

**CITY OF NORWALK
SHELLFISH COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
AUGUST 3, 2023**

ATTENDANCE: Steve Bartush, Chair; Jonathan Pageler, Nicholas Sacchinelli, Jordan Saxe

OTHERS: William Mooney, Officer Justin Bisceglia, Geoff Steadman, Harbor Commission Consultant; Joseph Schnierlein, Water Quality Advisory Chair

The meeting was held via Zoom teleconference.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Bartush called the meeting to order at 7:20 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

The roll was called. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

• July 2023

**** MR. SAXE MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 2023 MEETING.**

**** MR. PAGELER SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 2023 MEETING AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no one present from the public who wished to comment at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

• Treasurer's Report

Mr. Mooney said that there were \$27,213.17 available in fund but there is a pending transfer of \$3,000 from the Shellfish Commission to the Harbor Management Commission. Once the recent deposit of \$2,495.00 from the permit sales register, the remaining balance will be \$26,708.17. He gave a very brief overview of the demographic breakout of the permits.

• Secretary's Report

Mr. Bartush said that he had sent out an email to the local DEEP reviewer about proposed zoning changes for the northern half of the marine commercial zone which is to be rezoned as CD5W. He asked for clarification on this in relationship to the Connecticut Coastal Management Act of 1978 and the Norwalk Municipal Coastal Management program. Mr. Bartush said that he had not received a response at this time.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A) Health Department – July's rainfall was 7.38 inches. Last year, it was 3.52 inches which was during a drought. Historically, the average is 3.82 inches. There were six closures: July 3rd, 10th, 14th, 16th 18th and the 25th, all due to rainfall. There were no reported bypasses.

B) Wastewater Treatment Plant – no report.

C) Water Quality – Mr. Schnierlein said he saw two members of the Department of Aquaculture the other day at the beach and asked them for an update on Vibrio because it has been reported on the Channel 12 News. A recent warning from the Department of Health did not have all the correct information included. It was not the shellfish that was causing the issue. A resident traveling out of state had shellfish at an out of state restaurant and became ill and later died. Norwalk shellfish was not involved. There were two additional cases in the State where the individuals had open wounds on their legs and were wading through muddy water. It will be important to let the people know it was not Norwalk shellfish.

Mr. Schnierlein said that Mr. Harris had done a comparison of the least expensive test and the most expensive test for PFA and PFOS. The lower cost tests results did not register as high as the more expensive test. It may be worth using the less expensive test as a barometer.

There was considerable discussion on the proposed zoning changes, which could have impact on the northern end of Water Street by the Washington Street Bridge. The plan proposes to have high density housing there, which is in a flood plain. Meetings are still underway. Other proposals include converting single family zones to multi-family zones.

Ms. Lauricella was looking for an update on the sewer violations and wished to invite the staff of the WPCA to the Water Quality Committee meetings. The WPCA have stated that the Water Quality members are free to attend their meetings.

The Committee will be discussing climate change, heat and water quality will be discussed at the next meeting.

Mr. Bartush noted that Vibrio Bonificates has never been found in Connecticut but there have been reports of Vibrio Parahaemolyticus before. Mr. Schnierlein said most of the sources

only refer to the genus name and not the species. Channel 12 had a special report on their midnight broadcast but because of the late hour, many people did not see it.

D) Permits – This was discussed earlier.

E) Police – Sgt. Bisceglia said that it has been very quiet from a shellfish perspective.

F) Advisory – Sgt. Bisceglia said the water temperature was around 70 degrees. Mr. Schnierlein asked if Sgt. Bisceglia had been contacted by Dr. Crosby from the Aquarium. Sgt. Bisceglia said that he had not been contacted directly. Mr. Schnierlein said that there had been a meeting regarding the work that would be involving the southern end of Veteran's Park. There was a discussion about putting concrete structures in the mud to help stabilize the bank. He said that he had recommended that they contact Sgt. Bisceglia about this since there are people who fish in that area during high tides.

G) Harbor Management – Mr. Steadman said that the State had issued a clarifying document about the Vibrio which was intended to address the fears that Vibrio was originating in Connecticut.

Mr. Steadman said that the Connecticut Port Authority was funding a study regarding the public access to the harbor and potential encroachments. This involves street ends that could provide public access to the Harbor. The next step is to put out a RFP for engineering and design consultants.

There has been no response from DEEP about what work will be done near the public dock.

The Harbor Master will be processing permits for the commercial barges for the Walk Bridge projects. The permit holders will be held responsible for any damage to the shellfish beds during this project.

Mr. Steadman spoke briefly about the shellfish restoration plan. He also mentioned a proposed amendment to the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) which the Harbor Commission is reviewing. This will involve replacing the commercial district along the northern portion of water street with multi-family units. This will impact future water dependent uses and will also place housing in a flood plain.

**** MR. SACCHINELLI MOVED TO ACCEPT THE COMMITTEE REPORTS AS PRESENTED.**

**** MR. PAGELER SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

OLD BUSINESS

- **Walk Bridge – DOT** - There was no additional information available at this time.

- **18 Burwell St.** - There was no additional information available at this time.

- **Eversource LWRD License Application** - There was no additional information available at this time.

Mr. Pageler said that it would be important to follow up on Vibrio issue. He said that the report just indicated that it was in Connecticut and mentioned that there were three victims, one of which died.

Mr. Saxe said that they could reach out to the reporter to provide them with background information. Discussion followed.

Mr. Bartush said that he would like to thank Harbor Master Lovallo in handling a recent oyster poaching incident

Next Meeting – September 7, 2023 @ 7:15pm (Zoom)

ADJOURNMENT

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

**** MR. PAGELER SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services