

CITY OF SANTA BARBARA WATERFRONT DEPARTMENT

MEMORANDUM

Date: January 19, 2012
To: Harbor Commissioners
From: Scott Riedman, Waterfront Director
Subject: **Mid-Year Mooring Program Report**

RECOMMENDATION: That Harbor Commission:

- A. Receive and consider a staff report on the status of the Department's East Beach Mooring Program; and
- B. Review proposed amendments to City Council Resolution 09-075, pertaining to rules and regulations for issuing mooring permits and setting minimum specifications for installing, inspecting and repairing such moorings, and forward to City Council for adoption.

BACKGROUND

Established in 2006, the Permitted Mooring Area east of Stearns Wharf includes 46 mooring sites (Attachment 1). Moorings are owned by individual permittees and inspected annually by City-approved inspectors. The inspection cost is borne by the permittees who pay annual permit renewal fees of \$250. City Council Resolution No. 09-075 requires that any time the number of Mooring Area permittees declines to 30 or fewer, the Waterfront Department shall undertake a new lottery to fill the vacant mooring sites. The Department conducted lotteries in 2006, 2007, 2010 and 2011 to assign vessels to available mooring sites.

DISCUSSION

Owing to termination and/or voluntary relinquishment of several mooring permits during the past year, the current number of active permits is 26 (Attachment 2). Moreover, out of 45 applicants in last year's lottery, only three resulted in permit assignments. Many applicants dropped out during the sign-up process. Others dropped out during the prove-up process, during which individuals provisionally awarded mooring permits are required (within 90 days) to have a mooring installed, pay their initial \$250 annual permit fee and establish a vessel on the mooring in order to finalize the assignment.

In addition, the distributor/installer of Seaflex moorings dropped out of the program in August 2011, due to disagreements with clients over payments, repairs and the overall integrity of the gear. Although a new inspector qualified to (re)install or repair Seaflex moorings has been added to the City's list of Qualified Mooring Inspectors, staff does not intend to approve any new Seaflex installations at this time. *(During the course of*

the program, seven Seaflex moorings have failed. There are currently three active Seaflex moorings in the East Beach Mooring area.)

In order to address these issues and others, staff proposes the following amendments to Resolution 09-075:

1. Requiring a non-refundable \$50 Application Fee that would accompany a mooring-permit application. This would limit the number of speculators participating in lotteries and applying for mooring permits, and reduce staff time spent on applications that don't result in issuance of permits.
2. Eliminating reference to the Grandfather Lottery. It has come and gone and will not be repeated;
3. Amending language to reflect that anytime the total number of Mooring Permits assigned in the Santa Barbara Mooring Area declines to thirty (30) or fewer, a lottery "may" be held. "May" replacing "shall," would allow the Department more latitude in scheduling of lotteries and would create consistency with existing Resolution language stating, "Such lotteries shall be conducted at the discretion of the Waterfront Director."
4. Changing the amount of time a permittee has to replace a sold or destroyed vessel from 90 days to 120 days, consistent with time allotted to slip permittees in similar situations. The amended Resolution also proposes other minor changes in time allotted for relocating a mooring that has migrated off station and submission of Mooring Inspection Reports; and
5. Adding language stating that if a permittee allows alterations or repairs to his/her mooring by persons not listed on the Waterfront Department's list of Approved Mooring Inspectors, this is cause for permit termination.

CONCLUSION

At the five-year mark, the East Beach Mooring Program remains a work in progress, as adjustments related to the timing of lotteries, assignment of permits and specifications of mooring tackle continue to be modified. That said, staff believes the program continues to meet an important need for boaters seeking permanent moorings off East Beach and will continue to improve with time.

Attachments:

1. Drawing—East Beach Mooring Area
2. Drawing—East Beach Mooring Area (as currently occupied)
3. Draft changes—Resolution 09-075

Prepared by: Mick Kronman, Harbor Operations Manager