



**Stonington Harbor Management Commission  
Special Meeting - March 29, 2021  
Minutes by (Melanie Degler, Secretary)**



**1. Call to Order:**

Chairman Spalding called the virtual meeting to order at 7:00 PM. The virtual meeting was held via ZOOM with public call-in. The Commissioners listed below were participants of the ZOOM meeting as noted.

**Attending:** Chairman Spalding, Secretary Degler, Vice Chairman Diggs, Commissioners McKinnon, O'Neill, Rose, and Williams

**Absent:** Treasurer Crites, Commissioners Anderson and Smith, Harbormaster Donch and Deputy Harbormaster Estabrooks

**Guests: BMC Joshua Reeve - US Coast Guard Officer in Charge of the Aids to Navigation Team**

Matt Gimble-SHYC, Michael Wiseman-SHYC, Mark Adams-NESS, Joe Wojatas-The Day, David Collins-The Day, Jay Douglas and Suzie Flores-Stonington Kelp Co./Greenhaven Marine, Kimberlie Rayner-Russell (Westerly Deputy Harbormaster), Elizabeth Ellenwood, Malcom Cooper, Tom Moran, Brian Maggs, Dick Holiday, Kevin Horagan, , and Ben (from Pawcatuck)

**2. USCG Buoy Changes in Little Narragansett Bay (Sandy Point Channel):**

BMC Joshua Reeve-US Coast Guard Officer in Charge reviewed the proposed Coast Guard Plan and answered questions from the Commissioners and public guests.

**Key Points Noted:**

- **The current metal buoys will be replaced with Foam, Seasonable removable buoys. These new foam buoys WILL ONLY BE REMOVED for deep freezes expecting ice of six (6) inches or more.**
- Coast Guard data shows there have been no reported ice issues in Little Narragansett Bay for twenty years.
- The Coast Guard is having issues navigating the channel with their 49' steel-hulled tug boat used to maintain metal buoys. They can only use the channel during high tide and need to make multiple trips to complete the task.
- The new foam buoys can be maintained with the Coast Guards two (2)- 26' trailerable buoy tenders from either Barn Island or Pawcatuck River, which allows them to navigate the channel much easier due to less depth restrictions.
- If there is a deep freeze with ice of 6" or more, the Coast Guard anticipates being able to reset the foam buoys within a week-weather permitting and it would only take one (1) day to place the all buoys in the full channel.

Public comment stressed the concern to have the buoys replaced as soon as possible if removed for weather issues, since there are marine businesses and commercial fisherman who use the Sandy Point Channel and Little Narragansett Bay for their livelihoods.

- *Key buoys noted for this group are #'s 5-7-13-19-20 and 23.*

After a short discussion, Commissioner Caleb Rose made a motion to accept the Coast Guard's Plan to change from permanent to seasonal, endangered status for the buoys in the Sandy Point Channel and if removed, the markers will be returned as soon as possible, when the waters are safe from ice. Commissioner Paul O'Neill seconded the motion. No further discussion occurred, all in favor-six (6) Commissioners in attendance, with Commissioner Williams opposing, motion approved by majority.

The Commission, (SHYC) and (NESS) will be sending comments to the Coast Guard by the deadline of Friday, April 2, 2021.

**3. Adjournment:**

Commissioner Williams made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner MacKinnon seconded the motion. No further discussion occurred, all in favor, motion approved for adjournment at 8:35 pm.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

*Jay Spalding*  
Jay Spalding, Chairman SHMC

Date: 4/12/2021