

Harbormaster's boat repairs cost town \$10,000

By Sam Bari

Town Administrator Bruce Keiser announced that the town's portion of the harbormaster's boat repair bill would be \$10,000 if the town agrees to accept the proposal of the manufacturer, Ribcraft of Marblehead, Mass.

Keiser made the announcement after the council went into executive session to discuss the matter at Monday's Town Council meeting.

The harbormaster's boat, purchased early last year, has been out of commission since last July when it was hauled out of the water due to severe galvanic corrosion.

Keiser said the amount of the negotiated settlement with Ribcraft to repair the boat was \$25,270. Part of the cost was for investigative procedures to possibly determine who was at fault for the severe corrosion.

He said that the net repair bill was \$21,000. Since there was no conclusive evidence that the manufacturer or the town was at fault, Ribcraft agreed to split the net costs, making the town's portion approximately \$10,000. The funds are coming from retained earnings in the harbor fund, not tax money, Keiser added.

The town administrator said that the matter was still open for discussion. Councilman Robert Sutton said that he thought it was a wise decision on the town's part to accept Ribcraft's offer if Keiser thought it was reasonable.

Councilman Bill Kelly made a motion for the town administrator to continue with negotiations, mentioning that something in the agreement should cover the costs if the problem continues. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.

Private roads

Councilman Sutton spearheaded a discussion concerning the town's standards for private roads being built in subdivisions that are that are substandard to public roads. He said that the problem with the roads, besides being too narrow, is that they turn into mud in the winter, and the town gets complaints.

"We should require that all roads should meet town standards,

or not relax town standards," Sutton said.

Town Planner Lisa Bryer agreed saying, "Private roads can be problematic, and relaxed standards can be an issue. But the town does not maintain private roads."

Town Solicitor Peter Ruggiero said that the Planning Commission has the authority to approve the concept of acceptable standards. There are a lot of consequences when roads are not up to standard, he said. "However, it's a policy question - how the town wants to operate. If the council has concerns, it would be appropriate to have a resolution on the matter," Ruggiero said.

Council President Julio DiGiando said, "Maybe we should ask the Planning Commission to think about the policy since the comprehensive plan is being re-written."

Councilman White suggested judging each case separately and keep the status quo.

Councilman Kelly asked if the town has established a standard for private roads.

Bryer said, "There is, but we have the right to relax the standard in certain situations."

Ruggiero pointed out that the procedure is called "waiver" that gives the town the right to set the requirements for each road separately.

Sutton made a motion "to send a resolution to planning to look seriously at any waiver for any subdivision as they review the comprehensive community plan and any proposal to build a private road other than for width. It's the surfaces that cause the problems," he said.

The motion failed with a 3-2 vote. Kelly said, "I would like to have Planning uphold a higher standard."

Town Administrator's report

In his report, the town administrator said that the town has received several complaints on Gondola Avenue about the condition of an abandoned house and barn at 101 Gondola Ave. The house has been vacant for many years and the structure is in serious disrepair.

The current absentee owners have informed the town that they intend to re-build on the site using parts of the existing structures. Despite notification from the town informing the owners of their obligation to maintain the property, the owners have not responded with either repairs or improvement. Consequently, the town is taking any and all appropriate action to correct the situation.

Keiser said the town planner, solicitor and he would meet with Church Community Housing on May 30 to discuss the feasibility of moving forward with use of the Town Office site at 44 Southwest Ave. for affordable housing.

Legislative update

Jamestown Representative Bruce J. Long (R-Middletown, Jamestown) gave his legislative report that included several bills of interest to the community and the state.

Legislation that would repeal the requirement for a fishing pier to be constructed at the end of the old Jamestown Bridge was recently introduced (H-8199). "This requirement was passed in the 1980s," Long said. "It has been determined to be one of the best fishing areas in the state. I stand opposed to this bill and will work for its defeat." The Council instructed the Town Administrator to write a letter in opposition and send it to the Committee.

The Jamestown Art's District legislation sponsored by Rep. Long had a hearing May 15 in the House Finance Committee.

Jamestown residents Karen and Hal Krider joined Rep. Long testifying in strong favor of the bill that had already received endorsement from the Town Council. "The bill will provide a sales tax exemption for those who live and create art in Jamestown," Long said.

Bills have been introduced to consolidate regional school systems, as well as state colleges, Long said. A 14-member legislative commission, created last year to study school consolidation, is due to report soon. "With several bills calling for consolidation by regions or counties, and a new proposed school aid formula that would zero fund several communities, including Jamestown, there is a lot of work to be done to conceive a predictable, fair and equi-

table funding formula for every community and school district," Long said.

Long recently testified against legislation that would have zero funded Jamestown schools.

Licenses and permits

The Town Council approved exhibition license applications for the Conanicut Island Art Association and the Central Baptist church with a 5-0 vote. An entertainment license application from Jon Mistowski dba: Caddy Shack was also unanimously approved.

Bid awarded

A bid for roof repairs to the Jamestown Library was awarded to Gorman Roofing, Inc. for an amount not to exceed \$5,830 was unanimously approved by the council.

Maritime music focus of weekend event


Traditional and contemporary maritime music will highlight the 29th annual Sea Music Festival at Mystic Seaport June 13 to 15.

Musicians will perform onstage Saturday from noon to 5:30 p.m. and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Themed workshops and demonstrations will also take place aboard the Charles W. Morgan and L.A. Dunton, both of which will be hauled out for restoration later this year.

The workshops cover a wide range of maritime themes, including, "Songs of Fishing," "Women & the Sea," "Irish Influence," "Different Tongues," "Songs of Whaling" and "Love Ashore & Afloat." All workshops are included with regular Mystic Seaport admission and do not require separate tickets.

Mystic Seaport is the nation's leading maritime museum. Founded in 1929, the museum is home to four National Historic Landmark vessels, including the Charles W. Morgan, the last wooden whaling ship in the world. The museum is located one mile south of exit 90 off I-95 in Mystic, Conn. and is open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is \$18.50 for adults and \$13 for children ages 6 to 17. Children 5 and under are admitted for free. For more information, call 888.973.2767 or visit www.mysticseaport.org.

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