



## **Sailing/Kayaking/Stand Up Paddle Board Committee**

Brian FitzSimons	Former Commodore, Yacht Club
Jessica Ebeling	Edenton Chowan Partnership – Tourism
Shannon Ray	Edenton-Chowan Recreation Director
Tracy Benkusky	Paddle Board/Kayak Racer & Enthusiast
Brian Donnelly	Sailing Instructor & Current Commodore Yacht Club
Kermit Layton	Member of 1999 Waterfront Redevelopment Commission/Sunfish Park Enthusiast
Samuel Dixon	Edenton Town Councilman



**January 8, 2016**

**Report From the Edenton Waterfront Sailing, Kayaking, Stand-Up Paddle Boarding Committee**

In conjunction with the Edenton Town Council's review and consideration of the possible sale of the former Conger Building/NE Commission Building located at the Edenton Waterfront, concerns were expressed about the impact of loss of storage building and outside boat storage area that would occur with a sale or lease of the building. The loss of this storage space and area would impact the Edenton Chowan Recreation Department's sunfish sailing program and the Town's Kayaking & Paddle Board rental program. The consensus of the Town Council was regardless the future use of the building, these water-related programs are important to the vitality of the waterfront and a plan of action should be developed to improve and expand these programs at the Waterfront. In October 2015, Mayor Vaughan appointed the following members to serve on the committee:

Tracy Benkusky, paddle board and kayak enthusiast; Committee Chair of the Annual Music & Water Festival Paddle Board and Kayak Races. Tracy and her husband own Edenton Eye Care Center and are the parents of two young daughters who swim competitively and want to learn to sail.

Brian Donnelly, certified Sailing Instructor who teaches sailing for the Edenton-Chowan Recreation Department's summer sailing program. Brian also is the Commodore of Edenton Yacht Club.

Jessica Ebeling, Assistant for Chowan County Tourism Development Authority, Edenton Chowan Chamber of Commerce and Edenton Chowan Partnership. Jessica has a Master's Degree Public Administration an emphasis in Urban Planning from Auburn University. Jessica and her family enjoy exploring Edenton's creeks and water ways in canoes and kayaks.

Brian FitzSimons, past Commodore of the Edenton Yacht Club and sailing enthusiast. Brian is a Real Estate Agent for Dowd & Forbes' United Country Real Estate.

Kermit Layton, charter member and founder of Sunfish Park Sailing Group. Kermit was a member of the Mayor's 1998 Waterfront Redevelopment Commission – the group that developed the plan of action that lead to the construction of the Breakwater and Harbor facilities at the Waterfront. Kermit owns Edenton Office Supply in downtown Edenton.

Shannon Ray, Director of Edenton-Chowan Recreation Department. Shannon's department sponsors summer sailing camps and lessons at the Edenton Waterfront. The department recently completed improvements to the County owned Pembroke Creek Park which include enhanced water access for kayaking and fishing.

Sam Dixon, Edenton Town Councilman served as the Council Liaison. Sam's daughter is an avid Opti sailboat racer and competes in sailing regatta races up and down the eastern seaboard.

The Committee conducted four spirited meetings. All members were actively engaged in discussion and debate. Below is a summary of the salient points of discussions from each of the four meetings. The fourth and final meeting of the Committee concluded with specific recommendations.

#### October 30, 2015 Meeting

The Committee received an overview of the history of the development of the waterfront, from the early colonial seaport days, through the industrialization of Edenton and the redevelopment that began in 2000 with the construction of the breakwater, harbor and other amenities and culminated in 2014 with the relocation of the Historic 1888 Roanoke River Lighthouse.

Discussions points included ways to make Edenton waterfront "race ready", better launch facilities, what are the best launch options. The committee focused on defining the problem or challenge – who do we want to cater to – local sunfish users/kayakers or tourists or regattas. How big do we want to get, what resources and infrastructure needed to host regattas. Can we expand sailing program to include Optis – the Recreation Department program is at a place where the program can grow.

Discussions ensued regarding the need for storage for bigger boats or enhancing the storage space we have now. Questions were asked about possibility of acquisition of Keith Nixon property and Denise Barnes building (former Edenton Bay Trading Co. location). The group talked about other locations to move the sailing program to – Edenton Marina – infrastructure good but difficult for regattas to get out of Pembroke Creek. Queen Anne Park was considered but space is limited. The sandy beach area on Hayes Plantation was mentioned several times as an excellent location but dismissed due to cost.

#### November 13, 2015 Meeting

The Committee reviewed report submitted by Brian FitzSimons that outlined the resources necessary to host a regatta (attached). Data such as revenue generated from harbor & kayak rentals, number of students in sailing classes were also reviewed (attached). The group talked about a new structure that would meet current and future needs for storage of sail boats & kayaks. Where would be the best location for this new structure – considerable thought and discussion took place. There was unanimous agreement that the new structure should not interfere with the views of the Bay, the Sound and Pembroke Creek from the shores of the park and especially the playground where a lot of adults get to enjoy the view while watching children play. There agreement too that a new structure should not interfere with the views of the and from the lighthouse and photos that are taken of the lighthouse. Protecting the "photographic view" of the Lighthouse was deemed very important.

#### November 20, 2014

A review of the various aspects of the County's sailing lessons and camps were given by Shannon Ray and Brian Donnelly. Sambo and Gray Dixon reviewed photos and videos of Opti sailboat regattas. There was discussion about expanding the sailing program to a level where summer interns could be added to the program. There was discussion about expanding to offer sailing opportunities to the Boys & Girls Club. Committee focused on idea of separating the new proposed facility into two structures – one for kayaks and paddle boards and another separate structure for sailboats. There is land available behind

the existing park attendant building that could handle an addition for storage of kayaks and paddle boards. There was consensus the utilization of kayaks and paddle boards would be enhanced if they located near the park offices. Improved signage will help improve utilization. Ideas were discussed about possible location for new sailboat storage structure included in the area where the lighthouse was stored prior to being located over water and near the sunfish launch site. It was agreed that technical assistance would be sought from Albemarle RC&D.

December 8, 2015

Shannon Ray and Anne Marie Knighton met on site with Albemarle RC&D officials Mark Powell and Linda Peterson to review proposed sites for the location of sailing storage structure and kayak and

Paddle board storage structure. Various locations were reviewed and Mark and Linda recommended focusing on two options for the sailing structure – one location at the site where the Lighthouse was stored and the other on the front lawn of the former Conger Building/NE Commission Building (West Water Street side of the building). Mark and Linda agreed to sketch options on site plan and attend the next meeting of the Committee and review ideas with members.

December 18, 2015

The Committee reviewed the two proposed options (attached) with Mark Powell. There was concern expressed that the location proposed for a new structure, specifically the location where the lighthouse was temporarily stored in the park on land, from the years 2007 until 2012, would negatively impact the views visitors and citizens enjoy of the Albemarle Sound, Edenton Bay and John's Island. Attention then shifted to the front lawn site. Concern was expressed that the distance from the structure to the launch site was too great. Concern about conflicts with boats being transported and park traffic, which includes the Trolley, school buses and general auto traffic. There was considerable discussion about the ability to manage traffic impacts during sailing lesson hours – 9 am. to 11:30 am.

The idea of adding class room like space to the sailing storage structure quickly gained support. There is ample land to support additional space needed. There was considerable debate over the benefits of keeping the storage structure we have now versus constructing a new structure. It was ultimately agreed that we need to expand infrastructure to support growing the sailing program and at same time protect the water views that are enjoyed by the public.

Consideration was given to constructing a kayak launch in the Harbor, to increase visibility of the Town's Kayak & Paddle Board rental program and Park Attendant's office where rental transactions are handled. Concerns were expressed about potential conflict with boaters and kayakers in the harbor.

Mark Powell made suggestion that in addition to constructing a structure on the front lawn with a classroom space, a "sailing season boat storage area" be created adjacent to the Sunfish Inlet. This would accommodate quick and easy launches for sailing lessons and rentals as well as increase the visibility of the boats and kayaks during peak season. Design and placement details will need to be worked out but the consensus was a seasonal outdoor storage area adjacent to the launch facilities makes sense from an operational standpoint and it achieves goal of increasing visibility of the watercrafts. The main take away is the storage rack(s) be constructed near the launch area in Sunfish Park to allow for storage during sailing and kayak season and be secured with a locking system or fence.

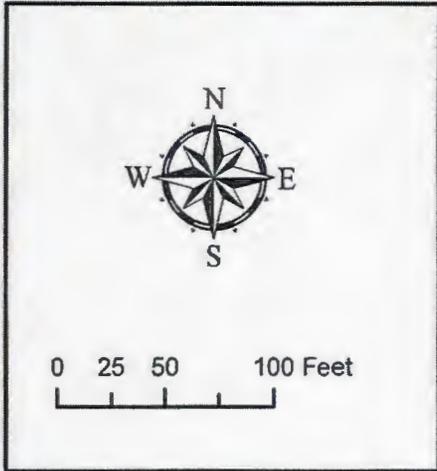
A new sloped launch is recommended to be constructed in the northeast corner of the sunfish park inlet. This launch would accommodate kayakers, Sunfish and Opti sail boaters.

**Recommendations:**

After considerable discussion and spirited debate, the Committee unanimously recommends the following improvements to enhance the sailing, kayaking and paddle boarding utilization at the Edenton Waterfront:

1. Construct addition to the Park Attendant /Bathrooms/Showers Facility to accommodate the storage of kayaks and stand up paddle boards (and canoes?). Structure should be 30' x 15'.
2. Modify the parking lot curbing by installing a ramp to allow for cart or trailer to move kayaks from storage facility to launch area.
3. Provide mechanized vehicle – gator, club cart - to assist moving trailers with boats/kayaks from new storage locations.
4. Construct a structure on the West Water Street lawn area of the Conger Building/NE Commission Building. The structure should be approximately 50' x 20' and will accommodate sailboat storage and classroom space.
5. Construct boardwalk or cement walkway from the Sailboat Storage & Classroom structure to connect to the existing pavement that will be used as route to the launch site.
6. Construct a fixed canoe/kayak/sailboat launch in the northeast corner of Sunfish Park inlet.
7. Construct a seasonal sailboat & kayak storage rack system with possible fencing near the east side of Sunfish Park inlet.

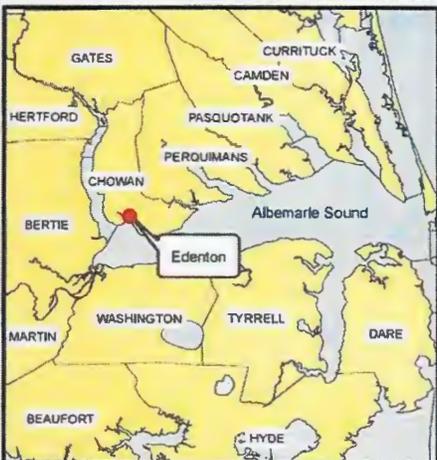
# Edenton Waterfront Sailboat and Kayak Storage Options



Map author:  
 Mark Powell, NRM Consultant  
 Albemarle RC&D Council

Date: 12/18/2015      Revision: 2

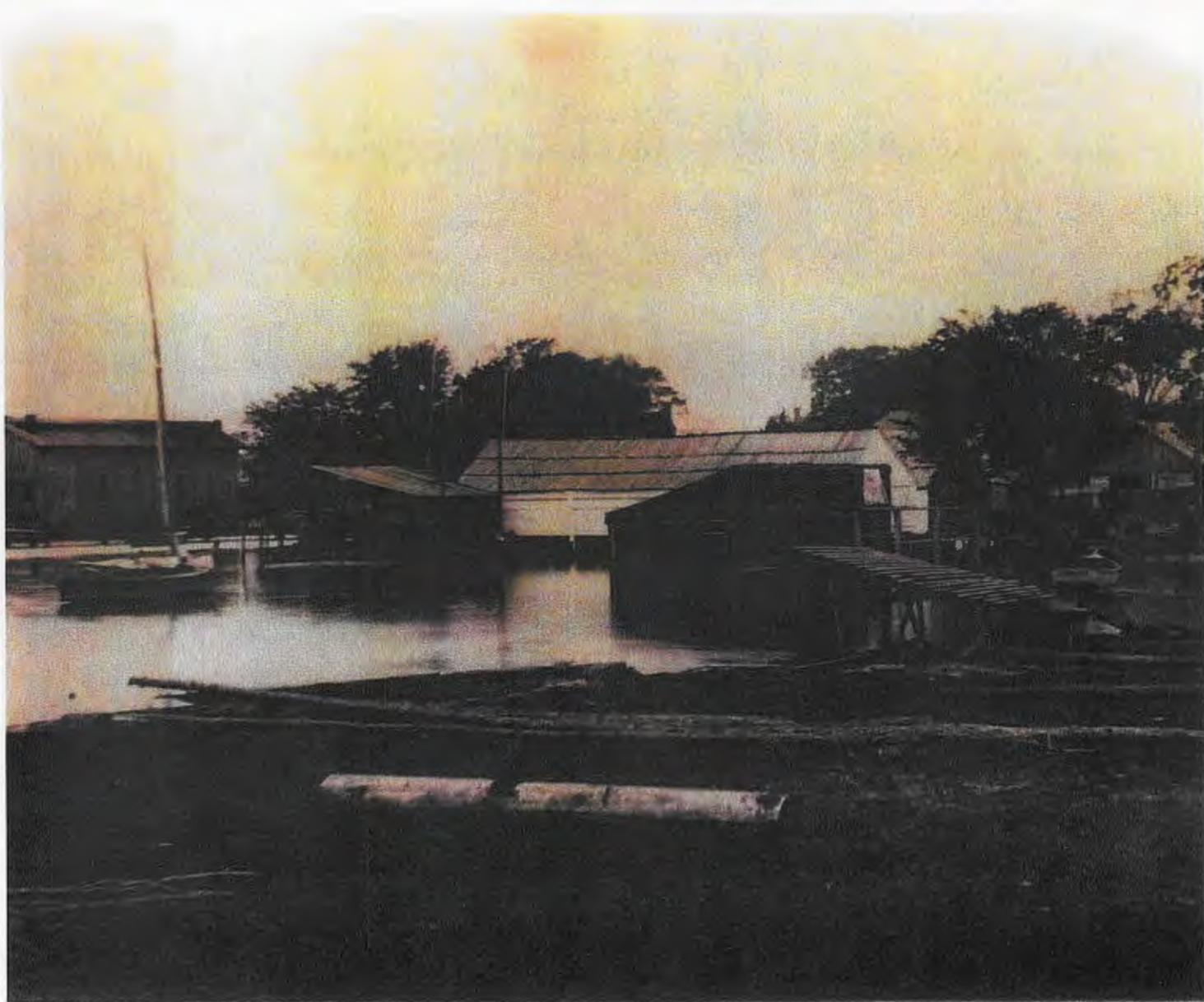
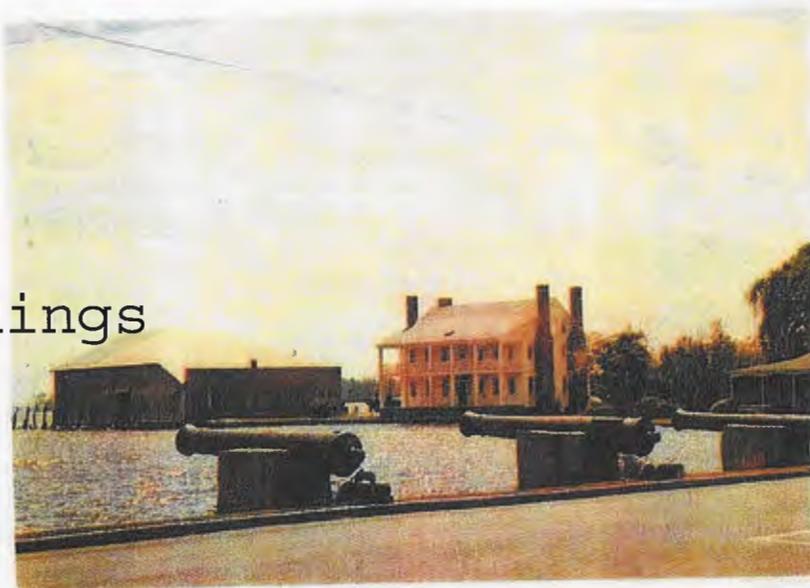
Notes:

Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, IGN, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, and the GIS User Community



Industrial Buildings  
At Waterfront



## **Edenton Waterfront – Sailing requirements.**

**11-9-15**

The following is a list of the resources that visiting sailors would expect to find on hand when they take part in a regatta on our local waters.

Obviously, it will depend on how many of them there may be to determine the scale of this effort. Given our physical restrictions with regard to water access, it may be prudent to limit ourselves to hosting relatively small fleets up to 50 boats.

Our competitors in the regatta hosting business may be able to host larger fleets, but we will have a marketing advantage by having the regatta centered on down town Edenton, and hopefully attract our fair share of events.

### **Regatta Needs**

#### **Parking**

- Boats, (a dinghy on a trailer will take up one parking space. This should be adjacent to the launching place)
- Cars, (These can be parked in the vicinity but don't have to be close to the boats)
- Trailers, (These will be under the boats when the boats are ashore normally. Some boats may have a separate launching trolley which means the trailer would have to be parked somewhere else)

#### **Launching Facilities**

- Ramps, (Ideally this would be wide enough to take the whole fleet at once, but that is not usually the case unless a beach is involved. As a minimum we should be able to launch five boats at once.)
- Cranes, (Some of the larger dinghies, such as Flying Scot can be craned in to the water. We currently have two cranes, a couple more would be useful, but they have to be accessible)

#### **Crew Facilities**

- Bathrooms, I am not sure what would be acceptable for a crowd of 100 people, but that can be worked out and Porta Potties could be used to augment if necessary.
- Showers, Same as above.
- Changing rooms, These would be part of the other facilities.
- Cafeteria/Snack Bar, The need for this would depend on the regatta schedule. A catered meal in the evening may be sufficient provided the competitors can source breakfast and a lunch snack somewhere in town.

#### **Boat Repair resources**

- Fiberglass repair, carpentry, Usually carried out by the sailors themselves, except in the case of major damage.

- Rigging repair, wire splicing etc., Some classes have a traveling support trailer where broken fittings, and rigging repairs can be handled. We should at least have information on where this service can be accessed locally.
- Sail Repair, Usually handled with sticky sail repair tape. In big regattas a favorite sail maker may attend to support his customers. We have some local skill in this area.

### **Regatta Management**

- Regatta Chairman, (Responsible for the organization of the regatta resources)
- Secretary/Treasurer, (Responsible for recording entries and collecting entry fees)
- Principal Race Officer, PRO (Runs the regatta on the water from the Committee Boat)
- Racing Marks, (Inflatable tetrahedrons for setting out the course)
- Mark Boats, (Usually one per mark (3), responsible for setting them in response to instructions from the PRO)
- Committee Boat, (This is where the PRO runs things from and it needs to be large enough to house about 4-6 people)
- Rescue Boats, (Very important in dinghy events. The mark boats usually do double duty but it is nice to have two or three independent boats to rescue people)
- NOTE : Some classes bring a lot of this with them, but if we are going to instigate events, then we need to have these resources available locally.

### **Summary**

This is a very broad overview of what it would be nice to have if we are going to promote Edenton as a desirable venue for sailing events. I have made no attempt to fit it into the physical assets we currently have available.

Kermit has a legitimate point when he says that the Yacht Club is aging out and we no longer have the people to run these events, (in a fit state to do so). However, it is possible to import them for events; it would just have to be included in the organization.

### **Canoe, Kayak and Paddle board rentals**

#### **Signage**

- The main problem with this activity is that there seems to be some difficulty finding the Harbor Master when visitors want to rent something.
- There needs to be a descriptive sign by the canoes etc which shows where the Harbor Masters office is located and possibly it would be good to have her cell phone number there as well. Most people today have a cell phone with them and that may be the quickest and easiest way for them to get in touch with the Harbor Master.
- The Harbor Masters office needs to be more visibly identified with better, more obvious signage.

**Access**

- I think the Harbor Master's office should also be rearranged so that he or she is able to look out of a window when sitting at the computer so that he or she is able to see any activity in the harbor, such as boats entering and leaving, visitor wandering round looking lost etc.
- It would be better if the canoes etc were closer to the office so that there is less running to and fro involved
- This would suggest that a floating dock by the lighthouse might be a good idea for the use of the visitors coming and going.

Brian FitzSimons  
252-312-9042

## Knighton, Anne-Marie

---

**From:** Ray, Shannon  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 12, 2015 11:10 AM  
**To:** Brian FitzSimons; Knighton, Anne-Marie; Jessica Ebeling; Tracy Benkusky  
spbenkusky@embarqmail.com; laneyl101@yahoo.com; Brian Donnelly  
sambo233@mchsi.com; mayorvaughan@icloud.com  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** RE: Sailing/Kayaking/SUP Committee

Additionally, I was asked to provide numbers for the summer sailing classes for the last several years.

2015

Income: \$1035 (23 kids); two weeks of sailing canceled due to algae problem in water

Expense: \$805

Revenue: \$230

2014

Income: \$1620 (36 kids)

Expense: \$1275

Revenue: \$345

2013

Income: \$1620 (36 kids)

Expense: \$1200

Revenue: \$420

See everyone at the meeting tomorrow morning.

### Shannon Ray

Center Director

Northern Chowan Community Center

Edenton-Chowan Recreation Department

**From:** Brian FitzSimons [<mailto:bfitz9042@live.com>]

**Sent:** Monday, November 09, 2015 3:42 PM

**To:** Knighton, Anne-Marie <[anne-marie.knighton@edenton.nc.gov](mailto:anne-marie.knighton@edenton.nc.gov)>; Jessica Ebeling <[jessicaebeling@edenton.net](mailto:jessicaebeling@edenton.net)>;

Tracy Benkusky [spbenkusky@embarqmail.com](mailto:spbenkusky@embarqmail.com) <[spbenkusky@embarqmail.com](mailto:spbenkusky@embarqmail.com)>; Ray, Shannon

<[shannon.ray@chowan.nc.gov](mailto:shannon.ray@chowan.nc.gov)>; [laneyl101@yahoo.com](mailto:laneyl101@yahoo.com); Brian Donnelly <[briandonnelly242@gmail.com](mailto:briandonnelly242@gmail.com)>

**Cc:** [sambo233@mchsi.com](mailto:sambo233@mchsi.com); [mayorvaughan@icloud.com](mailto:mayorvaughan@icloud.com)

**Subject:** RE: Sailing/Kayaking/SUP Committee

Further to our meeting last Friday, please find attached my preliminary outline of the requirements for hosting regattas. I have taken the liberty to give my thoughts on the water toy rentals as well.

I look forward to everyone's input on Friday.

**Kayak/Dock Revenues**

	<u>Dock</u>	<u>Kayaks</u>
2009	\$1,659	\$1,770
2010	\$3,157	\$1,184
2011	\$3,878	\$1,558
2012	\$2,282	\$1,895
2014	\$6,408	\$2,967
2015	\$5,213	\$3,358

KAYAKS

YEAR	AMT:	DIFFERENCE:
2012	258	0
2013	285	27
2014	351	66
2015	302	-49

In 2015 The Algae Bloom had an affect on Kayak rentals as we had a steady amount of inquiries however after reading information they decided not to go.