

To: Town of Mattapoisett
From: Sgt. J.R. Simmons
Date: 15 FEB 15
Re: 2015 Annual Town Report

I am writing the Harbormaster's 2015 Annual Town Report while watching what seems like a never ending cycle of blizzards! As I sit in my houseboat, I can only see a few slips down the dock before the view vanishes in the snow. Like all of you, I am anxiously awaiting the arrival of spring!

It has come to my attention that there has not been a harbormaster report in the last few years. I started the job on September 1, 2013, so I would like to give a brief rundown on what the office has done since my arrival.

During the summer of 2014 we embarked on several projects intended to make things nicer for the townfolks and the waterfront users. From simply painting the skiff space numbers on the main town docks to construction projects, we were busy.

The first job was to give the office a makeover in order to make it more customer friendly. By removing the old and rusty furniture, putting a new floor in, giving it a general cleaning, and acquiring new desks, bookshelf, printer, and file cabinet, it now looks nice and we still have a large supply of dog biscuits for those of you who walk your BFFs (best furry friends) on the dock! (Thanks Horace, for starting the tradition!) Please feel free to stop by anytime.

We were able to renew the contract with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for the pumpout facility, which had not been done for several years. We keep track of the gallons pumped, do a lot of paperwork, and they send us \$3500 per year to make sure it keeps working. That allows me to use money in the budget for other purposes, it keeps the harbor cleaner, and is a win for everyone.

The racks at the town landing had originally been constructed for the purpose of holding dinghies. However, it became extremely obvious that the vast majority of users were kayakers, so we repurposed the racks, making them look better, accommodate more vessels, and be more user friendly. Without the help of Asst. Harbormasters PJ Beaudoin and newly appointed Jim Sullivan, it would not have happened. We will be adding other racks around town at Ned's Point, Ship Street, and the town docks this spring.

Ship Street was a mess with abandoned dinghies and sailboards. We removed all of them after posting notices on them. No one ever claimed any one of them. The town barn cut back the vegetation and we were able to clean up the place. Thank you Barry Denham! This year we plan to build racks for that location as well.

The electrical project to run new power lines down to Mello (Short) Wharf and the Timber Pier was finished this summer. The original problem was exposed wires and deteriorating steel pipe through which the wire ran, which were putting everyone at risk. The project was first proposed and authorized at town meeting before I arrived.

A major project was the additions to the dinghy dock. We were able to purchase three relatively new floats (3 years old) from New Bedford Community Boating Center. With the assistance of Triad Boat Yard who not only picked them up, and got them in the water and moored for us, but also allowed us to use his yard for to make the changes to the system that allowed us to integrate them with our existing system, the new system is now in place.. The summer help (Patrick Cooney, an MMA grad

who has just finished his first season as third mate on a 1000' iron ore carrier on the Great Lakes) and Assistant Harbormaster PJ Beaudoin did the vast amount of work on the system.

A concern of many people was delineating the recreation area on the south side of the harbor. We built eight channel markers using PVC pipe for about a third of the cost of purchasing new ones. Four were used to mark the corners of the recreation area, two for the beach area, and two speed limit channel markers. Thanks to the Marion Harbormaster, Mike Cormier, for his assistance in deploying them.

During the summer of 2014 we rounded up runaway boats, recovered kids who were just learning to sail but couldn't figure out how to run against the wind, made emergency repairs to the town beach, assisted in getting a stuck-in-the-mud quahogger as the tide was coming up, assisted in the search for a man overboard (who, sadly, later died), pumped out and saved two sinking boats, and kept watch during those infamous SE storms which unfortunately sunk a beautiful large vessel on its mooring as well as flipping others on their moorings. We were able to give out a number of moorings and get a big bite out of the waiting lists. Lots of paperwork!

The major project for this winter has been to clean up and organize the storage/workshop at the rear of the building. Ken Pacheco (retired police officer) painted the place (under pretty adverse, cold, conditions!) after we removed everything from the area. He did a great job. While he did his work, all the items we kept were in a trailer loaned to us by the Town Barn...thanks, Barry Denham. We were able to get the tools all in one place, organize all the parts used to repair things like the pumpout and those items used for the boat, as well as storage for seasonal items. A number of things that were useful, just not by us, were given to other town departments.

Even though I was a New Bedford Police Officer for 42 years, ran the dive team for 28 years, and was the de facto harbormaster in New Bedford for most of that time, this has been a very different experience for me. The gentlemen who work for this office are quality people and care for the town. My hat is off to them. Thank you very much for your support. I also must thank the Marion Harbormaster Michael Cormier (also a Mattapoisett resident) and his Assistant harbormaster, Isaac Perry, for all of their help and advice. They have been extraordinary.

I also want to thank the residents of Mattapoisett and the users of the waterfront for their understanding and assistance in helping me to learn about the wants and needs of the users of this beautiful waterfront. Please feel free to stop by, email, or call anytime to discuss any situation.

The town selectmen, administrator, his staff, and the people of the various departments in town hall have all been fantastic and very helpful. A special thanks to Police Chief Mary Lyons and her officers, who are always available to assist at any time. As you read this, you can see that any job was a coordinated effort among the town departments. Thank you all!

Sgt. J.R. Simmons (NBPD-Ret.)
Harbormaster - harbormaster@mattapoisett.net
Office 508-758-4191
Cell 508-742-5800

Assistant Harbormasters

Gerald (PJ) Beaudoin
James Sullivan

Wharfingers

Captain Robert Ketchel (USCG-Ret)
Clint (Buddy) Allen (NBFD-Ret)
Victor Demski