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PLANNING AND CODES DEPARTMENT

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MEMO:

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Alexandra E. Sykes - City Planner
CC: Erin Herbig – City Manager; Bub Fournier – Director Planning and Codes, and
Kathy Givens – Harbor Master
Date: March 11th, 2025
Re: Second Reading – Proposed Amendments to Chapter 30 Marine Activities

On February 18th, 2025 the Belfast City Council voted 5-0 to proceed with a Second Reading and Public Hearing on Ordinance Amendments regarding the proposed amendments to the City Code of Ordinances, Chapter 30 Marine Activities. Based on the City Councilors comments received at the First Reading, minor language changes were updated in the drafted language of Chapter 30 Marine Activities.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

At the November 16th, 2024 City Council Workshop, the Harbor Advisory Committee recommended the Council consider adopting regulations for large passenger vessels that carry 50 or more passengers within the Harbor. The topic was discussed amongst the Council, various stakeholders, and staff during the meeting. As a culmination of the meeting, Council proposed the Harbor Advisory Committee prepare further specificity to their recommendation and present said information to be discussed at a future subsequent regular Council meeting.

During the regular City Council meeting of January 21st, 2025, Councilors revisited the topic of defining further regulations in regard to limiting the amount of passengers for large passenger vessels to embark and disembark, including by tender, at the City Landing or other City property or marine facilities. After discussion and consensus by the Council, the Council directed Planning and Codes staff to draft Ordinance language to reflect said recommendations by the Harbor Advisory Committee.

In the documents provided, you will find drafted Ordinance Amendments to Chapter 30 Marine Activities that would modify the allowances for large passenger vessels. The Amendments propose that any marine vessel certified to carry 50 or more passengers shall not be allowed to embark or disembark guest passengers, including by tender, at the City Landing or other City property or marine facilities. The draft Ordinance language for your review is marked up in the typical manner, in which the proposed changes are indicated in red.

Planning and Codes staff ran a public hearing notice for one week in the Midcoast Villager. In addition, mailed notices of this meeting were sent to all property owners in the Waterfront Mixed Use-1 and Waterfront Mixed Use-2 zoning districts as well as other stakeholders, which included local business groups and cruise ship industry contacts.

REQUESTED COUNCIL ACTIONS

I respectfully request the Council to allow Planning and Codes staff to present the proposed Ordinance Amendment incorporating language to modify the allowances for large passenger vessels. In addition, I respectfully request the Council conduct a public hearing. After discussion, I respectfully request the Council consider accepting the Second Reading and consider taking a vote to adopt the proposed Ordinance Amendments to Chapter 30 Marine Activities as presented. The Council has the option to potentially adopt, table, or amend the proposal.

Draft Motion: *The City Council, at its meeting on March 18th, 2025 hereby adopts the proposed Ordinance Amendments to Chapter 30 Marine Activities, as such were presented at the March 18th, 2025 Second Reading.*