

Agenda
Bar Harbor Cruise Ship Committee
Tuesday, November 16, 2021 @ 3:30 PM
via Zoom Webinar

- I. CALL TO ORDER**
 - a. Excused absences**
- II. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD (UP TO 15 MINUTES)**—Use raised hand function if participating via webinar
- III. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES (October 13, 2021)**
- IV. STAFF REPORTS**
- V. REGULAR BUSINESS**
 - a. Address CLIA Letter**
 - b. Possible Recommendations for Town Council**
- VI. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD (UP TO 15 MINUTES)**
- VII. COMMITTEE COMMENTS AND REQUESTS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**
- VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

To ensure your full participation in this meeting, please inform us of any special requirements you might have due to a disability. Please call 288-4098

You are invited to a Zoom webinar.

When: Nov 16, 2021 03:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Topic: Cruise Ship Committee Meeting

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86282787300?pwd=MWdTMdUvcUlxN3FvQWRKRW1xWTJpUT09>

Passcode: 977074

Or One tap mobile :

US: +13017158592,,86282787300# or +13126266799,,86282787300#

Or Telephone:

Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

US: +1 301 715 8592 or +1 312 626 6799 or +1 929 205 6099 or +1 253 215 8782 or +1 346 248 7799 or +1 669 900 6833

Webinar ID: 862 8278 7300

International numbers available: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kqdywNIWw>

Minutes
Bar Harbor Cruise Ship Committee
Council Chambers
Wednesday, October 13, 2021 @ 3:30 PM

- I. **CALL TO ORDER**—3:30 p.m.
a. **Excused absences**—There were not any excused absences.

Attendance:

In-Person Participation--Chair Person Eben Salvatore and committee members Matt Hochman, Larry Sweet, Sandy McFarland, Jeremy Dougherty, Harbormaster Chris Wharff, Police Chief Jim Willis, John Kelly, Amy Powers, Skip Strong, and Lynn Kenison Higgins. Town Manager Cornell Knight also attended the meeting.

Remote Participation—Committee members Martha Searchfield, Dr. Jane Disney, Jen Cough, Sarah Flink, Ken Smith, and Greg Gordon.

Harbormaster Chris Wharff, Police Chief Jim Willis, Sarah Flink, Greg Gordon, Skip Strong and Amy Powers are non-voting members. Lynn Kenison Higgins did not vote. The voting membership was ten.

- II. **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD (UP TO 15 MINUTES)**— Four people from the public were present in person during the meeting and two people were present remotely. Jim O’Connell spoke via Zoom, expressing his opinion that the 2019 cruise ship survey was biased towards local businesses instead of the general public. Also questioned the feasibility of working with CLIA. Mr. O’Connell had sent emails to Cruise Ship Committee members for review. Spokesperson Salvatore asked Mr. O’Connell to re-send in a different format as the Committee members were unable to open the attachments.
- III. **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES (September 16, 2021)**—Mr. Kelly with second by Mr. McFarland, moved to approve the September minutes as presented.

Roll call vote:

<u>Searchfield</u>	<u>Y</u>
<u>Salvatore</u>	<u>Y</u>
<u>Hochman</u>	<u>Y</u>
<u>McFarland</u>	<u>Y</u>
<u>Dougherty</u>	<u>Y</u>
<u>Cough</u>	<u>A</u>
<u>Smith</u>	<u>A</u>
<u>Sweet</u>	<u>Y</u>
<u>Kelly</u>	<u>Y</u>
<u>Disney</u>	<u>A</u>

Motion passed 7Y—3A.

IV. STAFF REPORTS—Harbormaster Wharff reported that there were not any changes and the 2022-2023 cruise ship season was the same as reported last meeting. There were not any other staff reports.

V. REGULAR BUSINESS

a. Review Council Workshop Product as Requested (see Memo from Chair) After reviewing recent Town Council motion, the Cruise Ship Committee focused on preparing Ms. Powers with specific presentations for CLIA. Ms. Powers would present information in advance to CLIA such as the Town Council’s F-1 Chart and the motion to designate the cruise Ship season as being from May-October. Ms. Powers expressed how helpful it would be for a more interactive meeting with CLIA in November. Questions could be prepared in advance to present. Spokesperson Salvatore would contact different town facilities such as Fire Department & Ambulance Service, MDI Hospital, and Bar Harbor Policy Department for their feedback regarding understaffing and over-stretched capabilities.

There was also concern and discussion regarding environmental impacts, climate change, quality of life, potential legal issues and management of this popular vacation destination vs. various bans. Last summer’s intensive tourist season was a State issue. Sustainable management measures isn’t just a focus of the Bar Harbor Town Council, but for the rest of the State as well.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD (UP TO 15 MINUTES)

Russell Benford from Royal Caribbean was present remotely, thanking the Cruise Ship Committee and Town Council for all their work. He shared that the company was looking forward to continuing working towards a solution.

Jim O’Connell was also present remotely and expressed his concerns that he didn’t feel working with CLIA would be a good thing. He expressed concern about the environmental impact from diesel fuel. He also felt the Town Council should listen to the survey results, how the people wanted the big ships “out.”

Jill Goldthwait expressed her concern that the Town Council appeared not to care about the survey results or the concerns of the public because anything being enacted as a result of the survey was taking too long. Questions being asked of various institutions need to be consolidated to avoid being repeated asked by more than one person.

VII. COMMITTEE COMMENTS AND REQUESTS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Next meeting will be held Wednesday, November 17th at 3:30 pm. Future agenda item will be to continue discussion of the cruise ship seasons, working with direction from the Town Council.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT—Mr. McFarland, with second by Mr. Sweet, moved to adjourn.

Roll call vote:

<u>Searchfield</u>	<u>Y</u>
<u>Salvatore</u>	<u>Y</u>
<u>Hochman</u>	<u>Y</u>
<u>McFarland</u>	<u>Y</u>
<u>Dougherty</u>	<u>Y</u>
<u>Cough</u>	<u>Y</u>
<u>Smith</u>	<u>Y</u>
<u>Sweet</u>	<u>Y</u>
<u>Kelly</u>	<u>Y</u>
<u>Disney</u>	<u>Y</u>
<u>Motion passed 10-0.</u>	

Lynn Kenison Higgins, Deputy Clerk



November 12, 2021

Bar Harbor Town Council
Bar Harbor Municipal Building
93 Cottage Street
Bar Harbor, ME 04609

Dear Members of the Bar Harbor Town Council:

The natural beauty and unique visitor experiences on Mount Desert Island make it an extremely desirable destination for the millions of people who visit the region each year. As you know well, the number of visitors to Bar Harbor has accordingly increased steadily in recent years. In fact, pre-pandemic more than 3.4 million people visited Acadia National Park in 2019, the vast majority of which also went to Bar Harbor. It is therefore reasonable for the Bar Harbor Town Council to consider how best to manage visitation in ways that allow the town's residents to enjoy the economic benefits of well-managed tourism flows while maintaining the quality of life in the community. Referencing the Town Council's Goals and Strategies (amended April 2021), Goal 2, "Create Effective Plans for a Sustainable Future," Strategy 2c and 2d, Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) and our cruise line members have significant experience working with coastal communities to help assess holistic, integrated tourism plans. We welcome the opportunity to share our views on the proposal before the Town Council to reduce cruise ship visits, and to continue supporting the community of Bar Harbor with efforts to develop an effective, all-encompassing tourism plan and communications initiative that raises awareness of Bar Harbor as a green leader in sustainable destination management and environmental stewardship.

For more than a decade, the cruise industry has worked proactively to support Bar Harbor's needs. This cooperation is evidenced by the industry honoring the Town Council's seasonal daily passenger caps that were established in 2008, resulting in cruise ship passenger visits representing only 7 percent of Bar Harbor's total annual visitors. In addition, at your request, we were pleased to underwrite support for an independent analysis in 2019 that resulted in a report entitled, "Cruise Tourism & Traffic Congestion in Bar Harbor: Improving the Visitor and Resident Experience." The report provided a comprehensive analysis and several reasonable approaches to managing the flow of all visitors to Bar Harbor. As tourism in Bar Harbor continues recovering from the devastating economic impact of COVID-19, we believe that implementing the remaining recommendations from the tourism and congestion report will deliver immediate, positive results that are in keeping with the town's aspirations.

Based on the current 2022 schedule of cruise ship visits as compared to the proposal presented by the Town Council on August 17, the number of cruise ship visits would be reduced by 55 percent and the number of passenger visits would be reduced by 82 percent. For the 2022 season, making changes on such short notice would be enormously disruptive and it would be out of line with Bar Harbor's usual practice of providing cruise lines with at least 18-months advance notice of schedule changes. Cancelling cruise visits for the 2022 season would suddenly and negatively impact those visitors arriving by ship and contracts with local vendors and service providers in your area who have long been constructive partners with Bar Harbor. Moreover, and as previously noted in CLIA's July 30, 2021, letter to the Town Council, there are legal and constitutional issues that would be called into play were the

Town Council to move forward with the proposal as presented. In short, because the sudden cancellation by a local government at one port of call in a range can have knock-on effects on previous or subsequent port calls, the adverse financial impacts can amount to an unconstitutional taking by the local government.

For the reasons expressed above, we respectfully ask that the current 2022 cruise schedule not be changed and that we work collaboratively with the Town Council to address the 2023 season and beyond as part of a holistic discussion on tourism management overall in Bar Harbor. As always, we welcome a constructive dialogue and are eager to collaborate with you on meaningful solutions that consider the entirety of tourism in Bar Harbor.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter. CLIA and our cruise line members look forward to continuing our longstanding collaborative partnership with the Town Council and the Bar Harbor community. If you have any questions, please contact me at kcraighead@cruising.org.

Sincerely,



Kelly Craighead
President & CEO

Cc: Bar Harbor Cruise Ship Committee