



AGENDA ITEM COVERSHEET

PREPARED BY: Ed H. Parvin, Deputy Manager

DEPARTMENT: Executive

MEETING: Town Council – 13 AUG 2024

SUBJECT: Enhancing Harbor Stays and Safety

BACKGROUND:

In the 90's and early 2000's the Town of Carolina Beach was written off as a good place for boaters to stop as they cruised up and down the intercoastal waterway. All of that has slowly changed over the past few decades. The Town Council adopted a Harbor Management Plan in 2007 that promoted moorings in our harbor area. Since that time the Town Council and staff have worked to re-establish and define the pierhead line, develop and implement anchorage and mooring ball areas, build and maintain multiple dinghy and dayboater access points, and enhance golf cart, vehicle and bike parking as well as pedestrian facilities around the harbor area.

The work done by the Town Council and Staff has taken Carolina Beach from a place boaters wanted to avoid to one of the most popular destinations for boaters on the eastern coast of the United States. It remains the only place where you can dock your boat and not only walk to our downtown area but also the beach!

With all the positives we do also have many challenges. Over the years we have continued to request additional enabling authority from the North Carolina General Assembly to manage the issues we have experience. These issues include dangerous, derelict, and abandoned vessels in our harbor area.

The harbor area is set up as an environment where boaters can come in and enjoy the community. However, there are many that are leaving their boats here for extended periods of time resulting in harm to the other boaters, adjacent property owners, and the environment. To help resolve this issue Town Staff is recommending amending our current harbor ordinance to allow boaters to continue to come and enjoy the Town but put limits on the boating activities that lead to the negative impacts we continue to experience.

ACTION REQUESTED:

The goal of this text amendment are to:

1. Promote turnover of slips, anchorages, and moorings allowing for an increase in users served.
2. Clarify the enforcement process and ensure we have the means to hold all violators accountable that are threatening to or are causing harm to our citizens, private and public property, and/or the environment.
3. Align and streamline regulations for boaters to promote a better understanding of how our harbor areas are managed.
4. Increase boaters' options to patron Carolina Beach and encourage return visits while giving our Harbor Masters better oversight.
5. Enhance access of the community's businesses and natural resources for harbor users.

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

Recommend adoption of Ordinance Number 24-1231 to amend mooring, anchorage, and docking regulations as defined in Chapter 10 Harbor and Marina Regulations