

Harbor Commission

Regular Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 19, 2013
5:30 p.m., Conference Room B
South Haven City Hall



City of South Haven

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

Present: Jeffers, Pyle, Stephens, Strong, Sullivan, Arnold
Absent: Silverman

Also present: Wendy Hochstedler, Finance Director; John Marple, Harbormaster

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Strong, second by Stephens to approve the Tuesday, March 19, 2013 Harbor Commission regular meeting agenda as with addition of item 8A.

All in favor. Motion carried.

3. Approval of Minutes: February 19, 2013 Meeting

Motion by Stephens, second by Jeffers to approve the February 19, 2013 Harbor Commission regular meeting minutes as written.

All in favor. Motion carried.

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

None at this time.

5. Marina Reports

VandenBosch gave an overview of the Marina Reports.

Marple reported good sales of slips in the marinas; there has been an increase from last year in all marinas.

Sullivan and Pyle inquired whether any record is being kept of where the boaters are coming from. Concerns were expressed by Marple regarding filling the South Marina and Black River Park slips.

6. Michigan Maritime Museum Dock Proposal

VandenBosch introduced the Maritime Museum's proposal for joining the Museum dock to the City dock; the city attorney is working on legalities regarding who can do what in what area. During the following discussion several points were made regarding connecting the two areas such as possibilities for events on the dock with the view down the river. It was noted that there could be advantages to both the city and the museum. Discussion ensued regarding the fact that the City owns the dock and the Museum has a very long-term lease. VandenBosch pointed out that the procedure for approval of this project will include the Planning Commission and City Council weighing in and making recommendations.

After Strong and Jeffers expressed their discomfort with making any recommendation with so little information, the board decided they should wait to comment until they see more information regarding the proposal. Pyle expressed concerns with liability.

7. Budget and Strategic Plan

VandenBosch reviewed the budgets, explained there will be more dredging costs than staff has budgeted for, but there will be money coming from the State to help cover it.

In reviewing the River Maintenance Fund VandenBosch explained that major capital projects make budgeting difficult.

The Strategic Plan was requested at the last meeting and was included in the agenda packet for the boards' reference.

8. Dredging Update

North Side and South Side Dredging Dunkley Spoil Site Restrictive Covenant Black River Dredging Project

VandenBosch updated the board regarding progress made toward dredging. Abonmarche is working on bid specifications. Bid documents will probably take three to five weeks; the projects will be advertised and it will take another three weeks to wait for bids to come in; and then presented to City Council. Staff is waiting for the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) dredging permit for the main channel and waiting for a grant.

A restrictive covenant from City Council for the North & South Side dredging was included in the packet. Staff is waiting for the DEQ, which has said the city should have a permit by this Friday; staff also needs the grant agreement but that is out of our control.

VandenBosch is working with the city attorney and with Grow America to put together an agreement allowing Grow America to dredge private areas and use the city's spoils site.

Regarding the Dunkley spoil site, VandenBosch noted that while contamination numbers are not high they are above the DEQ's criteria, so the city is required to cap the site and does plan to do so.

Responding to a question, VandenBosch said, "The Black River Dredging Project includes the Black River Marina slips."

Pyle wondered about the launch tie-up area; "It seems to be where so many people get hung up." VandenBosch noted that the dredging will not go bank to bank but if we can afford it, the dredger will do more than just forty feet down the middle of the river. VandenBosch noted that soundings in the launch area have not been provided to the board because the motor on his boat bottoms out in that area.

Sullivan inquired whether the dredging includes cleaning out sediment ponds and pointed out that it seems sensible to start upriver and work downstream to dredge the channel. VandenBosch explained that while mechanical dredging may leave debris in the river hydraulic dredging does not.

There was discussion of the moratorium on dredging and how this will affect the city's dredging. VandenBosch is assuming dredging will be allowed to proceed during May and June; if not staff will be looking at September and October. The board discussed emergency dredging and getting some help from legislators.

After questions from Sullivan regarding private slip dredging, VandenBosch explained the process of dealing with the contamination and keeping those spoils separate so they can be totally removed. Grow American will be responsible for that. VandenBosch noted that the Dunkley area will be capped sometime between Memorial Day and June 30, depending on the weather and how fast the dewatering takes. VandenBosch responded to questions regarding the South Beach Army Corp. replenishment program.

8a. Black River Park Improvements

VandenBosch gave an overview of the proposal which he hopes will lead to a grant for a fish cleaning station and expanded parking for Black River Park and noted that a restroom might be included in a later phase. VandenBosch noted the reason the City has been successful at getting grants is due to getting a concept plan engineered and getting cost estimates.

Pyle asked whether this project would include the channel plans and other parts of the project that was before the Harbor Commission previously.

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Motion by Pyle to recommend having the City Manager send this project to Abonmarche for design services. Second by Strong.

All in favor. Motion carried.

9. General Comments

There were none.

Member and Staff Comments

Pyle: 1.) asked whether the docks have been put in at Black River Park and was told that the project is scheduled for next week. 2.) Requested an update on the bridge project and was promised that VandenBosch will send out an update. 3.) Wondered, since the fish cleaning station is so far out, whether the grinder could be switched out from the north side to the south side, since so much of the activity is on the south side to which VandenBosch responded that an electrician should look into that.

Stephens: requested the date of the spring safety meeting and was told it would be held on the third Tuesday in April.

Stephens: Upton found money for St. Joseph dredging from the Federal Waterway Fund and wondered if St. Joseph will get permission to dredge in May and June.

VandenBosch: reminded the board of the tour/workshop of the North Side facility this Friday at 4:00 p.m.

Adjourn

Motion by Strong, second by Stephen to adjourn at 6:48 p.m.

All in favor. Motion carried.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Marsha Ransom
Recording Secretary