

**Water Front Safety Committee
January 19, 2019**

Minutes

Attendance:

Committee: Craig Brigham, Gordon Fuller, Bill Haverty, Mike Lannan, Jen Tabb, Jeffrey Wilt

Community Participants: Jim Coughlin, Erick Ekberg, Jim Facey, Emerson Smith, Lisa & Dan Webster

The meeting was called to order at 3:00

Introduction by Jeffrey Wilt: The committee was formed by the Northport Village Overseers with participants from the Yacht Club, the Wharfmaster, and a beach/kayak user to develop both short-term (2019 season) and longer-term recommendations with respect to daily, weekly, and long-term storage of all types of watercraft at the dinghy dock and along the shore in Village owned land. The goal is to balance the uses of the boat owners with the uses of non-boat owners in a safe and responsible way that does not result in overly unsafe conditions, unnecessary damage to the watercraft or other infrastructure, or inhibit the use of the village by boaters and non-boaters alike.

Craig Brigham read the first half of the Northport Yacht Club's "Dinghy Letter" for the benefit of community participants (copy attached).

This committee will be meeting at least once per month to formally discuss the issues and work on a recommendation to the overseers for incorporation in a Waterfront ordinance. It is unclear at this point whether an ordinance can be developed and approved before the 2019 season, so the committee is developing both a short-term and a long-term strategy. The Committee focused on 3 key short-term issues during the initial meeting:

One: Definition of a dinghy.

The committee and community participants discussed reasonable limits on the size of dinghies and engine horsepower of dinghies that should be left overnight at the boat float attached to the wharf, and at the outer (non-connected) float. A straw poll of committee members resulted in the majority favoring the following for at least the summer of 2019 to relieve some congestion, as possibly longer:

- 12' Max length for dinghies with max width of 5 ½ feet
- 9.9 HP Max for dinghies overnight on the boat float
- 25 HP Max for dinghies overnight on the outer float

Two: Notification of proposed changes and education of the waterfront rules in general.

Discussion centered predominately around notification as part of a permitting process for the summer of 2019, so this item was tabled for future meeting, to start the third issue on the agenda.

Three: Permitting of Watercraft.

The committee and community participants discussed the possibility of permits, who would issue and manage them, different permitting options and associated fees. Permitting options ranged from a nominal fee for dinghies only on the wharf to reasonable fees for dinghies stored on the wharf, dinghies stored on the shore, kayaks, and paddleboards left overnight, to everything in between. Someone asks what Belfast charges for fees and the discussion seemed to center around a consensus that something should be charge at a comparable rate to Belfast at a minimum for the dinghies to gather data on the true needs, and to use the permitting process as a tool for Item 2 above. The committee settled on a favorable vote for \$25 permit fee for residents and \$100 permit fee for non-residents for access to the boat float. The definition of resident still needs to be discussed (i.e. NVC, Northport, Maine, etc.)

There were many ideas “floated” (pun intended) for other watercraft, dinghies on the beach, weekly fee options, enforcement, etc. It was agreed that the rest of this topic needed a fresh start at the next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for February 16 at 3 PM. There will also be a call in number for that meeting, so if any of these items of discussion are of interest to members of the community (boaters and non-boaters alike) please consider listening in and providing input.

Meeting adjourned at 4:30

October 20, 2018

NYC Board of Overseers Safety Committee

Based on observations and significant input from our membership and other users of the dock facilities, especially the boat float, we feel that the overcrowding dinghy issue has reached the point where something needs to be done for a variety of reasons, with safety being at or near the top of the list. There were reports of several mishaps this summer involving people trying to get in and out of their dinghies which were tied to the main float. Fortunately, no one got seriously hurt to our knowledge, but it is clear that there are too many dinghies tied to the boat-float during the core portion of the summer (July & August), and that only a few dinghy owners take the existing rules seriously or even know what they are. At one time, we counted about 30 dinghies tied to the boat-float this summer and frankly about 22+/- is a reasonable capacity in our opinion. Despite the current posted rules and regulations, some people still seem to be unaware of them and/or have not even taken the time to read them, while others just will not make the effort and/or take the time to comply. The end result is an overcrowding/safety issue for the core weeks of the summer season. The current out-float which was added approximately 8-10 years ago was at the time a joint venture by the club and village to be used by the club for deck storage of its two 420 sailboats, as well as by the village for overflow dinghy tie-ups. Since then the overcrowding issue has become significantly worse, and while some folks have made the effort to use the out-float for dinghy storage, most simply have not.

Now, it is time to take additional steps as the overcrowding issue has increased and is out of control. Not only is the out-float an aggravation to use on many occasions, but the situation also presents safety issues for users loading/unloading, and tying up their dinghies. We propose the following for you to consider:

- 1) The waterfront rules especially relative to use of the main boat float should be looked at and revised as determined to be appropriate---by

a committee including the wharf master.

- The club requests representation on this committee.
 - “Dinghies” should be defined.
 - What is the appropriate number of dinghies to allow
 - How many public use/NYC dinghies shall be allowed to tie up (currently 2)
 - length/width limits (presently 12' maximum length)
 - Should there be a maximum horsepower (no limit currently)
 - Should it be required that motors be left down, or at least have propeller protection
 - Should the railing tie up bar be removed and replaced with rings/cleats
 - Should spaces be provided for short term or visiting guests, or priority go to Northport or Village residents
- 1) We need to get the word out to all potential users about the rules and what is expected of them.
- Users should sign a contract document agreeing to follow the rules in order to use the facilities
 - Users should be further educated/informed of what is expected and required
 - Letters should go out to village residents, tax payers and perhaps all mooring permit holders in the anchorage which include copies of the pertinent rules and possibly a use-contract to significant
 - More signage should be posted on the dock and boat float highlighting some of the more significant requirements for dinghy tie-ups, especially at the boat-float along with general consequences for noncompliance described
- 1) Dinghy tie up permits should be considered.
- We favor one permit/one small nominal fee for the first year for use of any of our facilities (main boat-float, out-float, or public beach areas)
 - We also think permits should be required for storage of kayak/canoe/paddle boards, small sailboats, i.e. sunfish.

- This permitting will also provide much needed information to create a database of who is using our facilities and what types of boats are being stored
- Commercial rental entities for kayak/canoe/paddle boards, etc would also be included in the permit regulations, as it is clear that they, or their customers, are using our north shore banking/beach area and significantly contributing to the overcrowding issue there.
- Perhaps even storage racks that could be rented should be considered for this area, although they would need to be low profile units so as not to obstruct views and not be eyesores.

1) Out-float: Something needs to change relative to the out-float in our opinion— it is not currently user friendly or safe. We see a couple of options for its use:

2) a) Consult engineering to consider attaching the out-float to the existing boat-float. When the out-float was built, it was specifically built 14 by 16' so at some time it might be attached to the main boat float which is 16' wide. Additional moorings would be needed with a hook up system to attach the two floats. The out-float could be attached for only July and August and then left on its current mooring for the remaining time it is in the water. It could be attached to the boat-float in a manner that could be fairly easily detached and put out on a mooring if needed due to pending weather concerns.

3)

(b) If attaching the out-float to the boat-float is not feasible for next season (which is probable), there are things we can do to make the moored out-float more user friendly and safe. We as a club recognize that having two 420 sailboats on the deck makes the deck more cumbersome and use of the out-float less safe and inviting. So, to make it safer and more attractive to users, the club would consider moving at least one or both 420 sailboats off the deck so that people can safely access the deck of the out-float for dinghy tie-ups. Also, a boarding ladder should be installed on the out-float in the event of

someone falling into the water when using the out-float.

(5) We have looked into launch service and determined that it would be a very cumbersome and expensive venture for the club or village to take on. We also feel that it would not have a significant impact on the dinghy overcrowding issue we now have, as it is unlikely that many people will choose to give up their dinghies—in our opinion. Factors to consider are :

- Appropriate Coast Guard licenses/permits
- Insurance, including worker' comp
- boats/motor
- staffing: how many days a week, how many hours
- what is the true demand
- the club is not in a position to take this on, does the Village want to?

We feel that folks who are looking for such a service should make their own arrangements with private parties for such service. We would welcome a private party who might like to perform this service. We simply do not feel that a formal launch service is warranted and is not something we want to take on at this time.

Please consider our recommendations outlined above and let us know what you think and what we can do together to resolve some of our waterfront issues that very much need some attention.

Sincerely,

NYC BOD