



# CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH HARBOR COMMISSION AGENDA

City Council Chambers-100 Civic Center Dr, Newport Beach CA 92660

Wednesday, March 11, 2026 - 5:00 PM

**Harbor Commission Members:**

Ira Beer, Chair  
Marie Marston, Vice Chair  
Steve Scully, Secretary  
Bob Miller, Commissioner  
Rudy Svrcek, Commissioner  
Gary Williams, Commissioner  
Don Yahn, Commissioner

**Staff Members:**

Paul Blank, Harbormaster  
Cynthia Shintaku, Management Analyst

The Harbor Commission meeting is subject to the Ralph M. Brown Act. Among other things, the Brown Act requires that the Harbor Commission agenda be posted at least seventy-two (72) hours in advance of each regular meeting and that the public be allowed to comment on agenda items before the Commission and items not on the agenda but are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Harbor Commission. The Chair may limit public comments to a reasonable amount of time, generally three (3) minutes per person.

The City of Newport Beach's goal is to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in all respects. If, as an attendee or a participant at this meeting, you will need special assistance beyond what is normally provided, we will attempt to accommodate you in every reasonable manner. Please contact Paul Blank, Harbormaster, at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the meeting to inform us of your particular needs and to determine if accommodation is feasible at (949) 270-8158 or pblank@newportbeachca.gov.

Questions and comments may be submitted in writing for the Harbor Commission's consideration by sending them to harborfeedback@newportbeachca.gov. To give the Harbor Commission adequate time to review your questions and comments, please submit your written comments no later than 5 p.m. the day prior to the Harbor Commission meeting. All correspondence will be made part of the record.

**NOTICE REGARDING PRESENTATIONS REQUIRING USE OF CITY EQUIPMENT**

Any presentation requiring the use of the City of Newport Beach's equipment must be submitted to the Harbor Department 24 hours prior to the scheduled meeting.

1) **CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

2) **ROLL CALL**

3) **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

4) **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

*Public comments are invited on non-agenda items. Speakers must limit comments to three (3) minutes. Before speaking, we invite, but do not require, you to state your name for the record. The Harbor Commission has the discretion to extend or shorten the speakers' time limit on non-agenda items, provided the time limit adjustment is applied equally to all speakers. As a courtesy, please turn cell phones off or set them in the silent mode.*

5) **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

5.1) **Draft Minutes of the February 11, 2026 Harbor Commission Regular Meeting**

[2.11.2026 Harbor Commission Meeting Minutes Draft](#)

[2.11.2026 Harbor Commission Meeting Draft Vice Chair Marston](#)

**6) CURRENT BUSINESS****6.1) The Interesting Story of the Newport Harbor Kelp**

Captain Nancy Caruso, Marine Biologist and Founder of Get Inspired will provide information on the story of how kelp in Newport Harbor came to be, its interesting story and how it is being studied by USC and others as a possible savior for California's kelp forests.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. Determine this action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) and 15060(c)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines because this action will not result in a physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly; and
2. Receive and file.

[Staff Report](#)**6.2) General Plan Update: Final GPUSC/GPAC Draft Harbor, Bay, and Beaches Element**

At its meeting on November 12, 2025, the Harbor Commission reviewed recommendations from the ad hoc subcommittee that reviewed the draft Harbor, Bay, and Beaches Element, ultimately forwarding the input to the General Plan Update Steering Committee (GPUSC) and General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) for review and consideration.

The GPUSC/GPAC held a special joint meeting on December 3, 2025, to review comments on the General Plan Update from City Boards, Commissions, and Committees, and to provide direction to City staff and Dudek, the City's consultant, on how to incorporate responsive revisions, as deemed appropriate. The GPUSC/GPAC held another special joint meeting on January 21, 2026, and supported the comprehensive set of revised draft elements moving forward as the "Final GPUSC/GPAC Draft General Plan Update." This includes the revised Harbor, Bay, and Beaches Element, which is now being presented to the Harbor Commission for review and consideration.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. Determine this action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) and 15060(c)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines because this action will not result in a physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly; and
2. Review the Final GPUSC/GPAC Draft Harbor, Bay, and Beaches Element, which has been revised to incorporate the Commission's input from October 2025. The Commission may provide additional input and should conduct a

vote to consider recommending the City Council adopt it as part of the comprehensive General Plan Update anticipated in May or June 2026.

[Staff Report](#)

[Attachment A](#)

[Attachment B](#)

**6.3) Review and Discuss Proposed Elimination of Mooring Length Adjustment Process**

Several applications to adjust mooring lengths are received by the Harbor Department annually. Some desire to eliminate the process of mooring length adjustments has been expressed. The Commission will discuss whether mooring length adjustments should be considered going forward.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. Determine this action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) and 15060(c)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines because this action will not result in a physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly; and
2. Review and discuss the proposed elimination of mooring length adjustments
3. Provide direction to staff regarding the adoption of a recommendation to eliminate mooring size adjustments.

[Staff Report](#)

**6.4) Discussion of Potential Safety Requirements for Small Vessel Rental Customers**

The Harbor Commission will conduct a discussion regarding potential safety requirements for single-day small vessel rental customers operating in Newport Harbor. The purpose of this discussion is to explore practical and enforceable measures that could improve safety for renters, other harbor users, and the general public. Topics include renter orientation and education, life jacket availability and use, operator age or competency considerations, standardized harbor rules and navigation awareness, and potential technology-based or operational best practices. The Commission's feedback will help inform whether staff or the Newport Harbor Safety Committee should further evaluate or develop recommended guidelines or requirements for future consideration.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. Determine this action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) and 15060(c)(3) of the CEQA

Guidelines because this action will not result in a physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly; and

2. Receive and file; or
3. Provide direction to staff and/or the Newport Harbor Safety Committee regarding potential safety guidelines or requirements for single-day small vessel rental concession operators and their customers in Newport Harbor.

[Staff Report](#)

[Attachment A - Florida Boating Safety Education Requirements](#)

[Attachment B - Georgia Rental Boat Requirements](#)

[Attachment C - Harbor General Rules Signage](#)

[Attachment D - Harbor Map Sticker](#)

**6.5) Ad Hoc Committee Updates**

Several ad hoc committees have been established to address short term projects outside of the Harbor Commission objectives. This is the time the ad hoc committees will provide an update on their projects.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. Find this action exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) (the activity will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment) and 15060(c)(3) (the activity is not a project as defined in Section 15378) of the CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, because it has no potential for resulting in physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly; and
2. Receive and file.

[Staff Report](#)

## 6.6) Harbor Commission 2024 Objectives

Each ad hoc committee studying their respective Objective within the Commission's 2024 Objectives, will provide a progress update.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

1. Find this action exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) (the activity will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment) and 15060(c)(3) (the activity is not a project as defined in Section 15378) of the CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, because it has no potential for resulting in physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly; and
2. Receive and file.

[Staff Report](#)

[Attachment A-2024 Goals and Objectives](#)

## 6.7) Harbormaster Update - February 2026 Activities

The Harbormaster oversees the City Harbor Department and is responsible for the management of the City's mooring fields and Balboa Yacht Basin marina, support for the Harbor Commission, municipal code enforcement on the harbor, events and marine activities permitting, safety and rescue operations, management of the Marina Park visitor serving marina, marine sanitation pump out equipment and public pier maintenance, water quality monitoring and maintenance, impound and disposition of abandoned and unclaimed vessels and public relations and information dissemination on and about Newport Harbor as well as several special projects.

This report will update the Harbor Commission and the public on the Harbor Department's recent activities.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

1. Determine this action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) and 15060(c)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines because this action will not result in a physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly; and
2. Receive and file.

[Staff Report](#)

[Attachment A](#)

7) **MOTION FOR RECONSIDERATION**

*A motion to reconsider any action taken by the Harbor Commission must be made at the same meeting or the subsequent meeting at which the action was taken and may only be made by one of the Harbor Commission members who voted with the prevailing side.*

8) **COMMISSION ANNOUNCEMENTS (NON-DISCUSSION ITEMS)**

9) **MATTERS WHICH COMMISSIONERS WOULD LIKE PLACED ON A FUTURE AGENDA FOR DISCUSSION, ACTION OR REPORT (NON-DISCUSSION ITEM)**

10) **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, April 8, 2026 at 5 p.m.**

11) **ADJOURNMENT**