

**CITY OF NORWALK  
SHELLFISH COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 5, 2024**

**ATTENDANCE:** Steve Bartush, Chair; Pete Johnson, Jonathan Pageler, Jordan Saxe, Nick Sacchinelli

**OTHERS:** William Mooney, Health Department; Police Sgt. Justin Bisceglia, Geoff Steadman, Norwalk Harbor Commission Consultant; John Hilts, Tom Ryder, LandTech

The meeting was held via Zoom teleconference.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Bartush called the meeting to order at 7:17 p.m.

Mr. Bartush requested a moment of silence in memory of Dr. Caroline Rosenfield, one of his former teachers and an integral part of science and mathematics in Norwalk.

**ATTENDANCE**

The attendance was taken and a quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**• August 1, 2024**

**\*\* MR. JOHNSON MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 1, 2024 MEETING.**

**\*\* MR. SAXE SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 1, 2024 MEETING AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no one who wished to comment at this time.

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

Mr. Mooney presented his report and commented that the permit information will also be included. He said that the balance was the same as last month at \$24,938.00.

Mr. Mooney said that he visited Fisherman's World and received a check for \$3,384 for the permits issued. This has been deposited, but has not cleared yet.

### **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

No report at this time.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **A) Health Department**

Mr. Mooney reported that in August, there was 7.29 inches of rain. Last August there was 5.68 with an average of 4.17. There was 1 bypass on August 18th when the large storm was in the area. There were 4 closures and on the 18th all of the areas were closed. Mr. Bartush said that he had noticed that the rainfalls amount started increasing on Saturday night before the major rainstorm. Discussion followed about the type of measurements recorded.

**B) Wastewater Treatment Plant.** – No report.

**C) Water Quality** – No report.

**D) Permits** – This was presented earlier.

**E) Police** – Sgt. Bisceglia said that there was one incident where someone tried to harvest shellfish on the wrong side of the pier but this was immediately address by the beach unit. He said that the water temperature was around 70 degrees. A few flags have been replaced.

**F) Advisory** – No report.

**G) Harbor Management** – Mr. Steadman said that he appreciated the recognition of Ms. Rosenfield's passing. She contributed greatly to the City. He added that he would like to see the Council or the Mayor acknowledge her passing if possible.

Mr. Steadman said that the Harbor Commission had submitted a grant application requesting \$3 million dollars to the Connecticut Port Authority to restore or replace the Veteran's Park Marina. The Commission does not expect the full amount due to the fact that the Authority only has a total of \$5 million to allocate.

Mr. Steadman said that the Harbor Commission was going to send a joint letter to the DEEP regarding the Eversource public hearing process. He reviewed the details with the Shellfish Commission. The documents that were submitted for the hearing were not available for public review. In a previous case, DEEP had ruled that it was their agency's responsibility to

determine if a project is consistent with the Harbor Management Plan. Mr. Steadman noted that the final decision that was made by the Hearing Officer mentioned the Norwalk Harbor Commission, but did not mention the Shellfish Commission. He said that the letter will ask DEEP for the statute that gives them this authority. Stamford had asked the same question when their case was active, but did not receive a response. Mr. Steadman also said that they would be asking about the “Call Before You Dig” protocols.

Mr. Steadman also noted that Mr. Matthews had been working on promoting the Oyster Trail. Mr. Steadman is working on some interpretative panels on these and possibly incorporating some of the City Hall oystering murals.

Mr. Steadman said he had received an inquiry about the work at the Interstate 95/Route 7 Connector. There were concerns about the runoff from that area draining into the Harbor by Oyster Shell Park. He reminded everyone that when the mall was being constructed, the facility cut into the storm drain and claimed that there was additional capacity in the drain due to DOT instituting measures that would allow for it. Mr. Steadman will contact DEEP to find out if this extra drainage was considered.

**\*\* MR. SAXE MOVED TO ACCEPT THE COMMITTEE REPORTS AS PRESENTED.**  
**\*\* MR. PAGELER SECONDED.**  
**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

##### **• 28 Shorefront Park**

Mr. Bartush said that Mr. Hilts was present. A number of the Commissioners are familiar with the area and he felt that the standard language would apply. Mr. Hilts said that they would like to leave the ramp hoisted and in place during the winter. Mr. Bartush said that he felt that it would be fine. Discussion followed.

**\*\* MR. JOHNSON MOVED TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION FOR 28 SHOREFRONT PARK AS DISCUSSED.**  
**\*\* MR. SAXE SECONDED.**  
**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

##### **• 120 Wilson Ave.**

*Mr. Bartush said that the applicant wished to dredge at Wilson Avenue. Due to his relationship with the applicant, Mr. Bartush recused himself from this item. Mr. Johnson assumed the Chairmanship.*

Mr. Johnson said that this was a COP and this had been done before. Mr. Johnson explained that the last person that had done the dredging had destroyed some oyster beds and had been working at low tide. Mr. Johnson said that it would be important to include something in the COP so that this does not happen again.

Mr. Steadman said that he had spoken with the Director of Aquaculture about this and the Director was aware of the problem that had happened. However, the Director was not supportive of including a requirement for the applicant to post a bond that would cover any damages to shellfish beds. The Aquaculture Department does not want to have a policy like this that they would have to manage. The Director did agree that they could require a condition of approval that would specify that the movement of tugs and barges to and from the dredging site be restricted to the designated channel and only during times when they would not have an adverse impact on the shellfish resources. This was the condition of approval that the Harbor Commission included in their vote.

Mr. Ryder of LandTech then addressed the Commissioners. He said that he was the representative for the applicant and they were aware of the concerns. The applicant does not have any problems with the conditions that Mr. Steadman just mentioned. He said that they would communicate with Mr. Hilts about 1 Nathan Hale. They will be notified two weeks in advance and inspections can be done with some forewarning. The captains of the vessels will be notified of the situation to make them fully aware of it. The contractor has not yet been selected although bids have been submitted from companies that have worked in Norwalk and that the Commission is familiar with. Mr. Ryder said that he did not have any concerns about the conditions.

Mr. Steadman said that it would be important to notify the Harbor Master when work is going to be commenced. Mr. Ryder said that they were aware of the past issues with the other contractor and were taking steps so that it doesn't happen again. Mr. Ryder said that he was a Coastal Ecologist and very aware of the problem.

Mr. Steadman said that Dr. Pinto was writing a letter and they would send the Shellfish Commission a copy. Mr. Ryder said he had also sent his comments to Dr. Pinto.

**\*\* MR. SACCHINELLI MOVED TO APPROVE THE 120 WILSON AVE. COP WITH THE CONDITIONS AS DISCUSSED.**

**\*\* MR. PAGELER SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR (4) IN FAVOR (JOHNSON, PAGELER, SAXE AND SACCHINELLI) AND ONE (1) ABSTENTION (BARTUSH).**

*Mr. Bartush reassumed the chairmanship at the conclusion of the vote.*

Mr. Bartush noted that the Norwalk Oyster Festival would be underway this weekend and encouraged everyone to try some oysters.

Next Meeting – October 3, 2024 @ 7:15pm (Zoom)

**ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* MR. SACCHINELLI MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**\*\* MR. SAXE SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes

Telesco Secretarial Services