

Stamford Harbor Master's Report 11/21/2017

Moorings

- Mooring status (as of 11/17/2017);
 - Approved - 75
 - Under Review - 00
 - Approval on hold - 04
 - Expired - 11
- I am already fielding enquiries for new and relocated moorings for the 2018 season.

Harbor Activity / Safety

- As of this past week, more than a few boats have been taking advantage of the fall run of fish so on the water activity has not yet reached 'winter levels'.
- Despite the season now quickly winding down, there have been a number of safety matters occurring;
 - At 18:20 on 11/1/2017 (while yet again walking *Harbor Dog* on West Beach), a Mayday call was heard on VHF-16 from a center console boat just outside of Stamford Lighthouse stating "I'm going down. I need help fast". USCG responded and tasked one of their boats. TowBoat US also acknowledged the call, was underway within 3-minutes of the call and on-scene within 8 minutes. They took the casualty onboard, put pumps aboard to control the flooding and towed the boat to the West Beach boat ramp where it was recovered to a trailer. Darien Police boat also responded as did the SFD boat, departing the dock almost 20 minutes after the initial call. SPD Harbor unit was called but were not on-duty. This call was unusual in that it was made and controlled on marine vhf radio. Congratulations to everyone who responded, attended or was tasked. It all went very well with no confusion over location, what was needed or who was doing what.
 - During the high winds at the end of October, a yacht moored at TGM marina partially broke free and was 'banging against' other vessels. This was seen and reported to me by Jardar Nygaard (oysterman) who went across to try and secure the boat but was unable to do so alone. TGM manager was contacted, attended dealt.
 - Over the weekend of 4/5th, the Hurricane Barrier was closed during the high tide period. Whilst it was quite a big tide with the possibility of a small surge, it was very badly circulated or announced (not everyone uses Facebook). It caught out multiple boaters both outside the barrier trying to return after fishing, and inside trying to get out to meet pre-arranged end of season haul-out facilities.
 - During the same weekend, a call for assistance was heard from a yacht towing a disabled power boat towards Stamford. The yacht had only a very small engine and was making little headway in the conditions. TowBoat US was already committed so the Harbor Master attended and took over the tow (see figure 1) near Green #32 returning the boat to Brewers Marina. The single manned SPD Harbor Unit offered to launch and assist but after discussion, Sgt Fitzgibbons arranged reception at the marina as staff were not present and provided support securing the boat on arrival.



Figure 1. Disabled boat under tow to Stamford

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Police Harbor Unit

- The yacht which grounded and sunk near Cove Island last month has now been recovered (see figure 2) and disposed of by the owner at no expense to the city. This was accomplished by use of a very large tow truck (see figure 3), several chain saws (see figure 4) and, most importantly, the fantastic persuasive ability of SPD Harbor Unit supervisor, Sgt. Fitzgibbons.
 - This event high-lights the need for proper equipment to be readily available within our harbor to effect recovery of what, at 27 feet,



Figure 2. Recovery of yacht at West Beach boat ramp.



Figure 3. a large tow truck was needed to remove the yacht from the water.



Figure 4. The yacht had to be cut into sections small enough to be taken for recycling

was only a modestly sized boat. Had there been a risk of injury or pollution, or had the owners not been responsible enough to take prompt and effective action, this incident could have had a far less satisfactory outcome.

- The Police Harbor Unit has also attended numerous other calls including further boats taking on water and requiring assistance. (Sgt Fitzgibbons will be able to provide further information on request).

Other matters

- Due to weather and tidal issues, O&G have had their barge schedule disrupted requiring excess barges to be staged on the buoy. They have contacted me each time to confirm that such action was in order and they have maintained a tug in or very close to the harbor during such times in case it was needed. The commercial users of the harbor are making every effort to liaise with us to ensure that the harbor operates effectively and safely.

Harbor Commission Boat

- It has again been prearranged with city risk management for the boat to remain operational throughout the winter and we will be based at Czescik Marina.
- The boat has been refueled and the bill has been submitted and reported as paid.

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- Repairing the inoperative safety strobe light on the boat has not proved as simple as anticipated. The Deputy Harbor Master and myself have the matter slated as a 'winter project'.
- The city marinas are closing for the winter as from Thanks Giving weekend. From then, recreational use of the harbor will almost cease for the winter, except for organized 'frost-biting' and a few hardy souls (that don't know any better). The Police Harbor Unit, Deputy Harbor Master and myself will still be out and about, but may have a lower visible profile than during the season. We will all be available if needed (just call) and Yale and myself will be available to supplement or support the Police and Fire department marine activities if required.

Respectfully submitted

Captain Eric Knott

Captain Yale Greenman

State of Connecticut Harbor Master, Stamford

State of Connecticut Deputy Harbor Master, Stamford