

**CITY OF NORWALK
NORWALK SHELLFISH COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 5, 2026**

ATTENDANCE: Steve Bartush (Chair), Jonathan Pageler, Pete Johnson, Mark Hiller, Nick Sacchinelli (6:32 pm).

STAFF: Bill Mooney, Assistant Director of Health, Aaron Ho.

OTHERS: Sgt. Justin Bisceglie, Geoff Steadman (Consultant), Matthew Shuler (17 Mack St.), Glenn Perschino (17 Mack St.), John Bove (17 Mack St.)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Bartush called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. A quorum was present.

II. ROLL CALL

A roll call of those present was performed.

III. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A. REGULAR MEETING: FEBRUARY 5, 2026

****MR. JOHNSON MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES.
**MR. HILLER SECONDED THE MOTION.
THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

V. REPORTS

A. TREASURER

Mr. Mooney reported that on February 5, two deposits were made as a result of shellfishing permits collected, one in the amount of \$462 and another for \$3,441, bringing the balance to \$32,553. He further reported that on February 12 an expenditure of \$556 was made for new year permits, resulting in a current balance of \$31,997.

B. SECRETARY

Mr. Bartush noted that the Commission had previously voted to send a letter to the Mayor expressing support for the reinstatement of Dr. John Pinto to the Harbor Management Commission. Mr. Bartush reported that he received a response from the Mayor acknowledging the letter but indicating that she declined to appoint Dr. Pinto.

C. HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Mr. Mooney reported that total rainfall for the month was 1.09 inches, which was lower than the 3.31 inches recorded in February of the previous year and below the historical average of 2.91 inches. Mr. Mooney also reported that there were no closures and no reported bypasses during the month.

D. WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT

There was no report.

E. WATER QUALITY

Mr. Bartush reported that there was no update from the Mayor's Water Quality Committee. He stated that he has not received any information from the Mayor regarding whether the committee will be reactivated.

F. PERMITS

Mr. Bartush asked if there had been any updates regarding a potential new vendor. Mr. Mooney stated that he had intended to visit the vendor but had not yet been able to do so due to work commitments. The Commission discussed the vendor All-American Tackle, and Mr. Mooney noted that the last time he stopped by the location it was closed for the season. It was suggested that the vendor may reopen in the coming months, and Mr. Pageler indicated he might try to reach out.

G. POLICE

Sgt. Bisceglie reported that the ice in the harbor had broken up, although the river remained fairly frozen. He stated that warmer temperatures expected during the week should help break up the remaining ice. He also reported that the water temperature was approximately 34 to 35 degrees and that overall conditions were quiet.

H. ADVISORY

Mr. Steadman discussed concerns related to the South Norwalk Boat Club and the nearby 26 Shorefront project, noting potential conflicts with the use of adjacent littoral areas. He also commented on the prior dredging of contaminated material in the harbor, the importance of

watershed management for protecting shellfish resources, and ongoing efforts related to the Norwalk River Watershed-based Plan. Mr. Steadman also referenced shellfish management efforts in Stamford and Greenwich and discussed issues related to permitting and enforcement of dock conditions on shellfish beds. He indicated that he would provide a summary of recommendations for the Commission to consider at a future meeting.

A separate motion to accept the Advisory report was made as it was out of sequence.

****MR. JOHNSON MOVED TO ACCEPT THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT.**

****MR. HILLER SECONDED THE MOTION.**

****THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

I. HARBOR MANAGEMENT

Mr. Mooney reported that he emailed Mr. Mangels to inform him that he could attend the meeting and offered to add him to the Zoom invitation list for future meetings. Mr. Mooney stated that he has not yet received a response. Mr. Bartush noted that a representative could attend in his place if needed.

****MR. PAGELER MOVED TO ACCEPT THE COMMITTEE REPORTS.**

****MR. JOHNSON SECONDED THE MOTION.**

****THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. 20 Wharf Rd.

Mr. Bartush revisited the 20 Wharf application presented by Mr. Ryder at the previous meeting. He noted that the Commission had requested GPS coordinates of the proposed barge location to allow for testing of the sediment and marine life in the area. Mr. Bartush stated that the Commission has not yet received the coordinates and may follow up with the applicant regarding the status of the project.

B. Maritime Aquarium Oyster Restoration Project - Letter of Support

Mr. Bartush reported that the Commission received a draft letter from the Maritime Aquarium regarding the Oyster Restoration Project and, with assistance from Mr. Mooney, is now participating as a junior partner. He noted that the project involves local marine science students and that the Commission has been invited to observe its progress. Mr. Johnson added that an area near the east end of Calf Pasture Beach has been buoyed off in preparation for the project.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. 17 Mack St.

Mr. Shuler presented an application for improvements at the South Norwalk Boat Club located at 17 Mack Street. He explained that the proposal involves enlarging several finger docks along the southern dock to improve safety, stability, and usability for boats typically ranging from 20 to 25 feet in length. The plan includes extending the finger docks, installing piles for added stability, and extending the T-head to align with the new dock lengths.

During discussion, Mr. Bartush asked whether the project was the same one previously referenced in discussions about a nearby property. Mr. Perschino confirmed that the proposal had been mentioned in an earlier meeting in relation to marina protection. Commissioners also briefly discussed the status of a related project at 26 Shorefront, noting that DEEP had issued a tentative determination to permit that expansion.

****MR. HILLER MOVED TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION FOR 17 MACK STREET WITHOUT REQUIRING A SITE INSPECTION.**

****MR. JOHNSON SECONDED THE MOTION.**

****THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

B. 160 Water St.

Mr. Ho, speaking on behalf of Mr. Meehan, presented a project at 160 Water Street involving a city stormwater outfall located on the property. He explained that sediment from roadway runoff periodically accumulates in the marina area, and under an existing easement agreement the City is responsible for maintaining the area when sediment exceeds a specified elevation. Mr. Ho reported that a recent survey confirmed significant sediment buildup, and the City is proposing a dredging project to remove approximately 200 cubic yards of material from an area of about 2,320 square feet, with an average removal depth of roughly three feet.

Mr. Bartush asked Mr. Ho to clarify what the Commission was being asked to provide as part of the project review. Mr. Ho explained that the City is applying for a permit from DEEP and that the process requires the local Shellfish Commission to complete a section of the LWRD license application. Mr. Bartush also asked whether documentation could be provided showing that the area had been dredged previously. Mr. Ho stated that the last dredging occurred around 2012–2013 and indicated that the City could provide documentation of that work.

Mr. Johnson asked whether the project should fall under a Certificate of Permission rather than requiring a new permit application. Mr. Ho indicated that the City was proceeding with a DEEP permit application but acknowledged that he was unsure why the project was not being handled through a Certificate of Permission, noting that the dredging occurs infrequently. Commissioners discussed the possibility of confirming whether that approach would be appropriate. Mr. Bartush also requested that documentation be provided showing that the dredging had previously been approved and completed.

Mr. Steadman provided background on prior dredging in the area, noting that previously dredged material was contaminated and required disposal in a confined aquatic disposal cell or an approved upland facility. Mr. Ho stated that environmental testing had been conducted during the prior project.

Mr. Bartush asked Mr. Ho to provide the requested documentation to Mr. Mooney so it could be distributed to the Commissioners, after which the Commission would complete its portion of the paperwork.

****MR. JOHNSON MOVED TO CONDITIONALLY APPROVE THE PROJECT, SUBJECT TO DOCUMENTATION CONFIRMING THAT THE AREA HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN DREDGED AND THAT AN APPROPRIATE DISPOSAL PLAN FOR THE DREDGED MATERIAL IS PROVIDED.**

****MR. HILLER SECONDED THE MOTION.**

****THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

VIII. DISCUSSION

Mr. Pageler asked whether local waters could support bay scallops. Mr. Johnson noted that scallops were historically found near Tavern Island when eelgrass was more abundant but that he had not heard of recent activity.

Mr. Johnson questioned why their letter of support to the Mayor was not accepted. Mr. Bartush advised that he would forward the Mayor's cordial response.

Mr. Pageler left the meeting at 7:01 pm.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

****MR. HILLER MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

****MR. JOHNSON SECONDED THE MOTION.**

****THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

UPCOMING MEETINGS

April 2, 2026.

The meeting adjourned at 7:08 pm.