



Town of Southwest Harbor Harbor Committee

July 10th, 2017 at 6:30pm Fire Station

Attendance

Committee members: Corey Pettegrow, Nick Madeira, Brian Walls, Joel Harper, Andy Mays, Anne Napier

Excused Absences: None

Unexcused Absences: None

Harbor Master: Adam Thurston

Selectmen: Lydia Goetze, Chad Terry

Public: 80 members of the public signed in. Some members were outside due to lack of room.

I. Call to Order / Role Call

All members present. 6:30 fire station

II. Acceptance of Minutes

April 10th minutes were amended and accepted. Nick made motion, Corey seconded.
(vote 5-0)

III. Visitors to be Heard

None

IV. Cruise Ship Discussion

Eric Dussault from Pearl Seas Cruise's stated that they operate two cruise ship companies one is pearl seas cruises, which is one ship, the Pearl Mist, 200 passengers, and 325 feet long. They also operate American Cruise lines with 8 ships. The company is proposing to come to Southwest Harbor September 21st with the Pearl Mist. The vessel would be anchored and passengers would be tendered into southwest harbor.

Corey Pettegrow says the harbor committee brought this up April 10th after Northeast Harbor dealt with the situation. The committee went over all of the reasons why this type of cruise ship activity was not a good fit for Southwest Harbor. The activity is unsustainable to our fishery and the town does not have the infrastructure on land to accommodate this type of activity. It was stated at the Northeast Harbor meeting by a cruise ship representative that if Northeast Harbor would not allow the activity then they would just go to Southwest Harbor instead, these statements alarmed community members. The harbor committee unanimously voted to ban cruise ships of this size while recommending to maintain current uses in the harbor.



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Ann asked how the passengers would be transported on land. Dussault replied that they would use 30 passenger coach busses, when needed they can use smaller vehicles. Ann asked how much the Peal Mist draws which is 11 ½ feet.

A member of the public asked how communication between the cruise ship and the town started. Dussault stated that because Northeast Harbor denied them access they wanted to search for other ports that were close. The question was asked why they were not going into Bar Harbor. Dussault stated that they do currently go into Bar Harbor but the passenger cap for this particular time is full so they started searching for other ports to land.

It was asked if Southwest had any current cruise ship landing fees. The harbormaster says no. It was stated that the harbor ordinance does not cover any passengers landing except for the Cranberry Island Ferry at Upper Town Dock.

A summer resident of the town who works with cruise ships in Bar Harbor stated that cruise ships in Bar Harbor make the town a lot of money and that Southwest is being very closed minded about the topic. The economics on this side of the island could always use more money. If adequate rules are set by the town then cruise ships could have a place in town. Andy informed her that the current activity in the eastern way and on town waters has reached a maximum capacity. We have recreational boating, tour boats, sailing races with children and barging activities, along with traditional commercial fishing. Putting a large cruise ship in the middle of everything would mean that local community activities would get pushed out.

Another resident indicated that he was a 54 year summer resident of Southwest Harbor. He also is a resident of Charleston South Carolina. There is a major issue in Charleston with cruise ships and they have had a negative impact on the city. I hope that Southwest will maintain its position and not allow cruise ships to land.

Many residents stated that once you make a change to let them in it will never go back to the way it was.

A resident from Bar Harbor says that the way of life for residents of Bar Harbor has been negatively impacted because of the amount cruise ship activity.

Corey made a motion; Ban cruise ship anchoring and passengers coming ashore in Southwest Harbor. This ban will not include the traditional use of the windjammers.

Nick seconded;

Vote (5-0)



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- V. **Comments for the good of the committee**
Discussion on who was going to attend the selectmen's meeting.
- VI. **Suggestions for next meeting**
Harbor ordinance review.
- VII. **Adjournment**
Corey made motion to adjourn.
Nick seconded;

Vote (5-0)