

TO: Save Seattle Harbor Patrol Coalition Members

FROM: Peter Schrappen, NW Marine Trade Association  
Andrea Pierantozzi/Doug Levy, Recreational Boating Association of Washington  
Eugene Wasserman, North Seattle Industrial Association

DATE: December 10, 2021

RE: Wrap-up of City of Seattle budget process vis-à-vis needs of Seattle Harbor Patrol

RESPONSE NEEDED: For your information and awareness going forward

---

**The maritime sector and our coalition to Save Seattle Harbor Patrol:**

We have appreciated the support you have offered, the e-mails you have sent (*1,329 emails were sent in with our action-alert tool*), and the contacts you have made as we banded together -- not only these last few months but in reality for more than a year – to save the Seattle Harbor Patrol (SHP).

Our effort was to preserve the Harbor Patrol and keep it from being de-funded or merged into other departments. We also wanted to, if possible, stabilize the Harbor Patrol budget and strengthen staffing and response on the saltwater and freshwater bodies in and around Seattle.

Now that the Seattle City Council has approved a final budget, we wanted to reflect on how things turned out and do a final report-back to this group.

In many ways, we achieved important successes regarding the Harbor Patrol. The talk of de-funding this unit went away and so too, for the most part, did the idea of studies of how to merge SHP into the Seattle Fire Department. Additionally, our sustained communication and outreach – all your e-mails, a group op-ed that ran in the *Seattle Times* (“An underfunded harbor patrol needs public support” ([LINK](#)), multiple KOMO-TV news stories ([LINK](#) and [HERE](#)) and more – gave Seattle elected officials newfound understanding of and respect for the Harbor Patrol. In several of our meetings, even Councilmembers that have had profound concerns over police operations said they appreciated the important life safety, health and welfare, and public safety role the Harbor Patrol plays on our waterways.

We also successfully worked with the Seattle Mayor’s Office in supporting an initiative designed to bring 125 new police department hires to the Seattle Police Department, some of which we hope can buttress day-to-day Harbor Patrol staffing. Further, we worked with Councilmember Dan Strauss and his office on an amendment that was included in the final budget, allocating \$200,000 for a study that will help determine cost of service and appropriate staffing levels needed to secure and preserve the safety of the waterways in Seattle.

An added note is that we forged the beginnings of a very good working relationship with Mayor-Elect Bruce Harrell. Our meeting with him left us little doubt that he “gets it” with regard to Harbor Patrol. He invited us to meet and talk further with him in the coming year, and Peter Schrappen and Eugene Wasserman gained appointments to seats on the Mayor-Elect’s transition team. With a new Mayor and some new blood coming onto the City Council, we hope the future is brighter for Harbor Patrol.

All that said, we don't want you to think everything turned out perfectly or that there is not more work to do. It didn't, and there is. We were disappointed that the City Council ended up cutting \$9.9 million from the SPD budget, eliminated any funding for new-hiring incentives, and did not take any steps to add staffing to Harbor Patrol (*although SHP full-time-equivalent staffing counts were maintained*). Our advocacy efforts need to continue and our voices need to be heard. Along those lines, count on us looking to re-gather this group sometime in 2022.

For now, though, as a challenging 2021 draws to a close, we hope that all of you and your respective families find time to enjoy the holidays and recharge your batteries before the New Year comes along.

We offer a sincere thanks, again, for your time, your attention, and your collective efforts.