

CBJ Docks and Harbors Board
Live-Aboard Meeting Notes
For Thursday, December 7th, 2017

Notes from the December 7th, 2017 public meeting are below. The notes are pre-decisional in regards to proposed regulatory changes or in the obligation of CBJ funds. D& H staff appreciates the broad community participation in this meeting.

Introduction -

Robert Barr, CBJ Library Director was the facilitator for this meeting that was at the Yacht Club. The meeting began at 5:07pm. He said the purpose of the meeting is Docks & Harbors staff wanted the Live-aboards brought together to talk about issues of common concern. Docks & Harbors wants to hear the live-aboards ideas as a group and how to move forward with the concerns.

Staff in attendance

Matthew Creswell, Teena Larson, and Jennifer Shinn.

Topics for Discussion

Sewage Regulation

Water Safety

Ground Rules -

Mr. Barr said there are ground rules for this meeting. If anyone in this room is going to participate in the conversations they need to abide by the following rules;

- Listen Respectfully - When someone else is talking, don't interrupt them.
- Criticize ideas, not people - It is completely okay to disagree with someone's ideas and okay to criticize the idea, but not the person. Stay away from personal attacks and insults.
- No Blame, speculation or inflammatory comments. Stay away from revisiting history because we want to move forward and not dwell on the past.
- He will allow everyone an opportunity to speak and try not to monopolize a conversation.

At the end of the meeting, the goal is to see where consensus exists around the topics of common concern. This means the majority of the room is on board with an idea and how to move something forward.

Sewage Regulation introduction/discussion

Mr. Creswell explained the sewage regulation. There are three different types of Marine Sanitation Devices that can be certified by the U.S. Coast Guard to meet the requirements in 33 CFR Part 159, each having its own design, certification, and discharge criteria. There is a pump out in Aurora Harbor, and a pump out cart that can be brought to your boat to pump out your sewage. Douglas pump out is not working currently but staff is working on getting that working again and a pump out cart. Harris Harbor has a pump out similar to Aurora Harbor. Mr. Creswell recommended to ask Harbor staff about the Marine Sanitation Device you are looking at purchasing before you do to make sure it meets the requirements in regulation.

Question - Why does the type II system have to have a holding tank of 10 gallons and Type I that is five times that doesn't?

Mr. Creswell said it has to do with how the wastewater is treated and he will look into why Type II requires a holding tank in regulation. Only Type III should be required to have a holding tank.

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Question - Does the Harbor determine success or failure of this regulation on coliform levels in the Harbor?

Mr. Creswell said the Coliform level test is what staff did on their own to get an idea of the condition of the Harbor water. We hope to test again in a few months and the coliform levels are down.

Comment- Our Harbor is unique. Last summer the Harbor was completely full of rotting red snapper carcasses. He does not want the live-aboard community judged because the performance of this program.

Mr. Creswell said the program has nothing to do with active counts in the Harbor.

Comment - If people are required to put in holding tanks for human waste, she feels the same way about dogs. Dog owners should not be allowed to wash their dogs poop in the water with the buckets on the docks.

Mr. Creswell said the buckets are being removed from the docks. In regulation it states washing dog poop in the water is not allowed.

Question - Will there be bags for people to use to pick up their dog poop?

Mr. Creswell said there are already bags throughout the Harbor. The bag dispensers are at the top of the gangway's and several other places throughout the Harbor. Staff has been directed to crack down on those irresponsible dog owners that don't clean up after their pet and don't have them on leashes.

Question - Are these Marine Sanitation Devices required for the fishing boats also?

Mr. Creswell said releasing sewage in the Harbor is already a federal regulation. He does not have a good answer to regulate the fishing fleet.

Question - Are all the boats going to be inspected or just the live-aboards?

Mr. Creswell said to register as a live-aboard, you are required to demonstrate that you have a marine sanitation device.

Question-Is this just for live-aboards?

Mr. Creswell said the regulation says every boat in the Harbor.

Question - When all the boats come due for their annual moorage are you going to ask the question to see if they are compliant?

Mr. Creswell said under regulation staff is not required to check to see if they are compliant.

Comment - The focus is just on live-aboards?

Mr. Creswell said yes for this regulation.

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Question - How are you going to regulate the people that come here in the summer and live-aboard their vessel but don't register as a live-aboard?

Mr. Creswell said if people stay on their boat more than three days they are required to register as a live-aboard. Staff does on a regular basis find people living on their vessel and have them come in and register. At that time staff will inspect their vessel.

Question - Asked what was discussed at the last meeting.

Ms. Larson said she could put the prior live-aboard meeting recordings on a USB for anyone that wanted that.

Question- Is there a charge to bring the portable pump out to your boat?

Mr. Creswell said no. Staff will bring it to you and make sure you know how to operate it. The actual pumping is done by you. The portable system is in place to assist. In regulation boats are required to move. If the portable system is not working, you will be required to go to the pump out area to pump your vessel. Currently this portable system is only in Aurora but there will be one added to Douglas also.

Question - Will Harris Harbor ever get a portable pump out?

Mr. Creswell said we would need to find grant money for the Harris portable system.

Comment - In regulation 05 CBJAC 45-015 says all vessels with moorage renewal will be required to have marine sanitation devices and not just live-aboards. You said earlier you were just going to enforce this for live-aboards.

Mr. Creswell said the regulation say's all vessels with an installed toilet facility must have a certified type I, II, or III system approved by the U.S. Coast Guard.

Comment- The regulation says upon application for moorage or moorage renewal, the vessel owner shall identify what type toilet facility they have. So this is for all vessels.

Mr. Creswell said the regulation say's if you have an installed toilet facility.

Question - Fishing vessels have installed toilet facilities. Are they required to have a type I, II, or III facility?

Mr. Creswell said only if they have the installed toilet facility. They are not allowed to pump overboard.

Comment - 95% of the boats in the Harbor have installed toilet facilities and that is not just the live-aboards.

Mr. Creswell said the regulation is not meant to single out live-aboards.

Question - Have all the other vessel owners been notified of this regulation?

Mr. Creswell said this has been through the public process and has been posted in all the offices.

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WATER SAFETY

Mr. Barr asked the group what was good on the this topic, and what is bad? What needs to be improved and what ideas do you have?

Comment - This person said they have pulled people out of the water two or three times since being in the Harbor. She noticed the metal ladders in the Harbor now and doesn't think if she fell in the water she would be able to use it to get herself out of the water because the docks are too high. Other harbors have pull down ladders and she believes she could pull the ladder down while in the water and get herself out. The current ladders are too big, bulky and heavy. She said they were a waste of money.

Comment - The current ladders are impossible and unsafe. If someone is in the water and the ladder is dropped on them, they are dead. These need to be removed before someone is killed and proper ladders installed.

Comment - I'm worried as a mother being pregnant with trying to bend over to get my daughter out of the water who currently wears a life jacket. If there was a pull down ladder she would be able to get out of the water.

Comment - Because of the bull rails, not every slip configuration is the same. You will need the drop down ladders long enough to go in the water. A rope ladder will not work because when you put your weight on it you will go under the dock.

Question - Do you go under the dock with a drop down ladder?

Comment - No because they are all metal.

Question - How were the current ladders chosen for the Harbor? She believes the ladders were expensive and doesn't want it to happen again with the upgrading of the Harbors.

Comment - Same designs are used from one phase to another and if this isn't stopped now we could end up with the same ladders again. This is important to get this figured out.

Comment - This was brought up as soon as these ladders appeared and one of the Board members dismissed the drop down ladders. She relayed what a Board member told her "it will probably be a drunk that falls in the water and good ridens to them anyway". This is a very important subject.

Mr. Barr asked what other issues does the group want to move forward?

Comment - Failure to have your pet on a lease ignores the fact there are children, old people, and ice. People single out their pet and say their dog doesn't need a leash. Small dogs can trip people, large dogs can scare children and for these reasons it is not okay not to follow the rules and have your dog unleashed.

Comment - The leash law is also for the dogs safety.

Comment - This happens all over the City and not just specific to the Harbor. There are a lot of places that they go to walk their dog and other dogs are not leashed so they are not able to walk their dog.

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Comment - Ice has been a big issue and doesn't believe it has been cleared off the docks as well as it needs to be.

Comment - At the top of the ramp is ice melt. She said she gets some and sprinkles it where it is needed.

Question - Is it okay to use the ice melt from the buckets at the top of the ramps?

Mr. Creswell said that is what it is there for to use when needed. If a bucket is empty, please call the Harbor office and let them know so staff can refill it when making their rounds.

Compliment - Harbor staff does a great job clearing the docks and helping with patrons needs.

Comment - She wanted to address safety in general. Last year she responded to a vessel sinking. She is not used to someone on call versus someone in the Harbor all the time. The police responded faster than the Harbor on call staff personnel. The police was not able to do anything until the Harbor staff showed up. What is the call time for Harbor staff to show up?

Mr. Creswell said it depends who is on call? The Harbors on call number goes to dispatch and they call the Harbor staff on call at that time. The on call Harbor staff live different locations throughout the City and respond time is based on that.

Comment - It also took along time for Harbor staff to get set up to address the sinking vessel.

Mr. Creswell said when he first was hired in the Harbors, none of the four Harbors had a quick response to a sinking vessel. Trying to improve this, he came up with a standard pump set which is a gas pump, a high output electric pump, a low output electric pump, and tools to access the boat in case it is locked. This standard pump set will be in all the Harbors.

Questions - Does staff help pump vessels in non emergency situation?

Mr. Creswell said yes, the only criteria is staff is not to put themselves in danger to pump out any sinking boat. Staff concern is to make sure no one is on the boat. The pumps are providing resources to keep from having an extensive problem.

Mr. Barr said Harbor staff received an email related to this topic from a woman who lives in Aurora Harbor. In the email she proposed ideas. One idea was a siren that would sound when someone fell in the water. Idea two would be to enlist a select group of volunteers to serve as Harbor safety Officers who could also be called in an emergency situation.

Comment - The siren is not going to tell you where you are needed. It will just make a lot of noise. She is in favor of a neighborhood watch. The live-aboard community is the eyes and ears of the Harbor after hours.

Comment - He also said he likes the neighborhood watch idea. Someone can sign up for a specific time and put their slip number down.

Comment - Have signs made and put up that the Harbor is under neighborhood watch.

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Mr. Creswell said this was our third live-aboard meeting. Out of all the ideas, the neighborhood watch is one of the best ideas so far. This will be an immediate and cost effective way to get things done. The neighborhood watch consists of live-aboards getting together to make the Harbor a better place to live. The Harbor Department can't run the neighborhood watch program but we can facilitate it.

Comment - There have been times he called the Harbor because an alarm was going off on a boat and he wanted to call the boat owner, but he was told that information could not be given out. He suggested to have people sign up voluntarily that don't mind having their phone number available to call if an alarm on their boat is going off or there is a problem with their boat.

Questions - When Harbor staff gets a call a boat is sinking, is the priority to call the boat owner or try to get it pumped out?

Mr. Creswell said it would be to start pumping it out.

Mr. Barr said the remainder of the meeting will be open to discuss any topics of concern.

Comment - He said for one person as live-aboard on a boat he pays \$69.00. However, if there are four live-aboards, they only pay \$17.25 per person. He has asked Harbor staff where the \$69.00 came from and he was told water and maintenance, but he was not given any exact numbers. He would like to get numbers for expenses in the Harbor.

Mr. Barr said fees for services are set by the Docks & Harbors Board. Your question should go to the Board.

Comment - He said he went to a Fee Committe meeting a year ago designated to raise the fees. He said he asked the question where the \$69 fee came from originally and no one knew. He still has not heard an answer on that. He is surprised that there is no breakdown in cost for this fee. Does a live-aboard use more water or a long liner who soaks his long lines 24 hours a day with hoses running? He would say the long liner is using more water than he is. There was no real financial break down but vague ideas that live-aboards use the dumpster, but so do the out of town patrons. It is hard to see what more live-aboards use than other boats in the Harbor. What more of a benefit does live-aboards have over anyone else in the harbor.

Comment - This person commented he would like a break down of the \$69 live-aboard fee.

Mr. Creswell said the fee review meetings were not just to increase fees but to review them. Harbors even did away with two fees last year. The live-aboard fee came up but was never finalized. There are a lot of things that go into the live-aboard fee and it is not just the cost of water but can include leaving the water on year around. He said it is not one single thing but several things. He said he didn't set the fees but is also interested on how the fees were set as a management standpoint.

Comment - He understands it could be a number of things to make up the \$69 live-aboard fee and maybe \$69 is too low but he would like the break down.

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Comment - When he pays the \$69 live-aboard fee, he is looking at heat trace, pedestrian lighting, free parking, and access to a toilet. The \$69 fee is a fairly broad spectrum of expense to the Harbor. The least of which is the water. He believes the \$69 fee is a fair fee.

Comment - The reason he started asking the question for a break down was when he found out it costs the same for one person to live on a boat as four people.

Mr. Creswell said the fee was not determined on how much water was used.

Adjournment - Meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.