015 regular meeting minutes as written.

All in favor. Motion carried.

### 3a. Marina Reports

VandenBosch reviewed the Marina Reports.

Silverman commented on the way the calculation was done and noted that it was not weighted.

Stephens asked whether it would be possible to track expenses for each facility separately to which VandenBosch responded that one of the difficulties is that staff such as the cleaning crews move from marina to marina throughout the day. VandenBosch noted there might be ways to make such expense guesses more accurate. Stephens noted that the more specific you can be the more accurate you can be.

#### **4. Interested Citizens in the Audience Will be Heard on Items Not on the Agenda**

None at this time.

#### **5. Tour Boat Amendment**

VandenBosch updated the board on progress regarding the contract with IT-IL-DO Charters, LLC, including delays with getting Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) permits and Coast Guard inspection approval. While staff is working on installing the electric pedestals, the charter has been unable to start operating. VandenBosch suggests that the commission pro-rate the current year's fee and add next year's fee to the updated contract.

Silverman questioned whether the 2015 rental was ever paid to which VandenBosch responded that the 2015 rental fee has not been paid. Silverman asked whether there is an anticipated date. Chad Bard, owner of IT-IL-DO Charters, LLC, stated the Coast Guard has done the stability test but Bard still has to take the inspector for a boat ride and do the man overboard drill. Bard noted the inspector is pretty much good to go but there are three different sets of approvals required.

Discussion ensued regarding the bidding process and work on the electric pedestals and removal of a section of railing.

Silverman asked about minor changes in the agreement, season ending dates, and fees.

Silverman asked whether the Marina Manager has any concerns about the tour boat being at the South Marina.

John Marple stated he has concerns, but IT-IL-DO Charters has been down there with his fishing charter for three (3) years and there has been nothing major in the way of problems. Marple thinks even if there are a couple of bumps in the beginning that overall this arrangement can work.

VandenBosch expressed his biggest concern: the existing public restrooms are not adequate when there are events in that area. "We could have up to forty (40) additional people at a time with the tour boat; we already need more restrooms in that area." Marple seconded what VandenBosch just said, and noted, "On any given weekend we are already overburdened. Maintenance involved there is quite high. At some point in the future the city needs to look at increasing the restrooms, there is a pressing need at South Beach as well." Marple also expressed concern that with the tour boat coming in there will be folks sitting around and waiting and there is not enough seating available on the south side. Marple stated that he is cautiously optimistic.

Pyle noted the charter is a great opportunity and that starting at a slower time of year may help staff and the tour boat operation get the bugs worked out regarding seating and restrooms before re-opening next year.

Motion by Reineck, second by Pyle to recommend that city council approve the license agreement with IT-IL-DO Charters, LLC for a tour boat operation to be moored at the South Side Marina.

Sullivan and Stephens abstained.

Ayes: Pyle, Reineck, Silverman, Stegeman, Arnold

Nays: None

Motion carried.

## **6. Marina Rates 2016**

VandenBosch explained how the discount was calculated and noted that these are substantial discounts compared to what had been offered before. VandenBosch pointed out that he modified the numbers in the resolution to round up to an even ten. VandenBosch also requests a two percent (2%) increase at the North Side and Black River Park Marinas but not at the Maritime Marina as the facilities there have not seen much improvement and the current rates are fairly high given the amenities that are available.

Silverman asked what the basis is for the two percent (2%) recommendation which VandenBosch explained as an inflationary increase. After a question by Silverman regarding whether the North Side is filled to capacity for the season, VandenBosch responded that there are a few slips that have a lot of surge which the city does not rent.

Marple corroborated that and stated that Black River Park has two empty docks compared to less than fifty percent (50%) occupancy three (3) years ago. "The two percent (2%) increase is a very reasonable amount to raise the seasonal fees." Marple cautioned about the Maritime Museum stating that he would prefer to keep that rate set until those docks are filled.

Silverman likes the idea of a nominal increase, because too frequently you wait too long and then it is a big increase. Marple responded, "We have the demand, the capitalistic system, you know."

Reineck asked at the current occupancy how much revenue will the city see to which VandenBosch responded that he should have calculated that.

Stephens asked if there has been an increase in the North Side Marina rates since the new facility was put in to which VandenBosch responded that rates were not raised at all during the economic crunch. Stegeman noted that the water level was also bad during that time.

Silverman asked about the state's fees which VandenBosch explained as the state setting ranges, noting that if the state changes their rates the city's rates will automatically follow.

Motion by Silverman to recommend to City Council the rate changes contained in the resolution setting the seasonal and transient slip rates at South Haven Municipal Marinas. Second by Stephens.

Ayes: Sullivan, Pyle, Reineck, Silverman, Stephens, Arnold

Nays: Stegeman

Motion carried.

Stegeman stated that a rate discrepancy is being created because one marina is more popular than another. If the rate change was inflationary it would be across all the marinas.

## **7. Capital Improvement Plan 2016**

VandenBosch explained that the Capital improvement Plan 2016 as presented is a wish list; it can come back next month with more detail. Marple put together the Capital Improvement list to which VandenBosch added a five (5) year Capital Improvement plan. VandenBosch's goal was to list all potential candidates for prioritization.

Discussion ensued regarding the Water Street bluff area; suggested improvements to the area where the stage is located during events; securing land for dredge spoils; using River Maintenance Fund money for purchasing land; the gate system at Black River Park and problems with re-entry.

Pyle noted that NAPA Auto Parts is moving out by John's Stereo so boaters will not be able to walk to get a part which will necessitate more people leaving and re-entering Black River Park. VandenBosch suggested asking the city's vendor how we could handle that. VandenBosch expressed concern about the overflow situation and stated he will contact the vendor to see if there is any way to give someone a one-time pin code. In response to a question from VandenBosch, Pyle stated that with the new fish cleaning station and more demand, she sees a need for providing a way for boaters to re-enter without having to pay a second day pass fee.

Stephens pointed out that according to page thirty-seven (37) of the agenda packet, the South Side Marina area has morphed into a center for more than marina patrons. Stephens wonders if it is appropriate for the general fund to contribute to this area, since the area is used by more than marina patrons. VandenBosch noted that while Waterfront Park is actually in the South Side Marina it is maintained and staffed by the Parks Department. VandenBosch also pointed out the aerial photo on page twenty (20) of the packet it can be seen that the area across the street from the stage green area, is included in the legal description of Southside Marina, which means either Parks or the General Fund is paying for that maintenance. If there is a need to increase the restrooms at South Side Marina, could be paid for by Parks, or a combination of funds. VandenBosch noted that there is a large amount of wasted space under that roof of the South Side Marina building which could be converted into a second story. A marina boater's lounge could be used by more than just boaters. There are things that could be done at the South Side Marina as a combined project, according to VandenBosch.

VandenBosch stated that this item, Capital Improvements 2016, will come back to the board next month. VandenBosch will try to have better cost estimates available and noted while

only a few of them will be able to be done, the board will be able to help with prioritization.

## **Member and Staff Comments**

VandenBosch: No comment.

Stegeman: Suggested having an in-water boat show/mini festival at the South Side Marina, similar to the Michigan City Boat Show, to raise money for dredging and other expense.

Silverman: Said that boat show is at the end of the year; imagine if a similar event was done at the beginning of the year/boating season.

Discussion ensued regarding talking to the Michigan City harbor master and find out what group sponsors the boat show; using temporary floating docks and the time frame to get something on the calendar and dates locked in.

Stegeman: This Saturday, Aug. 22, is the Steelheader sponsored Salute to Vets and Operation Injured Soldier. Steelheaders take the veterans fishing, and then have a noon time parade up the channel. Everybody is invited out on the piers; there will be American flags to wave and then a light luncheon. Stegeman noted that you can go to [www.steelheaders.com](http://www.steelheaders.com) for more information.

There were no other comments.

## **Adjourn**

Motion by Silverman, second by Stephens to adjourn at 6:25 p.m.

All in favor. Motion carried.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Marsha Ransom  
Recording Secretary