

Islesboro Harbor Committee
Regular Meeting
Thursday, October 30, 2025
In- Person Meeting at 6:30 PM, Town Office

 APPROVED

12/18/25

MINUTES

Call the meeting to order and establishment of a Quorum:

George Evans called the meeting to order and a quorum was established at 6:29 pm.

Members Present: Chair Ken Smith (Zoom), Earl MacKenzie, George Evans, Greg Janney, Gil Rivera,

Members Absent: Dylan Purington, Peter Anderson

Others Present: None

Others Present via Zoom: None

Approval of Minutes of July 17, 2025, Regular Meeting.

Motion: To approve Minutes of July 17, 2025, as written, E. MacKenzie, seconded by G. Rivera. No Discussion. Roll Call. Motion passed 4 yes, 0 no, Unanimous.

Anyone Wishing to Address the Harbor Committee

None.

Harbor Master & Deputy Harbor Master Reports

Deputy Harbor Master

- Dylan was absent. He provided a written report, read by Carrie:
- I patched a superficial piece of 4-inch x 8-inch decking on the pier at the turn of the Top of the East incline where it meets the pier at Grindle Point. It is non-structural, but was a place where fishing gear could 'hang-up' while being dragged onto or off of the incline. I used pressure treated lumber and galvanized nails.
- I posted a wind advisory for Friday on the bulletin board and I believe the Town Office sent out a notice. I also asked that people remove their unused dinghies from Seal Harbor as the finger floats are coming out ~Nov 1st
- Most dinghies are out for the season. There are a couple that are untended and I plan to contact the owners and suggest they haul.
- The fishermen, boat yards, and Quicksilver boats are on and off of the floats regularly, but no one is lingering much without permission, that I have seen.
- I plan to buy a housing for the fire extinguisher as well as a new fire extinguisher for the pier ~\$100.
- A well-intended summer person contacted Town Moorings on our behalf to inquire about the cost. Town Moorings responded to both of us that the subscription cost has risen to ~\$1,250 per year. This is an increase of ~\$950 since it was first brought up in the spring. My concern is the cost is going to continue to increase as time goes by. I suggest buying a one-year subscription to the program on a trial basis so that:
- Harbor Masters have a program in which to input mooring coordinates.
- The Town can begin the process of documenting the mooring fields and decide if we want to implement a fee structure to raise additional funds for our harbor maintenance. We will have a groundwork of data to do so.
- The float system and pier appear in good repair at this time.

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Harbor Master

- Earl reported that there's an issue with the proximity of Darrell Crate's moorings to the main power cable to Islesboro on the sea bed. Earl spoke with Darrell Crate's captain and requested that they get a diver down to mark the actual location of the cables. They found that two of the moorings were much too close. At Earl's request, they moved them. They're far enough away from the cable that they won't pose a threat. When weather conditions are bad, they will move the larger yacht to Seal Harbor.
- The cable to Seal Island is another concern. Over the years, Earl has had to chase scallop draggers away from that area. It's not marked on NOAA charts. Earl has contacted the caretaker and submitted the coordinates to NOAA. With the government shutdown, the NOAA site has gone dark, but hopefully that will get updated soon. The cable from Seal Island comes to Hermit's Point, but the signs are no longer marking the location.
- Earl reported that it was a quiet summer, and there were no real problems. He had to chase people off the docks occasionally.
- The dinghy floats will be coming out soon. There is one dinghy with an unknown owner. Earl is going to put it in the parking lot.
- There were a few things that came in adrift around the island that had to be towed in. There's an inflatable on the east side. Earl contacted the Coast Guard and various Harbor Masters, but no one has claimed it, so Earl will keep it where it is and use it.

Discussion of Engineering Report for the Seal Harbor Pier Repairs

- Earl stated that we hired Tom Fowler's firm, Terra Firma Professional Engineering (TFPE), to do the engineering design for the new pier. His estimate of \$25,000 to \$27,000 was a lot less than the first quote we got. TFPE is working with a structural design firm, TEC, and they've been over twice.
- They are proposing aluminum decking in premade sections. This seems to be the most reasonable and cost-effective solution.
- There are two designs, one with triangular bracing, and with longer arch sections. We can get estimates on the two options.
- They are proposing that the pier will be over two feet higher than the present one, which is the recommended height increase because of recent storms and sea-level rise.
- The longer ramp we put in is 50 feet, which keeps it at a reasonable incline.
- The firm proposed high-rated pressure-treated wooden pilings, with four pilings towards the end and another four further in.
- They are 40' aluminum spans. The advantage is this could be done relatively quickly, so we wouldn't be out of service for long. The most time-consuming part would be pinning it down.
- We have the landing that Paul Grindle put in based on Tom Fowler's design several years ago when we were having problems. They can utilize that with a little bit of additional work, as the ground support for where they build up and out.
- It will be built in the existing footprint, with a four-foot-wide walkway, making this eligible for Permit-by-Rule. If we deviate from that and go for a full permit, it will be more expensive and require more time.
- If the committee feels comfortable with this basic design, Tom can narrow it down for sending out to get actual estimates so we can start looking at our funding.
- Ken had mentioned a possible 50/50 grant.
- Earl stated that the money that was donated for the recreation dock (which was tabled by the Planning Board) could be repurposed to help with the new pier. Earl has contacted the all but one of the donors.

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Most of them have approved their donations be transferred to this project. Earl is still pursuing one \$20,000 donation. Hopefully, with the \$36,000 in that fund, we will be close to having enough for the 50/50 match. We need to determine this before the next budget cycle.

- The current pier is holding up okay. The rails on the walkway are not the proper height. The Town's insurance company has given us a temporary reprieve because we said we are in the process of getting a new one. We keep having to screw down the decking. There's a lot of rust on the steel carriers and legs and it's getting worse.
- The next step would be getting a package from Tom Fowler that we can start getting estimates on.
- The proposed materials are low-maintenance, and are not susceptible to wind and rust.
- Ken asked how far the proposed bulkhead would be from the existing bulkhead. Earl explained that it would come over the existing bulkhead and extend a little further, building up from the existing bulkhead.
- Ken asked how we would bid this project. Earl replied that Tom Fowler would prepare a bid package for the Town to put out. He believes this can be done quickly.
- Ken stated that we will need the details to apply for a grant.

Discussion of Required Permits for Seal Harbor Pier

- Earl reported that the permitting should be simple, because it would be permit-by-rule. We're replacing an existing structure, with changes in elevation.
- Permit-by-rule is a 14-day permit that must meet certain requirements by the state. We are within the guidelines.
- The project might need Planning Board review. The footprints for the pilings may be different.
- The Town is paying \$27,000 for the engineering. We need to get a price on the project.
- The committee members agreed on going with the proposed aluminum decking.
- Earl suggested that the Harbor Committee schedule a special meeting to get bids before the Select Board budget workshops in March.
- Ken had previously recommended the Small Harbor Improvement Program (SHIP) Grant. <https://www.maine.gov/dot/about/funding/grants/small-harbor-improvement-program>
- Earl will pursue the bid package.

Preliminary Discussion of FY 27 budget (July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027)

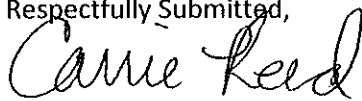
- Ken stated the proposed Seal Harbor dock will be in the budget; we need to get a rough idea of the cost.
- This is a preliminary discussion, and Ken invited committee members to present ideas.
- Gil stated that we need to look into the mooring software that Dylan presented (Town Moorings). This will be a great tool to help us transition to charging mooring fees.
- Earl stated that we need to look at whether the administrative cost of using software is going to be more than what we may recoup from it.
- Earl has taken coordinates for almost all the moorings. If we bring in an outfit to do it, it will cost money.
- Earl believes the question of mooring fees will be a hot-button issue. Discussion about pros and cons.
- Ken stated that there are other factors to consider. Islesboro is a very expensive island. The valuation last year was roughly \$650M. Supposing there are 150 moorings in the mooring fields, if we charge \$100 per mooring, that's \$150,000, which isn't going to make a big difference with the high valuation.

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- Greg added that if you put information into a spreadsheet and feed it in Chat GPT, it will fire off emails and ask for payment. He's not sure we need to pay for a software service.
- Earl stated that we have about 120 moorings within the fields. We should do a cost-benefit analysis. If we talk about going completely around the island, we'll have to go to the Town to change the ordinance. It will become controversial.
- Gil stated that even if we get the grant, half of the funding will be from the taxpayers. There are a lot of homeowners who don't do anything on the ocean. They would have to pay a lot for a handful of people who use the harbor facilities.
- Earl replied that if you're taken off in an emergency with Quicksilver, or getting materials on a barge, you're using Town facilities.
- Ken stated that it's also about general maintenance. The Town owns the two mooring fields, and they should be able to tell us who owns the moorings. All we're missing is the coordinates for a very few. It's inconceivable we've gone two years without having that basic information, which was originally available. From a maintenance perspective of working with the boatyards, Ken thinks they would love to have something out that's concrete and uniform. There's justification for having automated data processing, as it offers the least amount of work for personnel.
- Greg asked if the \$1,500/year allows people to go online and pay the fee themselves. That's a big benefit.
- Carrie suggested reviewing the Town Moorings demonstration from the April 17th Harbor Committee Zoom recording, to see all that the software can do.
<https://youtu.be/mqdEeC3i9Ms?si=nwX1BcBAGfwJK7Cz>
- Gil stated he believes that the rate wouldn't go up every year once we lock in a price.
- Greg stated that it's a nonstarter if the Town doesn't approve us charging for moorings.
- Earl stated we definitely need a database. He's talked with both primary boatyards, who seem to be organized with their mooring databases. That's probably 95% of the moorings.
- Greg added that, for those who own moorings outside of the fields and don't use the Town piers, the Harbor Master is still out there making sure derelict vessels aren't crashing into their moorings or things aren't washing ashore on their property. There's plenty of reason that they can pay an extra fee.
- George stated that we still need to get all the information.
- Gil asked about other items for the budget, such as repairs.
- Earl suggested the he and Dylan talk with Christian Zimmerman at Pendleton Yacht Yard and Josh Conover at Islesboro Marine Enterprises about possible needed repairs.

Motion to adjourn meeting at 7:32 pm by E. MacKenzie, seconded by G. Evans. No discussion. Motion passed
5 yes, 0 no.

Respectfully Submitted,



Carrie Reed, Secretary