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**The houseboat dock at the Muscatine Municipal Boat Harbor and Marina has three more sections yet to be installed but that will be done following completion of the dredging operation currently underway. New electric and water service lines will be added once the completed dock is in place.**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**August 10, 2017**

## **DOCKS REBUILT, DREDGING BEGINS IN BOAT HARBOR**

*Long Dock Replacement Project completed, rip-rap replaced, dredging underway*

**MUSCATINE, Iowa** – The docks have been rebuilt, rip-rap replaced in two areas, and the dredging of the Muscatine Municipal Boat Harbor has begun according to Nick Gow, Park Maintenance Superintendent for the City of Muscatine.

“I haven’t seen the water this low for the last two or three years,” Gow said. “I don’t think it got below 10 feet last year and we are at about seven and a half feet right now. This is a great time to get it (the dredging) done. It is always a little better when the water is shallower so you can get down in there and get the stuff picked up.”

The Boat Harbor and Trail Embankment Project was comprised of three restoration projects on the Muscatine riverfront that included lacing rip-rap along the inside of the harbor wall, placing rip-rap on a 1,600 foot stretch of the riverfront from Pearl City Station to the Millennium Plaza, and replaced the long dock in the harbor.

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Funding came from a Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) grant of \$125,000 that was awarded by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in December of 2015 and covered most of the cost of the three-part project. The City budgeted \$90,000 of the \$215,000 project.

Crews from the Parks and Recreation Department went to work removing the long dock in the Muscatine Municipal Boat Harbor as soon as the weather permitted while other city crews worked on the rip-rap replacement. Most of the work was well underway or completed when a tornado moved through Muscatine on March 6, 2017.

The high winds broke “The Pearl Button” river boat loose from its moorings at the transient dock, sending the boat crashing into the houseboat docks and eventually lodging against the rip-rap on the upriver side of the boat harbor.

“When I came in the morning after the tornado, the river boat was all the way up against the wall on the far side of the harbor,” Gow said. “Because of the REAP grant we had the long dock completely removed so there was nothing for the boat to crash into.”

Except for the houseboat dock and the rip-rap on the upriver side of the harbor.

“Thankfully we had not started putting those docks back in yet or we would have had a big mess for us,” Gow said.

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The damage to the houseboat docks was extensive, damaging five sections and ripping out the electrical service and water lines. The transient dock also suffered damage from the storm with three poles bent and several collars broken off as the river boat was pounded by the wind before finally breaking free of its moorings.

“Between the storm damage and the REAP grant this boat harbor has gotten a lot of attention in the last 18 months,” Gow said. “For this we are grateful because not a lot has been put into the harbor since the transient dock was put in back in the early 2000s. There was some old, old docks that is for sure with some old, old floats on them. It is nice to be able to update all that and we now have some great solid structure going forward.”

The new long dock was installed earlier this spring while part of the houseboat dock has been rebuilt.

“We still have three more sections that we have to get put in place that will give us 10 slips for now,” Gow said.

Meanwhile, the City is taking advantage of the low water level and a smaller houseboat dock to dredge the boat harbor and marina for the first time in several years. Crews from the Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP) are manning the dredge and have been at work for the last several days.

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“When they get done with the downriver side of the houseboat docks, we will move the docks down and then they can dredge the upriver side of the houseboat docks,” Gow said.

Another area that will be address at the present time is the mouth of the harbor where a lot of sediment is located.

“They will get the houseboat area and the mouth cleaned up and then come back next spring to finish the rest of the boat harbor,” Gow said.

The low water level has also revealed several other areas that need to be cleaned out and will be addressed when possible including the transient dock area and the shoreline from the Riverview Center to Pearl City Station. Included is the old boat ramp area that crews from the Public Works Department will work on.

“They have a big end loader that can go down, scoop the stuff up, and haul it off,” Gow said.  
“Then the fire department will come in with their big hoses and finishing washing all that sediment off.”

Gow noted that once the dredging operation is completed in the boat harbor he hopes to replace the electrical and water supply lines to the houseboat dock.

“The harbor will be in really great shape once we are finished,” Gow said.

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Meanwhile, several of the old docks that are currently pulled up in the old boat ramp area will be made available through a public auction that the City will hold in the near future.

“They are still useful docks,” Gow said.

More details on the public action will be announced later.

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[PHOTO GALLERY](#)

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