

## Harbor Commission Minutes

The Greater Dunkirk Area Harbor Commission meeting was held Wednesday, September 16, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. in the Stearns Building Conference Room.

Members Present: Chairman Jim Nichols • Allan Zurawski, • Gene Pauszek • Kurt Warmbrodt • Dennis Wolfe • Ron Veklotz • Mike Rosing

Members Absent:

Others Present: Patty Pleszewski, Secretary, Youth & Recreation Department • Zen Olow • Gib Snyder, Observer • Kevin Kearns, VP Engagement & Economic Development, SUNY Fredonia • Lance Ehrhardt, Eastern Lake Erie Charter Boat Association

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Nichols. Harbor Commission members recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Motion to accept the August 19, 2015 minutes was made by Al Zurawski. Seconded by Dennis Wolfe. All voting aye. Carried.

Chairman Nichols introduced Kevin Kearns, Ph. D., Vice President of Engagement and Economic Development of SUNY Fredonia to discuss the Lake Erie Discovery Center. Dr. Kearns presented commission members with a proposal called the SUNY 2020: Lake Erie Discover Center which has been submitted and is now in the process and review stages. The project represents a collaboration among SUNY Fredonia, DEC with Federal Agency Fishing and Wildlife as well as a number of other universities to try and bring to Dunkirk specifically on the waterfront a Lake Erie Research and Development Center. Dr. Kearns said that with Lake Erie being an asset and with the lakefront being underdeveloped it is believed that the project would combine the resources of the university on the waterfront for a true research center as well as a hands on aquatics museum and education center that will serve as a major tourist attraction. This project would attract significant tourism as well as generate additional revenue through grants. The project also includes request for funding for a deep water vessel. The Discovery Center's research vessel will provide currently unavailable deep-water access to Lake Erie for collaborative research in areas such as the presence and effects of pollutants, algae blooms, restoration of deep-water species, and impact of invasive species. At full maturity, the project will have an economic impact of \$34.1 million with 383 permanent jobs, generating \$2.2 million in annual state and local tax revenues. Commission member Al Zurawski asked if the proposed 30,000 sq. ft. building also included parking. Dr. Kearns said the plot would allow for approx. 100 parking spaces several acres. The in vision would be a 2-story building with a possible observation deck which would attract tourists.

After further discussion a motion to support the proposal was made by Kurt Warmbrodt. Seconded by Mike Rosing. All voting aye. Carried.

A draft letter will be prepared by Chairman Nichols and Commission Member Al Zurawski to send to the appropriate officials.

Chairman Nichols noted that plans to preserve the Wooden Indian (Lake Shore Drive W.) have to be approved for the structure to be built. Chairman Nichols said the Indian Nation is willing to supply the labor but the design must be approved and materials provided to them.

Commission members are hoping the Indian will be stained and sealed before the winter season approaches.

Commission Member Kurt Warmbrodt spoke regarding previous discussions of a traffic directional change at Point Gratiot. Warmbrodt suggested that maybe a study on the traffic pattern should be discussed on how many cars enter/exit Point Gratiot each day.

Learned that the dredging of the harbor could be this year depending on the weather.

Zen Olow told the Commission that if the boat launch is dredged then something must be done with powering up of the boats. Zurawski suggested that the Harbor Commission take a look at the City Code and recommend to the Common Council amending the Dock and Harbor Use so rules can then be enforced.

Commission Member Gene Pauszek spoke about the concern of the growing population of cormorants and the negative impact they can have. Pauszek recalled reading an article that the large concentration of cormorants can affect the perch population with the ability to dive as deep as they do.

Lance Ehrhardt reported that in 2016, the second week of September there is a convention scheduled at Chautauqua Institute with the Sports Writers. Andrew Nixon, Executive Director of the Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau will be greatly involved. There could be 300-500 visitors and may be even more if they bring the NY State Writers Association.

Zen Olow reported that the Lake Erie Experience will be held on August 10, 2016.

Chairman Nichols will try to make contact with a representative of NRG to attend the next Harbor Commission meeting.

The next Harbor Commission is scheduled for Wednesday, October 21, 2015. Motion to adjourn by Kurt Warmbrodt. Seconded by Al Zurawski. All voting aye. Carried.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted

By Patty Pleszewski  
Patty Pleszewski, Secretary

\*A copy of the recorded meeting (September 16, 2015) is available in the Recreation Department for review.