



SPECIAL MEETING

June 3, 2021

6:30 PM

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

- 1) Call to order – Meeting called to order 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 May 6th, 2021 meeting. The Chair identified a statement he had made erroneously attributed to another speaker. A motion was made & seconded to approve the minutes as amended. ( Banister / Raffo ).

The Chair asked the group to address Item 5c of the agenda at this time to accommodate Keith Neilson of Docko Incorporated's schedule. Mr. Neilson discussed the application of Gwenmor Marina, Inc. to add 273 feet of 8 foot wide dock on the North side of Murphy Point on Roseleah Drive in Mystic. This construction is to add recreational boat slips in that area. Keith indicated that there would be some dredging done to make the channel to the slips deep enough to accommodate the boats. It was pointed out that this area of Mystic Harbor is in a prohibited area of shellfishing and also near water treatment plant. The members asked a few clarifying questions, but further had no comments on the application.

The Chair at this time mentioned that the Town has asked the Shellfish Commission to consider a change of venue for the regular monthly meetings. He mentioned that the Commission needed to vote on a change of venue and that a 30 day wait period must be observed before we can hold a "regular" meeting at the new venue. The Town has suggested the Commission move to the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center at 27 Chase Street in Pawcatuck. A motion was made & seconded that the Stonington Shellfish Commission hold its regular monthly meetings at the PNC. ( Banister / Swenarton ) Voted in affirmative 5 – 0. The Chair instructed the secretary to file the required paperwork with the Town Clerk ( which was done ) and that the July meeting would still be a special meeting as it falls less than 30 days from the voted change.

4) Correspondence

- a) The Chair covered the correspondence that was contained in the meeting packet, including e-mails from Tessa Getchis regarding oysters in the Pawcatuck River; communication about the existence of mitten crabs in CT waters and a visit on June 18th by the State to the Mystic boathouse area.
- b) Also in the meeting packet, was a May 10th e-mail to David Carey at the State re: Beth Gomes aquaculture application informing the State that her project would likely succeed.

- c) There was correspondence with David Carey & Michael Zuber from the State regarding depuration site 19-03. It is no longer active and the Chair updated the State to that fact.
- d) There was extensive correspondence regarding aquaculture permitting between the State and also various Town's shellfish commissions. It was the consensus of the group that this issue would be a good topic to have as an agenda item at the next All Commissions meeting sponsored by Connecticut Sea grant.

5) Business

- a) The Chair covered the water quality results for the month of May. The recreational shellfishing beds were closed on May 29th after almost 2" of rainfall occurred over three days, which when the rainfall ended two days later produced a continuous event of almost 2.9" of rainfall. On June 2nd, Warden Rob Russell, sampled the recreational area waters with a hope for a good result to be able to reopen the recreational beds.

A second closure notice was issued on May 30th for the area between Lyddy Is and Wamphassuc Pt due to an overflow of a sewage pumping station on Lord's Point. It was estimated that @ 1,000 gallons of sewage over a period of three hours may have spilled into the water. It is likely that Garrett Timmons's depuration site may have been affected. The Chair included Lou Allyn's correspondence about bacteria sampling at Mason's Island Yacht Club.

- b) Commercial Shellfish Report – Steve Plant reported that sales have been good and higher than previous periods and the price for clams was up. Also, that the seed is showing a good growing season.
- c) Previously presented
- d) Steve Plant mentioned to the Commission the availability of clam seed and a new growing apparatus. He indicated that clam prices are up and that Groton was interested in looking into the idea further. It was the thought of all present that we would like to know more about the process.
- e) Recreational Shellfish Subcommittee – Commissioner Clark discussed the ideas the subcommittee had for hosting a shellfishing demonstration in either Area A or Outer Quiambaug Cove. Parking and water access issues were discussed. Also, presented was an idea of an oyster festival for Town promoting Stonington's abundant aquaculture resources. The Chair suggested Stonington might partner with Groton at Bluff Park for the shellfish demonstration.
- f) Licensing Agreement - - In Item 7 paragraphs b) & c) were discussed as to their effectiveness and whether the Commission wanted keep these items in the license agreement and enforce them or to eliminate those requirements. As the Commission is not collecting the commercial harvest fee currently, there is no revenue impact on the Commission and the written annual report requirement is not of much value. Therefore the consensus was to eliminate these requirements. A motion was made and seconded to eliminate the annual reporting requirement in paragraph 7b. ( Raffo / Banister ) Voted in favor 5 – 0 A second motion was made to eliminate the commercial license requirement in paragraph 7c ( Raffo / Banister ).Voted in affirmative 5–0.
- g) Equipment The Chair mentioned that while water sampling this past month, the Commission boat hit a submerged rock or old mooring and there is a possibility that a new prop might be needed.
- h) Enforcement – The Chair mentioned that our warden had indicated that at the moment, all was routine Mr. Dan Barrett raised the issue of volunteer constables to assist our warden by being land based observers for catch limits & size and for checking for permits.
- i) Financial Review Mr. Don Raffo presented the financial picture on a year to date basis and called the Boat Operations line item to the group's attention. The annual budget is \$4,700 and we are currently at approximately \$3,500. The Chair presented a summary of the permit sales by location. The Chair also identified the bills that were submitted for payment. Following up on the suggestion from last month, Mr. Don Raffo moved that any expenditure

in the category of Boat Ops for less than \$500 and in the category of Routine Expenditures of less than \$200, the Chair could sign off on those and submit them for payment. That motion was seconded ( Raffo / Banister ) & voted 5-0.

6) New Business - There was no new business brought before the Commission.

7) A motion to adjourn was made and seconded at 8:05pm. ( Swenarton / Banister ). Voted 5 – 0

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Austin P. Clark".

Austin P. Clark  
Secretary