

Minutes  
Operations, Finance and Safety Committee  
Third Floor Conference Room, Gloucester City Hall  
Thursday, November 21, 2013, at 4:00 PM

The OFS committee began at 4:00. Present: Jim Bordinaro, Jim Caulkett, David McCauley, Ralph Pino

Oral Communications: None

The minutes of 10/31/13 were accepted.

**Update on Timelines, Project Elements and Funding for Solomon Jacobs Project and timeline for expenditure of Seaport Council Funding**

The WWB was notified of the requirement to spend the \$200,000 in Seaport Council funding to purchase the floats by 6/30/14. This deadline would require the Harbormaster to store and later move, at our expense, the floats to install them. It would also prevent the transient boater element for some of the float structure to be eligible for reimbursement from the BIG source. Jim concurred that both of these outcomes would be problematic. David proposed an approach to administratively or legislatively change the date to 6/30/2015 to overcome these difficulties. Ralph and Jim expressed concern that the process or any delay might lead to a loss of the funds or a change of use at the municipal level. All agreed that any change effort should have the agreement of the administration before proceeding to the DCR and, if necessary, legislators. David suggested a motion for the WWB meeting, recognizing the OFS committee concerns. ***Motion: The WWB should proceed with an effort to postpone the expenditure deadline for the Seaport Council funding to 6/30/15.***

Jim Caulkett, David McCauley and Cate Banks will meet on 11/26 to assess the status of the BIG proposal prior to renewing meetings with Stephanie Cunningham, Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) Administrator. The WWB will file the proposal by October, 2014.

**Review of FY2014 budget and provisional allocations of “free cash”**

The WWB free cash was certified by the state on 11/20 at the level of \$89,412. The WWB had allocated \$16000 of this amount to purchase a new engine for the Parker. The WWB also supported the OFS recommendation to allocate the largest share of this cash to the Solomon Jacobs/Harbormaster complex. Jim identified some significant

FY14 budget adjustments that must come from free cash: a CPA grant payment of \$8893 and a new engine (90hp) for the pumpout boat for \$10,000 (with a possible reimbursement of 75% of this amount). (NOTE: Jim reported after our meeting that he had secured the 75% reimbursement.)

OFS also agreed to the suggestion made at the Ad Hoc committee to support improvements to the management and public display of moorings. This would involve the purchase of an industry-standard mooring management software (if available), the importation of current data into the new format, creation of a website presence for this mooring list and improvements to the website to promote wider access to harbormasters office. The amount proposed would be a cap for this set of work but may change as new opportunities are defined. The responsibility for the management is placed in the Public Facilities Committee. ***Motion: The WWB should dedicate up to \$4500 from FY14 free cash for technical improvements to the mooring management system and WWB website.***

While an allocation of not less than \$65000 of the free cash to the Solomon Jacobs/Harbormaster Complex (SJH) was initially discussed, it became clear that OFS should wait until later in the year when all competing uses (including the current stabilization accounts) had been considered. Despite this, OFS affirmed SJH as the priority claimant for the FY14 free cash and urged that a stabilization account be established to manage the project. The account will be able to receive free cash, grant funds, reimbursements and other funds. ***Motion: The WWB will pursue promptly the establishment of a stabilization fund titled the Solomon Jacobs Harbormaster Complex Construction Fund.***

## **Budget Preparation Process for FY 15: Budget Development and Policy Choices**

OFS discussed the **overall levels of FY15 Operating Budget** and reviewed the timelines. OFS sees the budget primarily as a policy document and will outline the policy priorities and choices in the budget at the 12/4/13 WWB meeting. After discussing some of the line items with Jim Caulkett, OFS agreed that there would probably be minimal levels of increases in the conventional annual expenses. OFS learned that the pension cost increase will 4.4% and that health increases are expected to be modest. Jim will update several accounts and the FY 2015 budget will be voted on at the next OFS meeting and will be sent to the full WWB for its approval at the 1/8/14 meeting.

OFS focused on the shortfall in **launch finances and operations** over the past year. The income was just \$2604 set against identified expenses of \$10,392 (\$9608 in salaries, \$534 in fuel, \$250 in miscellaneous). The income represented 868 paying

users from the 240 moorings serviced. OFS was concerned about, although not surprised by, this shortfall and affirmed its decision to continue the launch even with further losses anticipated. OFS discussed Jim's recommendation for an increase in the salary scale to attract more launch operators. OFS could not determine anticipated income for FY15 launch operations but stressed the need to increase usage and agreed to add \$500 to the WWB advertising budget. OFS also discussed an increase in the launch fee (now \$3 per person with free passage for those under 12) and was concerned about increasing expenses without increasing revenues. OFS was unified on a fee increase but not on the amount, with a concern that a fee increase might discourage use of the launch. OFS agreed to propose the following to the full WWB.

***Motion: The WWB approves the increase in the salary range for launch operators from \$10 to \$12 to the level of \$12 to \$15.***

***Motion: The WWB approves and will seek City Council approval to establish the launch fee at \$5 per person with free passage for those under 12.***

OFS discussed the status of the enhanced patrols on the Annisquam River by both the Harbormasters Office and the Gloucester Police. It was generally agreed, although with uncertain evidence, that these patrols had reduced speeding and disorderly behavior. Jim will report to the OFS at the next meeting on the number of tickets written by both the Harbormaster and Police. OFS agreed to leave the personnel allocations to this program at the agreed levels of FY14,

OFS asked Jim to identify any FY15 anticipated expenses for Solomon Jacobs Harbormaster Complex. The engineering account may be the place for these. It is anticipated that the newly created Ad Hoc Sub-Committee will incur some expenses as it develops its facilities plan. OFS urged Jim to convene this group soon.

New Business: The Committee asked when a City Council member would be appointed to the WWB to replace outgoing Councillor Ciolino. OFS urged that the Harbormaster's Office create email group lists to better advertise the launch and to communicate more easily with mooring holders and other WWB stakeholders.

The next OFS meeting will be on Thursday, December 19, at 4:00 PM at a place TBD.

The Committee adjourned at 5:45 PM.

Minutes prepared by David McCauley, OFS Chair.