

Fishers Island Ferry District
MINUTES
Board of Commissioners

February 5
General Meeting at 4:00pm
Fishers Island Community Center and Zoom

Chair Congdon called a meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Fishers Island Ferry District (the “Ferry District”) to order on February 5, 2026, at 4:04 pm at the Fishers Island Community Center and via Zoom.

Commissioners David Congdon, Jim Reid, and Tom Cashel were present at the Community Center, as were Geb Cook and Jessica NeJame. Jon Haney and Dave McCall were present via Zoom.

Chair Congdon established that a quorum was present. Everyone in attendance pledged allegiance to the flag.

General Meeting Agenda:

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Public Comment/Correspondence: Weather update
4. Marine Update: Change orders, spring schedule, fuel runs
5. Warrant: \$148,59.85
6. Budget Modification: \$97,062.00
7. HR Promotion
8. HR Promotion
9. HR Resignation
10. Junk cars
11. Life raft
12. Professional services
13. Propeller Replacement
14. Bond Petition
15. Legal
16. Other: Town updates, financial models
17. Executive: None
18. Next scheduled meetings – February 16, 2026, 4pm
19. Adjourn

Public Comment:

Greg and Gail Cypherd expressed their appreciation of the Fishers Island Ferry District weather updates. They hope that we continue to post these. These weather updates have been posted by John Morgan for the past couple weeks, where he writes up a detailed synopsis of upcoming weather and how it may affect the boats.

Marine Update:

We're in week five of the shipyard period for the Munnatawket. The inspectors have been checking in on the boat, and everything is generally going well, though a few change orders have come in. A hull plate in the engine room needed to be replaced and there was rotting steel around the windows, which meant taking the windows out. There was a leak in the pilot house that got into the passenger cabin, and that repair ended up being double what we expected. One of the propellers was condemned and is unfixable. The damage was likely the result of electrolysis. Discussion ensued about ordering one prop versus two. Only one is damaged, but on a two-prop boat, you order two because they must match exactly; if they are even slightly off, they will vibrate, potentially causing damage to other parts. However, props are expensive – one is \$18,000, \$21,000 if we rush it. The cheapest pair would be \$35,000-42,000. It would also be expensive to have to pull the boat out again if asymmetrical props created problems. Management has considered all these factors. They are working with a company in Fairhaven to ensure that the specifications of the prop are precise and will follow up with the producer to get a guarantee of their confidence that a new single prop will match the existing prop. In the meantime, we have spares that we can use to run trips.

The spring schedule will be the same as last year, but the days are different for Memorial Day weekend. We could add a boat on Memorial Day if need be. All the boats were sold out last year, but there was room later in the day. In general, taking cargo runs off the schedule has been working well. If we wanted, we could run the Munnatawket on Wednesday so that there's still an 11:30 boat, but that pulls staff from elsewhere. We'll table this until we have a full board, but Jon will load these times into the system so they're on deck.

Since the end of last year, there has been an issue with commercial reservations where contractors make reservations online instead of calling, paying \$70 instead of the \$110 commercial rate. It is pretty obvious when someone is coming over in a truck full of supplies, so the captains are catching it. They get one warning, but if we've seen them before, we send them into the office to pay the difference. Some of these people may genuinely not know that there's a price difference, but some certainly do.

The cold weather has meant higher demand for fuel, so we're at two cargo runs a week. Next year, it will be more challenging as the Race Point may be at the shipyard for up to three months. The Munnatawket can only fit two trucks – it takes four runs to do what the Race Point can do in two. This is a lot of stress on the boat, and Jon is looking for other ideas. Potentially

on smaller run days, the boat could be limited to 16 passengers. Another option is to charter the North Star and work with the fuel companies to get eight trucks on it to make the cost worth it (North Star is \$1,000 per hour with a four-hour minimum). A third option is to see if we could lease the North Star for three months. If they need to use it for a couple of days, we could get a credit. Jon will see if this is a possibility. The fact that this is a problem is an argument of why we need a new boat.

Warrant

RESOLUTION 2026 –007

RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the Fishers Island Ferry District hereby approves the Warrant dated February 5, 2026 in the amount of \$148,759.85.

Moved by: Commissioner Cashel

Seconded by: Commissioner Reid

Ayes: Commissioners Cashel, Congdon and Reid

Nays:

Budget Modification

RESOLUTION 2026-008

RESOLVED that the Board of Commissioners of the Fishers Island Ferry District Hereby amends the

2025 Fishers Island Ferry District budget as follows:

Increase Expenditures:

SM5610.2.000.000	Airport CapEx	\$ 30,251.00
SM5710.4.000.100	Utilities: NL	\$ 735.00
SM5710.1.000.000	Payroll Expense	\$ 46,076.00
SM9710.6.000.000	Medical Insurance Exp	\$ 20,000.00
	Total	\$ 97,062.00 <u>\$97,062.00</u>

Increase Revenues:

SM.5990.00	Appropriated Fund Balance	<u>\$ 41,265.00</u>
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Decrease Expenditures:

SM5710.4.000.300	Fuel Oil	\$ 22,894.00
SM5710.4.000.900	Bank & Credit Card Fees	\$ 956.00
SM1910.4.000.100	Insurance: General	\$ 412.00
SM1420.4.000.000	Legal Expense	\$ 10,000.00
SM5710.4.000.000	Miscellaneous Expense	\$ 445.00
SM5711.4.000.000	Office Expense	\$ 596.00
SM5710.4.000.400	Printing	\$ 423.00
SM5710.4.000.625	Terminal Supplies	\$ 1,028.00
SM5710.4.000.950	Training/Education	\$ 2,771.00
SM5710.4.000.800	Uniforms	\$ 219.00
SM5710.4.000.700	UPS Freight (FI)	\$ 290.00
SM9030.8.000.000	Social Security Expense	\$ 5,620.00
SM1950.4.000.000	Property Tax Expense	\$ 50.00
SM1930.4.000.000	Insurance Claims Expense	\$ 1,000.00
SM5710.4.400.100	Marine Engineering	\$ 7,397.00
SM5712.4.000.000	Commissioner Fees	\$ 1,150.00
SM5713.4.000.000	USPS Mail	\$ 546.00
	Total	\$ 55,797.00 <u>\$97,062.00</u>

Moved by: Commissioner Reid

Seconded by: Commissioner Cashel

Ayes: Commissioners Cashel, Congdon and Reid

Nays

HR Promotion

RESOLUTION 2026 – 009

WHEREAS employee Abigail Voight has demonstrated the skills, experience, and commitment necessary to assume increased responsibilities within the District:

WHEREAS her manager has recommended that she be promoted to Freight Agent/ Commercial Reservationist and her wages be increased to \$30.00.

THEREFORE, it is RESOLVED that Ms. Voight be promoted to Freight Agent and her wages be increased from \$23.20 per hour to \$30.00 per hour with effect February 19, 2026.

Moved by: Commissioner Reid

Seconded by: Commissioner Cashel

Ayes: Commissioners Cashel, Congdon and Reid

Nays: None

HR Promotion

RESOLUTION 2026 – 010

WHEREAS Frederick Stanley II has performed with merit in the duties of a part time deckhand, and

WHEREAS the manager has recommended that said deckhand be promoted to full-time deckhand; and

THEREFORE, it is RESOLVED that Mr. Stanley be promoted to full-time deckhand and the wages be increased from \$19.48 per hour to \$20.00 per hour with effect February 19, 2026.

Moved by: Commissioner Congdon

Seconded by: Commissioner Reid

Ayes: Commissioners Cashel, Congdon and Reid

Nays: None

HR Resignation

RESOLUTION 2026 – 011

WHEREAS Employees Benson Yon and John Erhard have resigned from their position as Part-Time Deckhands (FIFD) effective February 1, 2026; and

THEREFORE, be it RESOLVED that the Board of Commissioners accepts the resignation of Employees Benson Yon and John Erhard with effect February 1, 2026.

Moved by: Commissioner

Seconded by: Commissioner

Ayes: T. Cashel , D. Congdon, J. Reid, D. Shillo and H. Burnham

Nays: None

Moved by: Commissioner Cashel

Seconded by: Commissioner Reid

Ayes: Commissioners Cashel, Congdon and Reid

Nays: None

Legal

Junk Car Removal

RESOLUTION 2026 – 012

WHEREAS, Fishers Island has junked vehicles that need to be removed from the island; and

WHEREAS, the Fishers Island Ferry District is offering a temporary fare abatement of 100% which is good through March 30, 2026 to transport by truck the vehicles to its New London, CT terminal for disposal by other parties; and

THEREFORE, It is further RESOLVED that this fare abatement will terminate at the end of the day March 30, 2026.

Moved by: Commissioner Reid

Seconded by: Commissioner Cashel

Ayes: Commissioners Cashel, Congdon and Reid

Nays: None

This is for anyone who wants to do it. Jane Ahrens will post this to FishersIsland.net, and other relevant people know.

Life Raft

RESOLUTION 2026 - 013

WHEREAS: Ferry Munnatawket has two 50 passenger life rafts that failed their annual inspection after 23 years.

WHEREAS: Two bids were received and same cost and LRSE is the best value option for replacement life rafts in terms of cost and delivery.

THEREFORE The Fishers Island Ferry District Board of Commissioners accepts the bid for two 50 person life rafts for a total cost of \$16,450.

Moved by: Commissioner Cashel

Seconded by: Commissioner Reid

Ayes: Commissioners Cashel, Congdon and Reid

Nays: None

Propeller Replacement

RESOLUTION 2026 – 014

WHEREAS, the Fishers Island Ferry District ferry M/V Munnatawket has experienced galvanic corrosion on its starboard propeller rendering it unusable.

WHEREAS, a search for a replacement propeller yielded two potential suppliers and pricing and timing obtained from both

Therefore, It is Resolved that the Board of Commissioners of the Fishers Island Ferry District awards Wildcat Propeller as the low-cost provider for the replacement propeller at a total cost of \$21,886..

Moved by: Commissioner Reid

Seconded by: Commissioner Cashel

Ayes: Commissioners Cashel, Congdon and Reid

Nayes: None

Legal/ Bond Petition

RESOLUTION 2026 – 015

WHEREAS the Fishers Island Ferry District requires certain general and specific legal expertise including corporate operations and activities.

Now THEREFORE it is RESOLVED that the Commissioners of the Ferry District authorize Geb Cook to execute a professional services agreement with the law firm Northfork Law, P.C. to provide the Ferry District with representation in corporate matters.

Moved by: Commissioner Cashel

Seconded by: Commissioner Reid

Ayes: Commissioners Cashel, Congdon and Reid

Nays: None

Professional Services

RESOLUTION 2026 – 016

WHEREAS, a structural engineer is needed for the service life inspection of our south ferry loading ramp on Fishers Island,

WHEREAS, GNCB Consulting Engineer, P.C provides structural engineering services and has designed bulkheads and ramps for the Fishers Island Ferry before,

Therefore, it is resolved to accept managements recommendation to accept the proposal from GNCB Consulting Engineers, P.C for \$3,800.00 plus reimbursable expenses not to exceed \$500.00.

Moved by: Commissioner Reid

Seconded by: Commissioner Cashel

Ayes: Commissioners Cashel, Congdon and Reid

Nays: None

Other:

The New London Recreation Center is getting solar panels through a program with the state. Geb will be doing more research on this, as it would help significantly with utility bills.

Geb had a meeting with the town comptroller and Al Krupski this week to explain the bond petition coming their way, as well as the new ramp and new boat. They mentioned that we could have the state do a free audit to help determine if rates should be raised to help with expenses. We should contact the state comptroller if that's something we're interested in. Palumbo and LaLota may also know about federal earmarks. There is a ferry boat grant where certain money is allotted even to us. If LaLota could earmark \$10 million for the Fishers Island Ferry, that could be a win-win. Geb offered to attend a town work session this week to introduce the \$1.6 million for the ramp and the new ferry coming down the pike, so they're not surprised.

The town has been leaning on us for certified payrolls. We needed some emergency repairs, and the contractors may not be able to provide us with certified payrolls.

Contractor employees now have contractor cards, so instead of getting a big stack of tickets, contractor employees all get their own cards with a QR code. They get a subsequent invoice, but the cards can also be programmed to be prepaid with a set amount of money.

Abigail has been with the ferry for three years and is up for a promotion. She is commercial three days a week and does ticketing the other two. She also does IT and corresponding with Anchor. She is advocating for \$4 more per hour on top of the raise that comes with the new position to be a 24/7 liaison with Anchor and for other IT issues. Social media management would be a different ballgame, so she could maybe do that, but would want to try it out first before she put a price on it.

Emil Tullberg shared the financial models that he has been working on. He programmed everything so that if you change the assumptions, the model will change. He has also been programming scenarios. Some things need to be fleshed out a bit more as Emil needs more information. The next step will be to tweak the assumptions and bring the deficit down to zero, and to create a formula so you can plug in, for example, if taxes were 40% of revenue, how much would we have to raise ticket prices. Commissioner Cashel asked if there is a way that we can give money back to taxpayers; for example, a discount card for taxpayers, so that they can get a discount on the increased pricing. Another next step for Emil is to get ticket data for every month to get real numbers for the quantity assumptions. He will also make a balance sheet. He will code for the ferry, airport, and real estate; but the Ferry District is still responsible for all these things – if a grant doesn't come through, it's still a hole.

Geb got some commissioner signatures on important documents, like a letter to the town.

Executive Session:

There was no executive session.

Next meeting is February 16th.

Commissioner Reid moved to adjourn the meeting with Commissioner Cashel seconding.
Meeting adjourned at 5:43 pm.