Town of Stonington
Shellfish Commission

152 Elm Street Stonington, CT 06378

REGULAR MEETING
July 6, 2023
6:30 PM

A Regular Meeting of the Stonington Shellfish Commission (SSC) was held on this date. Members present were Chairman, Mr. Donald Murphy; Mr. Alan Banister; Mr. John Swenarton; Secretary Mr. Austin Clark. There is a quorum present.

1) Call to order – Meeting called to order at 6:36 pm.

2) Comments from the public – There were no comments from the public at this time of the meeting.

3) Review and approval of the regular meeting minutes of June 1st, 2023 A motion was made and seconded (Banister / Murphy) to approve the minutes as presented voted 3 -0 with one abstention.

4) Correspondence

a) The Chair included in the monthly meeting packet, correspondence between the Chair and Mark Dixon of the NOAA regarding a study on bay scallops and the effects of dissolved oxygen and salinity and other factors that they might experience in natural settings.

b) The Chair shared his response of No Comment on a recent dock application for a dock on the Pawcatuck River.

c) In the packet was an e-mail from Alissa Dragan of the DA/ BA informing the various Town Commissions in the State of a new staff addition for the laboratory team. She asked that Anne Staak be added to future sampling correspondence.

d) The Chair shared with the group an e-mail from Patti Burmahl, Director of Administrative Services for the Town regarding the American's with Disabilities Act. The thought was that if someone wanted to attend or participate in one of our shellfish commission meetings remotely, we should be aware of that possibility.

5) Business

a) The Chair included both the completed month of May and June water testing quality results. All the sampling data produced good results. The Chair noted that between June 16th & 17th 1.38 inches of rain fell, though because of the higher trigger point now of 1.5 inches, the recreational beds remained open.

b) Commercial Shellfish Reports: Steve Plant reported that his seed growth has been good; Kris Simonds mentioned that the season had experienced a slow start but was beginning to pick up now. Garrett Timmons mentioned that the water temperature in Little Narragansett Bay was very warm.

c) Review of the Commission's form. It was decided that with Commissioner Raffo absence, that the Commission table further review until the Commission's next meeting.

d) The Chair shared an e-mail about determining if the Aquaculture Atlas could be updated for the ease of adding background layers to the map.

e) Financial Review: The Chair informed the Commission that the Financial Department for the Town is temporarily being housed in the police department building making access a little more difficult. Two months of collections and deposits were listed along with the warden's time cards for two months. Included in the financial information was an invoice from Don's Dock for the spring commissioning and a new prop for the Commission's boat in the amount of $2,115.15. A motion was made and seconded (Banister / Swenarton) to allocate the funds to enable the Commission to pay the invoice. Voted 4 – 0.

At this point in the meeting at 6:57pm, the Commission called a recess to call the public hearing to order.

6) A public hearing was called to order to consider the applications by Stonington Farms Shellfish, Inc to conduct aquaculture in Stonington waters in the Mystic River southeast of Murphy Point and southwest of Ram Point on Masons Island.
Russell Dory of 22 Roseleigh Drive, an abutter to the proposed Murphy Point application rose and spoke in favor of the application.
Jim Markow, addressed the Commission and expressed concern for a buffer between his aquaculture licensed area and the proposed Murphy Point area. He suggested a 100 foot buffer be established.
Hearing of no further comments from the public, the public hearing was closed at 7:04pm.

7) New Business: Under new business the Commissioners discussed the two applications before it which were the subject of the public hearing. Having reviewed both applications and listening to the public comments, the Commissioners asked the applicant to provide a map showing the buffer between his proposed license area and the existing licensed area. With that requirement in place, a motion was made and seconded (Clark / Banister) to approve the two applications made by Stonington Farms Shellfish, Inc. to conduct aquaculture. Voted 4 – 0.

The applicant had a question about the receipt of the license and was informed that the license was active immediately.

8) Hearing of nothing further, a motion to adjourn was made and seconded at 7:19pm (Banister Swenarton) and voted in favor 4 – 0.

Respectfully submitted,

Austin P. Clark

Austin P. Clark
Secretary