

To: Town of Mattapoisett  
From: Sgt. J.R. Simmons  
Date: 21MAY16  
Re: 2016 Annual Town Report

Last year, in February, I started my report saying that I was sitting in my houseboat waiting for a never ending series of blizzards to hopefully one day end. Well, this year I am writing this report at the end of May. Somehow it almost seems as though the weather isn't that much better, but at least no blizzards!

During the late fall of 2014 into the winter months of early 2015 we began to use the new mooring program from PeopleGIS. The first billing went out by email by the new company. We migrated data over from the old program to the new one. The data was resisting! It was not well done originally, so it fought us in making it work. Nick Nelson, who worked for the town's highway department most of the time, has been doing the bulk of the work on the computer. He has a degree in GIS so he was a logical fit for that job. Ultimately the town moved him to that position permanently since many departments are using the program. He has been doing a fabulous job of sorting out the harbormaster data which was quite frankly, in very poor condition. I like the program very much and has made my job significantly better since it is cloud based and I can now access data that was not previously available except during town hall working hours.

The big news of the winter of 2014-15 was the huge amount of snow and ice. The harbor froze over completely. This resulted in a number of pilings being lifted out which ultimately disappeared, or they cracked and broke below the mud line. By spring I was not able to put the floats in for the dinghy dock system, because there was little left to hold onto them. At the same time the steel piles that hold the pumpout floats were badly deteriorated. The time had come to replace 11 of them. Unfortunately, everyone else on the coast had the same problems, and every company was booked solid. We were able to get AGM Marine out of New Bedford to come and do the work in June, while in transit from one job to another, after a vote by town meeting allowed us to use the remainder of the electrical bond for that purpose. Late start, but all worked out!

Adam Perkins, age 16, had put together a plan for a community project in order to obtain the rank of Eagle Scout. It was approved by the National Office of the Boy Scouts of America. He then built two beautiful kayak racks which were installed at the town wharves. They were almost immediately filled up and town folks were able to have a convenient place to store their kayaks, get plenty of exercise, and enjoy the beautiful harbor. Toward the end of the summer we built and added a third kayak rack at the Landing (and it still isn't enough!). Thank you so much, Adam.

During the summer of 2015 we were able to give out a number of moorings and by the end of the summer I had been able to offer moorings to everyone on the list. Some folks were not ready and took a pass. They were surprised when their names came up and were just not ready (kids still in college, weren't ready to buy a boat yet, and so on). We ended the season with everyone on the lists that wanted a mooring, got one, and interestingly enough, we had 21 left over. Of course, this year word must be out and the list is growing daily!

We had the fifth largest seizure of illegal sea bass in town when the shellfish officers and my "junior assistant harbormaster" spotted a severely overloaded inflatable dinghy coming in to the ramp. We contacted the Environmental Police and ended up with 198 fish (legally the three men from the Boston area would have been able to take only 24). They were civilly cited, criminally charged, and their equipment was confiscated, ultimately resulting in their paying \$20,000 in fines.

We began the process of training the assistant harbormasters to meet the current state standards for that position. The standards require a number of boat courses, captain's training, reserve/permanent intermittent police academy, and in-service training. Two assistants attended a week long nationally certified boat crew operators course. We will continue over the next couple of years.

We had the same group of people working for us as the previous year. Towards the end of the year one was injured in a fall and was not available for the last month and a half of the season. However, the remainder picked up the slack and did a great job.

I again 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.)

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