



**Town of Stonington**  
**Shellfish Commission**  
152 Elm Street Stonington, CT 06378

SPECIAL MEETING  
May 6, 2021  
6:30 PM

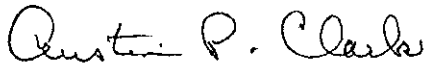
A Special Meeting of the Stonington Shellfish Commission (SSC) was held on this date online by WEBEX. Members present were Chairman, Mr. Donald Murphy; Mr. Alan Banister; Mr. Donald Raffo; Mr. John Swenarton; Secretary Mr. Austin Clark; and alternate member Mr. Dan Barrett. A quorum was present.

- 1) Call to order – The meeting called to order by the Chair at 6:32 pm.
- 2) Comments from the public – There were no comments from the public.
- 3) Review and approval of the special meeting minutes of the April 1st, 2021 meeting. After review and comment, the minutes of the April 1st, 2021 meeting were approved as amended. ( Swenarton / Banister ).
- 4) Correspondence:
  - a) The Chair shared with the group a request he had from the Stonington Magazine for its June issue and the short article written by the Commission Secretary, Austin Clark to fulfill that request. Austin mentioned he had hoped to have some editorial control of the pictures and photo credits, but the story is just submitted to the Westerly Sun which publishes the magazine for the Town
  - b) A copy of an e-mail from Alissa Dragan, of the State DA / BA was in the meeting packet where she lowered the trigger of closure in Lower Mystic River closing trigger to 1.5” from 2.0” based on the State analyzing of their data. Steve Plant offered to look into the details of this issue.
  - c) In the area of Outreach, the Chair is scheduled to present on May 18th, 2021 an online presentation to the Stonington Harbor Yacht Club of the benefits of recreational Shellfishing.
- 5) Business
  - a) The Chair distributed and discussed the April water quality samples. And correspondence with the State as to the number of boats on mornings in the Lower Mystic River, and procedures to follow under a memorandum of Understanding ( MOU ). As a result the shellfishing grounds in Lower Mystic River were closed on May 3rd.
  - b) Commercial Shellfishing report. The Chair noted that the water temperature at the Mason’s Island Yacht Club was 50 degrees in early May.
  - b) Review of the application of Ms. Beth Gomes of Murphy Point Oysters to conduct aquaculture near Murphy Point in Mystic Harbor and near Ram Island. An extensive discussion was held regarding the application in detail with Ms. Gomes. The Commissioners discussed the risks/benefits of using cage culture at the Murphy Pt. (RR) vs on-bottom culture. She plans to use cages at the depuration site near Ram Island. By the end of our discussions she concluded that she would request a license to conduct on-bottom culture at the

Murphy Pt site and use cages at the depuration site. While we can't be certain at this early stage, we believe this plan is likely to succeed. We believe that applying to use cages at the Murphy Pt site could increase public opposition and therefore increase the risk to the project. Obviously, that is her choice and in either case we would move ahead with our review process. The Chair will e-mail David Carey at the State expressing the Commission's belief that the application will likely succeed. The Chair did point out to the applicant, that David Carey indicated that the time line for State approval may well be six months and put it into the winter of 2022.

- c) Austin Clark & Dan Barrett outlined for the group the plans of the Recreational Sub-Committee to hold a Shellfishing demonstration for the public in either June or July in either Area A or Outer Quiambaug Cove. The original plan was for this to be for adults showing the use of clam rakes or tongs. The goal will be to make sure the group will get a supply of clams to take home, with no permit needed to participate and a demonstration how to open clams at the end. The Chair said that if Outer Quiambaug was chosen, he would follow up with the Lord's Point Association as to parking concerns.
  - e) Enforcement The Chair mentioned that now that the weather has started to warm, our Shellfish Warden, Rob Russell would be starting his normal schedule. Dan Barrett, also mentioned the concept of having volunteer land based constables to supplement the warden's activities.
  - f) Equipment The Chair included in the packet an invoice from Dockside Electronics to connect the Commission's boat radio to the GPS locator for emergency purposes. A motion was made and seconded to allocate \$137.01 for the work. ( Raffo / Banister ).
  - g) Financial Review. Contained in the meeting packet were copies of invoices for the prop work on the Commission boat from PMW Marine and for Don's Dock for launching the boat this season. A motion was made and seconded to allocate the funds to pay these invoices. ( Banister / Raffo ).
- 6) At 7:52pm a motion was made and seconded to adjourn ( Banister / Swenarton ).

Respectfully submitted,



Austin P. Clark  
Secretary