

**PEASE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
PORT COMMITTEE MEETING  
MINUTES**

**Thursday August 11, 2022**

Presiding: Neil Levesque, Committee Chair

Present: Steve Fournier, Committee Member  
Erik Anderson, Committee Member

Attending: Geno J. Marconi, Division of Ports and Harbors Director;  
Paul Brean, PDA Executive Director;  
Anthony Blenkinsop, PDA General Counsel;  
Roger Groux, Port Advisory Council Chairman

**I. Call to Order**

Director Levesque, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. in the Market Street Marine Terminal Conference Room at 555 Market St. Portsmouth, NH.

**II. Acceptance of Committee Meeting Minutes: July 15, 2021**

Director Anderson moved and Director Fournier seconded that the Pease Development Authority Port Committee accept the Minutes of the **April 14, 2022** Port Committee meeting. Discussion: None. All members agreed.

**III. Public Comment:**

Sue Reynolds, from Rye, spoke regarding the agenda items. The first one is to review the conditions of the waiver for Rye Harbor Lobster Pound. The certified motion outlines the conditions of the waiver which indicates there will be “active daily management” and there be “no impediment to other businesses”. RHLP is advertising that they are a seafood restaurant with dine in and take out and customers arrive with expectations. Sue expressed concern that some RHLP customers have been told that they can use the Rye Harborside, which she said she manages and operates, picnic tables during the our hours of operation. There is a sign up during operating hours that indicate the tables are reserved for the snackbar customers, so the RHLP customers buy a water from the snackbar. The tables can be used after hours, however, the RHLP staff is not cleaning up after their customers that use their picnic tables so the trash doesn’t get cleaned up until the next morning when Sue comes in. Her next concern is regarding the future of the Marine Facility, which was created to allow public access to the ocean (by statute). She asked what the plan is for the future and feels like it is in jeopardy.

**IV. New Business**

**A. Welcome to Grant Nichols, Assistant Port Director**

The Assistant Port Director position was created to support the current Division

Director and as part of a succession plan. Grant came back to the Port from NH Homeland Security. The Division is excited to have him back as he has many valuable skills and his past experiences will make him a valuable asset to the team.

**B. Project Updates:**

- i. Piscataqua River, Turning Basin Dredge, approximately 762,000 CY of dredge material was removed. 80%+/- was sand and went to Salisbury and Plum Island. The final inspection by the Army Corp of Engineers shows one high spot which needs to be corrected prior to the ACOE closing out the project and prevents opening the turning basin to the new width. This should be corrected during the next dredge window which begins in November.
- ii. Market Street Rehabilitation-the main pier rehabilitation is moving along. Discussion included the hydro-demo method, pilings, underwater work and schedule. Ships should be able to start docking and unloading road salt around October 1<sup>st</sup>. Granite State Minerals was awarded the NH DOT Districts road salt contracts for the year.
- iii. Portsmouth Fish Pier-the bulkhead project is being closed out. ARPA money \$1.25 million has been received to replace parts of the pier deck and x-bracing that have failed. The Division is in the process of reviewing a proposal from Appledore Marine Engineering for design through construction support for the pier repairs. Request for approval will be sought at the September PDA Board meeting. The next big job at the Facility would be to replace the building as it is falling apart. There is some money available through NH Fish & Game that could help get a start on concept planning and design for the building.
- iv. Hampton Float Improvement-this past spring some floats were replaced in Hampton. An aerial (drone) photo was passed out showing the new floats, and a section proposed for additional replacements. \$560,000 was awarded through the Governor's Office for Emergency Relief and Recovery.
- v. Market Street Security/Fence line upgrade-a Port Security Grant was received in 2018 which funded the replacement of the security fence surrounding the Market St. Terminal. The project is almost complete and includes a movable Jersey barrier system to allow for flexibility in moving oversized freight (ie: windmill blades, turbines, etc.) in and out of the facility.
- vi. Status of Rye Fuel Pier-2022 Annual inspections were completed and the systems passed but a fitting failed on the recreational side of the fuel system and is currently shut down. Stamped plans are required to apply for a DES permit which are currently being worked on but it doesn't look like the system will be up and running this season. Discussion included the importance of that fuel system is that it services first responders and emergency agencies.
- vii. Review Condition of Waiver Rye Harbor Lobster Pound, Rye Harbor- Director Marconi reported that the Division has eliminated the temporary parking on the driveway and added an entrance, exit and a fire lane. Personnel from the Airport and the Hampton facility have been being utilized for the required traffic control for Rye Harbor Lobster Pound. It has been needed and helpful. A police officer on the premises would help however, after numerous efforts and phone calls it is determined there is a shortage of law enforcement across State and Municipal police. Discussion included the fact that the volume of traffic continues to stress

the capabilities of the facility. Discussion included that there is a limit on the number of people that go on the whale watches, but also there is no way to know how many folks will come in on any particular day since it is the only public boat launch, the report that was submitted previously to the PDA Board, health inspector visits, and if the other conditions of the waiver and if they are being met. The water line was discussed, the main water line has been installed and there are 3 shacks connected to it now. Those 3 buildings have paid a fee for that connection to help offset the cost of the water line installation. Anyone who chooses to connect in the future will also pay the connection fee. There is discussion on assessing an annual fee for the water line service.

**b. Initial/Defining Phase of Rye Harbor Study**

- i. Review Existing Physical Conditions
- ii. Prepare and Mitigate Storm Conditions
  - a) Rock Revetment- Director Marconi showed photos of a storm at Rye Harbor which showed severe flooding in the parking lot. He suggested that any plans for the future of Rye Harbor would need to first address replacing the rock revetment to mitigate the impacts of storms. The facility was created when the ACOE created Rye Harbor in 1962 (ish) the dredge material was placed on marsh grass and made the parking lot that is there now. Each year the parking lot needs to be graded due to the washout.
  - b) Launch Ramp-improvements could include widening the launch ramp and adding a floating dock down the middle
  - c) Fuel System-options for relocating fuel system if/when the pier is replaced. In the meantime, concrete barriers have been put in place to protect parts of the fuel system on land.
  - d) Pile and Timber Pier-replace the existing pier with a steel pile and concrete deck and raise it up in anticipation of sea level rise. Discussion included options to move the dispenser, allowable length of hose, tying the fuel with the replacement of the dock, lengthening the dock (not an option as it is a federal navigation area) and that engineering reviews are needed to determine best course of action.
  - e) Paved Areas-tied into mitigating the storm conditions, engineers would need to determine what is stable and what is not stable
  - f) Property Elevation- typically after storms there is standing water for several days afterwards. Land is lost each year, again engineers would need to determine options. Exploratory discussions with PDA Engineering have determined that anticipated permitting costs would be astronomical as the entire facility is in the wetlands area.
  - g) Utilities-Rye water and electricity exist. Telecommunication lines are located in the Port office that go out underwater to Shoals Lab and Star Island.
- iii. Economic Review of Existing Conditions-Chairman Levesque asked the committee to consider the facility in 40 to 50 years. The protection of the facility from storm damage is a top priority. His thoughts are maintaining as a Marine Facility, maintain commercial fishing, maximize parking for the commercial side,

recreation, access for public, keep it a working water front, add picnic tables, and maximize revenues for the PDA and tax payers. A reference to the success of the Jenness Beach project was made. Discussion included the need to determine and define what type of facility we want there? Is it a marine facility, is it a park, or is it something in between? That needs to be determined prior to any engineering, concept studies etc. Fournier reiterated that the first concern should be to keep it a working water front and to address the storm issues so that in the next 50-60 years it will still be there. Future Parking and Infrastructure Requirements

- iv. Public Outreach
- v. Define Timeline
- vi. Funding Availability (**GOFERR**) Brean spoke on seeking GOFERR funding and the master plan, parking lot, launch ramp, and infrastructure. Request to allow staff to deviate from working on the master plan and allow the Division to put something before the Board to seek GOFERR funding (deadline is December) to address the immediate concerns for revetment repairs, fuel system repairs, pier repairs etc. This would allow the Division to complete projects that do not require extensive permitting. On a side note, Groux suggested that there is a State Park up the road which could possibly accommodate some of the retail operators that are currently at the Rye Marine Facility.

**c. Upcoming Board items**

- i. Report on use of ARPA funds-Discussion on the change of use of \$500,000 awarded for the Wetlands Mitigation for the BUILD and Functional Replacement project. The Army Corp would not approve the mitigation plan so in order to keep the BUILD project on schedule the Division had the option to make a payment to the NHDES Aquatic Restoration Mitigation (ARM) fund.
- ii. Request to approve a Delegation of Authority for any BUILD Project change orders to allow for immediate action in an effort to keep the project moving along.

**V. Press Questions**

There were no members of the press present.

**VI. Adjournment**

Director Fournier made a motion to adjourn, Director Anderson seconded and the meeting adjourned at 9:50 AM.