

Wiscasset Waterfront Committee Meeting, 10 DEC 2024

Minutes submitted by James Kochan, Secretary.

Attendees: Chair Eric Cousineau, James Kochan, Harbormaster Larry Hesselstine, Town Manager Dennis Simmons, Deputy Harbormaster Callie.

Also present: townsman Kevin Basset, Sean Kelly from Prock Marine Company, and Camden Rice representing "Protect Maine"

There being insufficient members present for a quorum, the votes to approve the minutes from the September and November meetings were tabled until the next meeting.

Presentation by Sean Kelly of Prock Marine. Prock has proposed both replacement in kind (wood floats) or floats utilizing the Candock float system which Mr. Kelly recommends for use on the Wiscasset waterfront, noting the system's durability and suitability for high-traffic and public-use applications, as well as a lower cost than traditional wooden floats. Prock sold a dock to the city of Rockland made with Candock float system cubes and Rockland leaves it in year-round, as the float cubes are impervious to rot. Prock installed another for Cranberry Island, which Jim Fortune, Harbormaster, also leaves in water year-round. For running conduit in the Candock System, they have fabricated a cube that has a cover; currently conduit runs through the ramp in Wiscasset. The attendees went outside to view the sample of the sectional ramp that Sean brought with him.

Harbormaster's report: Public Works serviced the moorings, replaced the chains and beefed up the chains. Mooring balls will be changed in future to barrel style to accommodate the pennants with more success. Grant for moorings. Green crab waterman is currently taking up too much space on the commercial float. Additional floats are recommended for the commercial side. Worm carts are tying up under the ramp and pier. Major space issues. In answer to query from Kochan, the Harbormaster noted that the Commercial Pier application and user fees do not currently take into account the square footage allocation or use per user; this issue to be explored by the committee in future meeting.

Presenter: Camden Rice (grew up in Wiscasset), clammer, lobsterman, wormer, works for Protect Maine Fishing Heritage Foundation (aka "Protect Maine") gave a presentation on fin and shellfish leasing issues. He stated that Maine communities can have a say over what leases get approved or denied and how it interacts with the fishing community, etc. "Protect Maine" has drafted a recommended or "model" ordinance for towns to use (copies distributed). Aquaculture currently is regulated by the state. Protect Maine would like to keep all leases smallscale and local vs. "industrial". DMR currently allows industrial concerns to come in and operate 1000s of acres in a lease, especially with fin fish farming. Bivalve aquaculture is more sustainable and can still be overcrowded as in Damariscotta now. Copies of a lease moratorium draft, as well as ordinance were distributed (moratorium can hold off giving new leases until properly studied and an ordinance in place. Home rule issue.

Wind operation at Maine Yankee and Cousins Island. Repower Wiscasset (not affiliated with town) wants to explore wind power.

Two Waterfront Committee candidate interviews are scheduled for next Monday, December 16th at 4:15 and 5 PM, respectively.

Meeting adjourned at 6:30 PM.