

**TOWN OF FAIRFIELD  
HARBOR MANAGEMENT COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES OF June 15, 2010**

A meeting of the Harbor Management Commission (HMC) was held on Tuesday, June 15, 2010 at 4:30 p.m. in Meeting Room II of the Honorable John J. Sullivan Independence Hall, 725 Old Post Rd, Fairfield, CT.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mary von Conta, Chairman; David Drabaski; John Zygmant; Louis Schueler; Hugh Smith; and Nelson North. **ABSENT:** Sandye Mann; E. Hewitt Gaynor and James P. Bradley. **ALSO PRESENT:** Patrick Carroll, Harbor Master; Geoff Steadman, Consultant; Thomas Steinke, Conservation Director, Joel Kunkel, Pequot Yacht Club, Steven Klemenz and Thomas Rudkin, Country Club of Fairfield; Lara Donahue, Staples High School; and Andrew Brophy, Press.

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. by Chairman Mary von Conta. Nelson North was appointed to sit as a full member.

**I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF May MARCH 16, 2010 MEETING:**

Hugh Smith *moved* and Louis Schueler *seconded* to approve the Minutes of May 18, 2010. *Motion passed unanimously.*

**II. CORRESPONDENCE:**

Chairman Mary von Conta reported the following correspondence:

Below are listed the dates of letters sent by Harbor Master Pat Carroll to Town of Fairfield CFO Paul Hiller. Enclosed in each letter were checks for fees collected for the renewal of mooring permits in Southport Harbor, for mooring maintenance charges where required, and for Waiting List applications:

June 6, 2010: Checks in the amount of \$525.00: (permits: \$350.00; maintenance: \$175.00.)

June 11, 2010: Check in the amount of \$150.00: (permit fee).

June 9, 2010: From Harbor Master Carroll to Mr. Hiller requesting that he refund the amount of \$325.00 to Mr. Stephen Toner who had paid his permit and maintenance fees and then notified the Harbor Master that he would not be able to place his boat on a mooring this season. Mr. Toner no longer has a mooring permit for Southport Harbor and his mooring location has been assigned to another boater.

May 17, 2010: Copy of an approval of registration to install a dock issued by the CT DEP to Mr. Anthony Ruscito, 2234 Fairfield Beach Rd., Fairfield, CT 06830. (This is outside the jurisdiction of the HMC.)

May 24, 2010: From Roberge Associates to Chairman von Conta, a Proposal for Professional Services— Hydrographic and Beach Condition Assessment-- for a total estimated cost of \$7,890.00 and requiring the authorization and signature of the Chairman. This document was signed and returned to Roberge Associates. A copy will be filed under Sand Management, 2010.

June 1, 2010: From Mr. Thomas Steinke to Chairman von Conta regarding shellfish and conservation concerns related to harbor management matters that Mr. Steinke and Mrs. von Conta had previously discussed during a telephone conversation. Briefly, these concerns pertain to: the Recreational Shellfish beds located off Sasco Hill and the CCoF beaches; the ongoing development of a Sand Management Plan; and the proposed dredging of the area of the Harbor adjoining the Lower Wharf and Town Boat Yard. (There will be further clarification of these matters during the Old Business section of this meeting under the categories of Sand Management and Lower Wharf Project.)

June 8, 2010: A copy of a letter sent by Mr. Steinke to Ms. Tonia Selmeski, CT DEP OLISP analyst, regarding the Fairfield Shellfish Commission's recommendation on the pending application of P. DiGennaro to DEP-OLISP for a non-harbor mooring on Fairfield Shellfish Natural Beds at Lat. 41-08-03 North and Long. 73-14-04 West. The Shellfish Commission voted to approve the application with specific conditions contained in the letter.

Early in June: a copy of the Shellfish Commission's Agenda for its meeting on June 9, 2010.

June 7, 2010: A Request announced by the CT DEP for Statewide Ecosystem Management and Habitat Restoration Grant Proposals: due date for proposals is July 29, 2010.

June 14, 2010: A copy of an e-mail sent by Dave Zawisha to Julie Victoria, CT DEP, informing her that he has "spotted two young Piping Plovers running around under the ever vigilant eyes of their parents" on the sand bar near the entrance to Southport Harbor. (Mr. Zawisha is believed to be a volunteer who is assisting the DEP in watching the Plover family currently nesting on the sand bar.)

### **III. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS: None Noted**

### **IV. OLD BUSINESS:**

**Sand Management Report:** Geoff Steadman reported that the Roberge Associates contract to conduct the hydrographic survey was finalized and signed approximately two weeks ago; it is anticipated to take approximately four weeks total to conduct the survey. Roberge Associates will likely launch its boat from Stratford and not from the Town Boat Yard ramp; the results of the survey will likely be available for review and discussion at the July meeting of the Commission. Upon inquiry by Hugh Smith, Chairman von Conta indicated that the final report of Roberge Associates will be prepared for the Harbor Management Commission and can only be used for the purpose for which it is prepared, namely, for the purpose of preparing the Sand Management Plan. Geoff Steadman indicated that there will be a meeting in New Haven on July 19<sup>th</sup> sponsored by the CT Harbor Management Association at which time the U.S. Army Corps. Of Engineers will provide information on its dredge, as well as how the states of Rhode Island and Massachusetts have utilized this type of equipment which appears to be suitable for use in Southport Harbor.

In response to a question from Dave Drabaski, Chairman von Conta said that the hydrographic survey will cover a section of the harbor channel south of the jetty, and that once the Harbor Management Commission has received the report it will be in a better position to review and discuss the most beneficial options for sand management in the harbor and will contact the Corps of Engineers about conditions in the main channel.

Chairman von Conta indicated that Thomas Steinke had provided her with suggestions concerning sand management issues for consideration by the Commission in the future.

**Lower Wharf Report – Mr. Steadman:** Geoff Steadman reported that due to concerns that no action had been taken on the Commission's permit application, Chairman von Conta had contacted the State DEP OLISP analyst to ascertain the status of the same. The Chairman was advised that the DEP is working on the application, and that DEP OLISP representatives will be visiting the site on June 17<sup>th</sup> to review site conditions. The Chairman will meet the DEP OLISP representatives at the Town Boat Yard, and suggested that it would be beneficial to have Devin Santa from Roberge Associates attend this meeting to answer any engineering questions the DEP may have. Following discussion, Louis Schueler *moved* and John Zygmant *seconded* to place the following matter on this evening's agenda: "Authorization For Payment to Roberge Associates For Professional Services". *Motion passed unanimously*

**Authorization For Payment to Roberge Associates For Professional Services:**

Nelson North *moved* and Louis Schueler *seconded* to authorize the expenditure, not to exceed \$300.00, to have a representative of Roberge Associates be present at the meeting with analysts from the CT DEP OLISP on June 17, 2010 to discuss the Commission's Lower Wharf project. *Motion passed unanimously*

**Mooring Report:** Harbor Master Carroll reported that upon his inspection, he did not find any vacant moorings in the Pequot Yacht Club/Perry Green and North Anchorage areas. Harbor Master Carroll further indicated that the lower harbor mooring area has approximately twenty (20) vacant moorings. The Southport Street Parade and Blessing of the Fleet was held last weekend; it was a very successful event, and approximately 50 vessels participated. Mr. Carroll thanked Geoff Steadman and Hugh Smith for their efforts related to this event.

**V. NEW BUSINESS:**

**A Report On The Sasco Brook Watershed Project: Ms. Lara Donahue, Senior at Staples High School:**

Geoff Steadman advised the Commission that Staples High School (Westport) students had conducted a survey of Westport town residents within the Sasco Brook watershed. He then provided background information on the Town of Westport's project to prepare a watershed-based plan to reduce runoff pollution in the watershed from the Town of Westport. He said the watershed covers about 10 square miles with about 20% of that area in the Town of Westport and almost 80% in the Town of Fairfield. On Sasco Brook, the jurisdiction of the Fairfield Harbor Management Commission includes the part of the brook in Fairfield, upstream from Long Island Sound to the Post Road. Mr. Steadman said that Lara Donahue became aware of the Town of Westport's project and contacted project officials to suggest that Staples High School students could conduct a survey of

Westport residents' attitudes and perceptions concerning the watershed. He said that Ms. Donahue not only had the idea for the survey, but she also helped plan and organize the survey, and then she participated in conducting the survey. Mr. Steadman introduced Ms. Donahue who provided Commission members with a pamphlet describing the watershed project and summarized the survey results. The survey was conducted by almost 50 environmental science class students who volunteered for the project. Nineteen survey neighborhoods were identified ahead of time, and the students split up into 19 teams for the purpose of visiting as many homes as possible. If residents were home and wished to participate in the survey, the students conducted personal interviews and recorded the residents' responses to the survey questions. Ms. Donahue said there are over 800 homes in the Westport part of the watershed and the students visited over 600 of them. A package of information on the watershed was provided to all of the homes that were visited. The residents were very receptive to the students, who found the experience to be very positive. Among the interesting results of the survey, most residents were familiar with the term "watershed" and recognized the adverse impacts that can be caused by runoff pollution. Also, most residents said they consciously maintained their properties in a manner to try to avoid adverse environmental impacts. In addition, most residents said they would be willing to consider new property maintenance measures if they knew that those measures would further enhance environmental quality, and most all residents surveyed said they would support a Town watershed plan to reduce runoff pollution in the watershed. Ms. Donahue also said that most residents said they would like to see additional information concerning the watershed provided on the Town web-page. Members of the Commission asked several questions concerning the survey, including if Ms. Donahue felt a similar survey might be appropriate in the Fairfield part of the watershed. Ms. Donahue felt that would be a good idea, and it would be informative, she said, to compare the attitudes and perceptions of the Fairfield residents with the attitudes and perceptions of the Westport residents. Ms. Donahue also suggested that it would be helpful to provide educational materials to the residents so that they are better informed as to the importance of the watershed. Mr. Steadman said that the Commission has been most focused in the past with the impact of runoff pollution in the Mill River watershed which drains into Southport Harbor, but is also concerned with runoff pollution in the Sasco Brook watershed. He said that the Commission could consider providing information on the Mill River and Sasco Brook watershed, and the relationship of those watersheds to Southport Harbor, on the Town of Fairfield's web-page. The Commission thanked Ms. Donahue for her presentation.

**VI. PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business to come before the Commission, David Drabaski *moved* and Hugh Smith *seconded* to adjourn the meeting at 5:12 p.m. *Motion passed unanimously*

Respectfully submitted,  
Betty Gabriel