

Newington Board of Selectmen's Meeting Minutes
Monday, April 28, 2008 Town Hall 6:30pm

Fox Point Dock Rules & Regulations

Chr. Cosmas Iocovozzi called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

Present: Chr Iocovozzi, Selectmen Jan Stuart & Jack O'Reilly, Administrative Assistant Beatrice Marconi and members of the public. *(see attached attendance sheet)*

A handout was available showing the articles proposed at Town Meeting pertaining to the dock. One was a Selectmen proposal, the other was submitted by Gurubhai Khalsa and 24 other registered voters. *(below)*

ARTICLE 17: To see if the Town shall approve the following: It shall be the policy of the Town to adopt the Fox Point Dock regulations shown

- 1) The dock is for Newington mooring owners to gain access to their moorings. Dock usage for other Newington residents may be granted by the Board of Selectmen on an individual case basis if space allows.
- 2) Tenders must be registered annually by owner and size with the town and display a sticker.
- 3) Size limited to 14 ft tiller controlled only tenders.
- 4) The end of the dock is for loading and unloading only.
- 5) The dock is only for Newington residents.
- 6) The Dock Master and Selectmen can limit the number of tenders to avoid over crowding and damage to the dock.
- 7) The town is not responsible for maintaining boats at the dock. Neither the Town, Selectmen or Dock Master are responsible for any theft or damages of goods or property at Fox Point.
- 8) Violation of these regulations shall result in the forfeiture of rights to this dock.

ARTICLE 18: By petition brought forth by Gurubhai K. Khalsa of 11 Old Post Road and at least 24 other registered voters of the Town of Newington, to see if the Town will vote to reinstate and adopt the following dockside rules at Fox Point:

- 1) No exclusive privileges will be granted to any boat owner in Newington.
- 2) Residents of the Town may utilize the town dock at Fox Point, provided their dinghy is 14' in length or less. No special consideration will be given to whether or not they have secured a mooring through the Port Authority.
- 3) In the event a shortage of dock space occurs, every Newington boater will have equal and unrestricted access to the boat ramp, in order to launch their dinghy. This applies to those with moorings, and those without.
- 4) A dock master will be elected by majority vote in the Town elections.

Selectman O'Reilly explained that currently via Selectmen's temporary ordinance, their proposed warrant article is active.

Jack Hoyt gave the history on the dock stating that in 1983 a couple of guys who had boats approached the Selectmen to see if they could build a small dock down there to access their moorings. (Connors, Haskins, Cole, Kent, Eames and Hoyt). It wasn't anything extravagant, as they got poles from here and floats from there but they found within a few years, 25 moorings were established in Newington. They shared dinghy's. As years went on, a cement platform was built at the entrance. It was very low keyed. If there was no room at dock, they would pull up on shore. He felt if in the future more space was needed, then another finger dock could be attached, however encouraged people to approach the Harbor Master to put in more moorings off our coast. Selectman Stuart noted that currently the Harbor Master has 18 moorings now off the shores of Newington.

Linda Khalsa said her goal is to ensure the spirit of Fox Point isn't infringed upon with stringent rules and regulations. The dock should not be exclusive to any particular users and should not be limited to mooring owners only. Sometimes she likes to just get in her dinghy and putt up the river and added that she would like to have the right to dock it there and leave it there.

Selectman O'Reilly said it isn't meant to be a slip rather a tool for access.

Selectman Jan Stuart noted that it was never the Selectmen's intent to limit the use, she just felt it was important that the mooring owners have access. Parking larger boats at the dock is problematic.

Chris Bellmare commented stating that no one is disputing the 14' length, but when you limit the use of the dock to solely mooring owners only, it takes the rights of other boaters away. He relayed that these were the thoughts of the Recreation Committee too. Perhaps eventually more finger docks will be necessary if there are too many dinghies.

John Frink asked how all this came to light. Selectman Stuart answered that a couple of boats last year filled up with water, a larger boat was parked there which threatened the smaller boats. Selectman O'Reilly added that people complained about the lack of access at the end of the dock with people leaving boats tied there for a length of time. John also felt the sticker system would cause more responsibility and creates more burden. Selectman O'Reilly said we need to be able to easily identify boats incase they are in trouble. Mike Marconi added that when a boat breaks away, unless there is a name and number in it, chances are it will never come back to the owner. John Frink went on to say that there will always be some people that don't get to the dock timely after a storm. We should just leave everything alone. Sinking boats will happen whether we have regulations or not.

Randy Durst asked if the Selectmen's regulations stay as they are will they be kicking people off the dock (if they don't have a mooring) which will prevent a guy from hauling his traps, yet this individual has a boat? He went on to say that there are community dinghies there. A lot of people share. Getting a mooring is almost impossible with the existing list. Using an 8' dinghy to access a mooring around the bend could be deadly.

Selectman Stuart wasn't so sure the Town needed a Dock Master at all. If people have a problem, they should call Town Hall or Len and the problem will be fixed. However, Mr. Durst disagreed stating that a Dock Master is a good thing to have who could act as a head of a small committee and could be the boaters' voice.

The Chair asked for a vote by hands on whether the group felt a dock master (liaison to the Selectmen) was necessary. 16 for 6 against Selectman Stuart stated that this person will report to the Board and asked that everyone understand when the Board addresses problems.

Selectman O'Reilly wanted all the attendees to know that engineering on the boat ramp at Fox Point has been done and that the Board is looking to fund its repair/replacement in 2010. *(Applause)*

Gail Pare asked about the number of moorings. Selectman Stuart said she counted 11 off the Point but 18 was reported by the Harbor Master for all of the moorings off the coast of Newington. Gail felt the sticker process was good for IDing purposes incase the boat was in trouble or it broke away. More finger docks could be an overkill but couldn't we just drag and tie to a tree? She agreed that the dock shouldn't be for mooring owners only. Suggested a dinghy rack. She liked the idea of a dock master as it would be someone to contact for information. Last year she saw a sunken boat with the gas can floating with the engine and hull submerged. It would have been nice to know who's property it was to easily give them a call to let them know their boat was in trouble. If a boat sinks and is left unattended, she felt loss of privileges was just.

Jack Pare stated that some people don't like to transport their dinghies on their vehicle every time and agreed with the rack idea. He also agreed with the sticker process to identify.

Sandy Hislop mentioned a place in Kittery that has a massive amount of dinghies with no problems of space. He suggested owners tote 15' or so of line as they all don't need to be dock side. He liked the idea of declaring owners name on the hulls. He added that personally he felt 14' is reasonable.

Dave Sweeney said that use of the dock should be kept as fair as possible and not only for mooring owners. Chr. Iocovozzi felt it was his personal opinion that the 'mooring owners only' clause come out. Mr. Harvey of Beane Lane agreed.

Ted Connors also agreed and said that the long line concept is a great idea. He added that everyone using the dock has great camaraderie and willing to help each other out. He did like the idea of names in the boats. Jim Carroll said that he has lost a dinghy from the dock. He'd feel better if he could chain and pad lock in some manner. He went on to say that most dock users have bailed a boat out more than once down there. Mr. Cole stated he lost a dinghy in the past too.

Chr. Iocovozzi explained that the end of the dock was always left open for emergency vessels to access the dock like the Coast Guard, Fire Department, State...incase of immediate unloading to an ambulance or what not.

Regarding people fishing off the dock, that was not an issue. No problem.

Selectman O'Reilly stood firm with his thoughts that mooring owners should be able to access the dock and made the following suggestions to consider.

1. No exclusive privileges will be granted to any boat owner in Newington
2. All residents of the Town may utilize the town dock at Fox Point, provided their boat is tiller driven, 14' in length or less
3. Boats must be identified with the owner's name as a minimum
4. The end of the dock is for loading and unloading only
5. The Town is not responsible for maintaining boats at the dock
6. Violations of these regulations shall result in the forfeiture of rights to the dock

The meeting was concluded with the Selectmen urging anyone that would like to be considered as a Dock Master to forward a letter of interest to Beatrice, the Administrative Assistant before May 5.

Selectman O'Reilly stated that the rules will be retyped and will come before the Selectmen May 5th for a vote.

Respectively Submitted

Beatrice Marconi
Administrative Assistant