



Peaks Island Council
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, May 24, 2017

6:15 p.m., MacVane Community Center

Call to Order: 6:15 p.m.

Roll Call: Lisa Peñalver, Timmi Sellers, Mary Anne Mitchell, Steve Anderson, Patrick Flynn, Stuart Jackson, David Stankowicz, Island Liaison Mike Murray, Councilor Belinda Ray, Councilor Nick Mavodones, Mayor Ethan Strimling

Sellers made the motion to approve the April 24th meeting minutes. Stankowicz seconded. Unanimous vote to approve. Motion passed.

Guest Presentation: Casco Bay Lines

Representatives from Casco Bay Lines in attendance included: Henry (Hank) Berg General Manager; Caitlin (Caity) Gildart, Sales Director; Paul Pottle, Director of Projects; Nick Mavodones, Operations Manager

CBL formed a group to consider options for crowd control during peak summer hours. Possibilities that were discussed but ruled out at this time include:

- Maine State Pier is not a feasible option due to summer concerts
- The Whale Wall was attempted last season and was deemed unsuccessful due to the heat
- Along the docks causes greater congestion
- Priority or designated boarding procedures while legal, involve complex logistical challenges

Some of the ideas CBL has identified to implement on a trial basis include:

- Two additional employees to assist with crowd control during the Friday-Monday overload. These employees will cover jobs in the ticket office during peak times in order to free up more seasoned staff to assist with the larger crowds.
- Barricades have been ordered to construct separate paths for disembarking and embarking passengers.
- Walkie-Talkies and Headsets have been purchased for communication between the boat and terminal staff.
- When possible, the down bay boat will be docked at Gate 2 or 3, further away from Gate 5 in an attempt to distribute the crowds over a larger area.

CBL Representatives stated these items will be piloted over several weeks to determine their effectiveness, and are considered interim or trial solutions at this time. Public engagement will be part of Phase 2 of the CBL Terminal Planning process.

Items discussed during public comment included:

- Consideration of separate boarding for bicycles, or directing bikes to one side for boarding
- Bottle neck of lines for Gate 5 intersecting with ticket lines out the terminal door
- Collecting feedback on items implemented as well as new ideas via email to: NickM@cascobaylines.com, CaityB@cascobaylines.com

- Consideration of routing arriving passengers to only one side of the terminal while waiting/departing passengers are grouped on the opposite side
- Reviewing boat schedules with a third party to help alleviate congestion
- A follow up meeting in 8 weeks or so to further discuss and allow feedback
- Ensuring the benches near Gate 5 are kept available for those with mobility challenges
- Setting a limit for the number of bikes allowed per boat, and asking bike passengers to stay with their bike for the duration of the ferry ride
- Capturing real-time photos at peak times throughout the season to be able to review the reality of congestion and effectiveness of implemented solutions
- Signage and announcements to inform people of procedures including priority boarding for those requiring assistance and bicycle boarding
- Creating and using a checklist for all staff to have a consistent way to collect and report data to determine success
- Using the Bay Mist for extra runs of 'walk-ons' and larger wedding groups or having Peaks walk-ons for the Down Bay boat and have them stop at Peaks to drop off only
- Electronic ticketing made available for everyone, but boarding separately such as is done at Maine Turnpike stations with EZ Pass
- Inviting CBL members to experience the ferry as an islander

Transportation Committee Presentation: Parking

Anderson stated that the demand for islander parking on the mainland is much greater than the current supply. He stated the PIC Transportation Committee, comprised of PIC and community members, has identified the following proposal:

Proposed short-term solutions:

- Open the metered parking that exists just beyond India Street to allow for approximately 12 additional Island Sticker parking spots.
- Open the City owned lot at the end of Thames Street which is currently used for police overflow parking.

Proposed long-term solution:

- Ensure that all ongoing City development efforts include a provision for island resident parking, as well as parking for all City residents.

Anderson stated that these recommendations have been presented to the City Manager by Mayor Ethan Strimling. He went on to say that continued efforts will include active communication with the City Council to ensure understanding of the issue, partnering with the City Council on development efforts and continued education of getting islanders involved.

Public Comment:

Clarification was made that the recommendations involve increasing the number of street parking spaces for islanders, because currently the area designated for island sticker street parking is not exclusive to islanders, but can be used by anyone and everyone.

AM suggested consideration of using the Homeland Security lot to be used as resident parking for 6 months of the year when the cruise port is not being utilized.

AM stated that looking for additional existing street parking is not a viable option because the East End neighborhoods are already full and have limited street parking. He stated that islanders on all islands need a designated parking garage where they are not impacting street parking for other residents.

AM suggested the space between Hamilton Marine and the waterfront doesn't seem to be utilized and may be a good area for consideration, as it does not impact commercial or residential areas.

Councilor Ray stated that street parking on Munjoy Hill is already available as long as the time limitations and other parking regulations are adhered to, and that no sticker is required. Ray stated that she had researched Islander Parking Agreement to ensure the City has fulfilled its obligations. She stated the City originally promised to provide 25 Island Parking spaces, and created 29. Ray stated that an additional 26 spaces were added later, creating a total of 55 parking spaces designated for island resident use. She went on to say that parking is a challenge throughout the City of Portland and that every residential parking zone is open to all and not exclusive. Ray stated that she encourages everyone who is able to employ alternative methods of transportation rather than personal passenger vehicles. Ray went on to say she discussed the Thames Street lot with the City Manager, who is looking into opening up some additional public spaces at that location. Ray stated there are monthly spaces available at the 58 Fore Street lot, and that METRO is also looking at options to maximize islander use.

AM stated that there used to be a lot designated for islander parking, he stated that he has missed boats trying to find parking. He stated he feels that the City benefits greatly from the ferry, islands and Maine State Pier and that the residents need to be part of the conversation to identify viable parking solutions.

AM stated he believes Island Resident stickers are not limited to property owners, and are being purchased by contractors. Council members agreed to check for clarification.

Further discussion included timed event parking near the Maine State Pier, the unique challenge of the need for parking on the mainland for islanders as island residents are not able to drive easily to their homes. Waterfront development was discussed further, including the additional parking aspect as a built in consideration.

Peñalver stated that PIC members need to vote on a recommendation that the City make available additional resident parking spaces for island residents.

Councilor Comment:

Mitchell stated she feels the PIC Transportation Committee should be allowed to work with the City Council directly and is unsure why a vote is needed.

Peñalver stated the reason for the process at hand is to present short-term solutions in order to gain some immediate relief while longer term solutions are being determined.

Peñalver made the motion to begin the process of working with the City to expand Island Resident parking:

- 1. Open metered parking spaces on Thames Street to allow Island Resident stickered parking***
- 2. To open up low or no cost temporary parking for island residents at the 25,000 sq ft lot at the end of Thames Street***
- 3. Devise a long-term solution for island resident parking on the mainland***

Stankowicz seconded the motion. Unanimous vote to approve. Motion passed.

Committee Reports:

Zoning: (Sellers) The HomeStart Zoning Committee has been meeting and will be presenting ordinance change recommendations to a public forum in July. The City has approved funds for creation of the dog park on Peaks.

Environmental Committee: (Mitchell) The City's Co-op Tree Planting Program is underway and that Lausier Gardens is the participating nursery. More information is available online here: <http://www.portlandmaine.gov/611/Co-Op-Tree-Planting-Program> . Five houses were recently weatherized during Weatherization Week sponsored by the Island Institute. Anyone interested in purchasing window inserts may contact Bob Villforth or Randy Schaeffer. The Island Institute's Spark Grant was awarded to install LED light bulbs at 4 locations on the island to reduce energy usage and costs: Children's Workshop, Lions Club, Faye Garman House and the Legion. Art Astarita recently held a presentation regarding private well water quality; Art has made himself available to anyone who has concerns or questions regarding their private well and water quality. There will be an information session on Thursday, June 8th at 7:00 p.m. on Tick Prevention.

New Business:

Reallocation of Funds: Peñalver stated there is a request to use \$300 for the island etiquette signs which will be placed in the ferry terminal as well as on the boats and have been created in collaboration between PIC and CBIDA. The Backshore Committee (with members from PEAT, PILP and PIC) has requested \$300 to pay for instructional signs to be placed on the backshore.

Peñalver made the motion to approve \$300 for payment of the island etiquette signs created by CBIDA and PIC. Sellers seconded. Unanimous vote to approve. Motion passed.

Peñalver made the motion to reallocate \$300 for contribution to the two signs created by the Backshore Committee. Stankowicz seconded. Unanimous vote to approve. Motion passed.

The following topics were tabled until further notice: additional reallocation of budget surplus, newsletter.

Open Public Comment:

Sellers addressed City and CBL Representatives regarding Waterfront Concerts, asking for a concert schedule to be posted inside the terminal. She went on to say that last season a person was placed between Commercial Street and the parking garage, creating serious delays and a bottleneck situation. It was determined that the City provided that staff, that a delay was recognized and that staff was selectively chosen since then.

Councilor Ray provided an update on the Golf Cart ordinance stating that the proposed ordinance change has passed the Health and Human Services Committee and has been sent on to the City Council. She stated the Council always conducts two 'reads': the first read will be held June 5th, the second read will be June 19th and will include public comment and a vote.

Mitchell stated that the Tree Committee continues to work with Jeff Tarling on replanting trees around the island and that it has been determined the trees across from the Inn will not be replaced because of congestion and limited sidewalk space.

Next PIC Meeting: Wednesday, June 28, 2017, 6:15 pm at the Community Center

Meeting Adjournment: 8:21p.m.