Memorandum 13-158 No Wake Buoy for Harbor Entrance

Memorandum ID: 13-158
Memorandum Status: Approved

Memorandum 13-158(A)
TO: MAYOR BETH WYTHE & HOMER CITY COUNCIL
CC: WALT WREDE, CITY MANAGER
THROUGH: BRYAN HAWKINS, PORT DIRECTOR/HARBORMASTER
FROM: PORT & HARBOR ADVISORY COMMISSION
DATE: NOVEMBER 12, 2013
SUBJECT: RECOMMENDATION FOR NO-WAKE BUOY FOR HARBOR ENTRANCE

The question of vessel traffic safety at the entrance of the harbor has been an ongoing issue, source of complaints, and near-miss stories for many years. I have met with USCG and Coast Guard Auxiliary to discuss the possibility of enforcement at the harbor entrance. I was informed that because the entrance resides on City property, it is, in their judgment, the City's responsibility to enforce. Of course an actual maritime incident resulting in property damage or loss of life would prompt Federal action, but normal day-to-day enforcement is deemed City responsibility.

My solution to this chronic problem is to install visual reminders on a buoy in the location indicated on the overview (see attached) and also at select locations throughout the main fairway, such as JJ Float and the end of the Fuel Float. These signs will remind boaters to keep their speed in check. I spoke with the Chief of Police on this issue and he confirmed that citations could be written using video footage as evidence, as per HCC 10.08.210. At this point I'm not recommending a fixed camera system, but we will have harbor officers watch the entrance on a random schedule and film violators. Evidence and contact information would then be passed on to HPD for enforcement action per HCC 10.08.210 Vessel Speed Limits.

At the Port and Harbor Advisory Commission's October meeting, the commission reviewed HCC 10.08.210 and decided that they would like to review the code during their January meeting to determine if any revisions are needed to bring the code up to-date with current use. They also made a motion to City Council approving this No Wake buoy course of action and expenditure.

Recommendation
Port and Harbor Advisory Commission recommends to City Council to fund purchasing the No-Wake Zone float buoy out of the 2013 operations budget. Staff estimates total costs including additional signage not to exceed $7,000.00.

Fiscal Note: $7,000.00 from Port and Harbor Reserves 456-380

Attached: Homer Harbor Entrance Overview of Proposed No-Wake Buoy Location
Port & Harbor Advisory Commission October 30, 2013 Meeting Minutes
Memo to PHC from Port Director/Harbormaster Re: No-Wake Buoy dated September 18, 2013

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