

**CITY OF NORWALK
NORWALK SHELLFISH COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
DECEMBER 4, 2025**

ATTENDANCE: Steve Bartush (Chair), Nick Sacchinelli, Jonathan Pageler, Pete Johnson
(6:34pm).

STAFF: Bill Mooney, Assistant Director of Health.

OTHERS: Alan Kibbe, Norwalk Harbor Management; Geoff Steadman, Consultant;
Sgt. Justin Bisceglie; Matthew Shuler - 108 Water Street.

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: NOVEMBER 6, 2025

****MR. PAGELER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES.**

****MR. SACCHINELLI SECONDED THE MOTION.**

****THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

V. REPORTS

A. TREASURER

Mr. Mooney reported that there was no expenditure. The balance remains \$28,650.

B. SECRETARY

There was no report.

C. HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Mr. Mooney reported that rainfall for November totaled 1.55 inches, compared to 4.14 inches last year and a historical average of 3.49 inches. Two closures occurred on November 26th and November 30th in the Cook's Ground area due to excessive rainfall exceeding the .5 inch threshold. He noted that conditions were otherwise quiet and that there were no bypasses.

D. WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT

There was no report.

E. PERMITS

Mr. Bartush advised that he and Mr. Mooney are working to have the 2026 permits ready by early January, with distribution targeted for the end of the holidays. He noted that the permits will have a slightly different design this year and that they plan to collect email addresses to allow for mass email communications with pertinent shellfish information.

F. POLICE

Sgt. Bisceglie stated that there was nothing new to report aside from the shellfishing violation discussed at the previous meeting. He reported that an arrest was made in that matter. The arrestee was charged with larceny in the second degree and violation of shellfishing regulations. The individual posted bond and has a court date scheduled for sometime after the first of the year.

G. ADVISORY

Sgt. Bisceglie reported that the water temperature is around 44 degrees.

H. WATER QUALITY

Mr. Bartush noted that following the Mayor-elect's inauguration, he would send an email to her new staff to inquire about reinvigorating the Committee and would see how it progresses from there.

I. HARBOR MANAGEMENT

Mr. Kibbe mentioned there was nothing beyond the routine application review to report at this time.

Mr. Steadman discussed developments in Stamford, where the Harbor Management Commission has been assigned shellfish responsibilities and formed a volunteer shellfish committee. He noted that Stamford's recreational beds remain closed due to insufficient water quality testing and that the Harbor Commission has contracted with Soundwaters to complete required sampling. Stamford must reissue its commercial shellfish ground lease, with a goal of creating opportunities

for new participants, similar to efforts underway in Branford. He explained that Stamford is rebuilding the Cummings Park Marina and may include space for commercial shellfishing vessels. He also described a recent meeting with the Bureau of Aquaculture regarding natural beds and noted that he prepared a poster of the 1889 Norwalk natural bed map, which Mr. Mooney will email to members. He added that Norwalk's natural beds were certified by the Superior Court, unlike Stamford's.

Mr. Steadman provided updates on the Connecticut Port Authority, noting that its annual meeting will be held next Tuesday in New Haven and will cover revised SHIP grant procedures. He stated that the Bond Commission will meet December 12 and may allocate all municipal grant funds as one pool, likely resulting in smaller but more broadly distributed grants. The Seaview Avenue project hearing is December 11, with comments due December 23. Shellfish resources are not an issue, but there are important harbor management concerns. He also noted a related evidentiary hearing matter in Greenwich involving a proposed dock on a natural bed, explaining that the outcome may set precedent for other towns.

Mr. Steadman stated that the next Norwalk River Watershed Initiative meeting is December 17 in Wilton. Displays prepared for the prior South Norwalk meeting will again be provided and emphasized the Commissions' long-standing involvement due to watershed impacts on shellfish resources. He added that the meeting will also address the Route 7/15 project and that water quality policies from the Harbor Management Plan will be submitted for endorsement. He updated the Commission on the Manresa Island stewardship permit, noting that the comment period closed October 30 and they are awaiting DEEP's response. The Bureau of Aquaculture director has increased confidence in the project's approach to marine sediment contaminants. He emphasized that the peninsula is surrounded by a confirmed natural bed and will require close review.

Mr. Steadman shared a brief update on efforts to amend the Connecticut Harbor Management Act and stated that they are working with DEEP and legislators ahead of the February session. He added that statutes for shellfish commissions may also need clarification based on issues arising in other towns.

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

****MR. SACCHINELLI SECONDED THE MOTION.**

****THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. 108 Water Street

Mr. Johnson expressed concern about protecting the area during removal of the existing wall. Mr. Shuler explained that their DEP application includes installation of a turbidity curtain to confine the work area prior to demolition. He described it as a weighted curtain with a float to contain the entire water column during construction and stated that additional protections could be added if the Commission wished.

Mr. Johnson indicated that the curtain should be included in the submission, and Mr. Bartush stated that it would be specifically mentioned in addition to the Commission's standard language.

****MR. JOHNSON MOVED TO ACCEPT THE APPLICATION FOR THE WATERSIDE BULKHEAD REMEDIATION WITH STANDARD LANGUAGE AND SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO WEIGHTED TURBIDITY CURTAINS.
**MR. PAGELER SECONDED THE MOTION.
THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

VIII. DISCUSSION

Mr. Bartush shared the annual gathering of shellfish commissions for the State of Connecticut will be held on Saturday, January 24th.

Mr. Steadman added that the annual meeting will likely include discussion of Public Act 25-84, including its impact on public hearings and the authority of shellfish commissions to make recommendations on shellfisheries. He noted that the Bureau of Aquaculture is reviewing the implications of the law and the concerns regarding commission members petitioning for hearings. Mr. Bartush stated that if the topic is not on the agenda, he will include it in the Commission's presentation.

Mr. Mooney advised the next Shellfish Commission meeting is scheduled for January 8, 2026.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

****MR. SACCHINELLI MOVED TO ADJOURN.
**MR. JOHNSON SECONDED THE MOTION.
THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 6:51 pm.