

**TOWN OF FAIRFIELD
SHELLFISH COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES – April 11, 2012**

The Shellfish Commission of the Town of Fairfield held a meeting on April 11, 2012 at 7:30 PM in the Second Floor Conference Room of the Fairfield Sullivan Independence Hall, 725 Old Post Road, Fairfield, Connecticut

MEMBERS PRESENT: Sanford J. Wakeman, Chairman; David Thornton, Secretary; Edward Crowley, Acting Member; Paul Nelson; Cathy Raynor-Catropa

MEMBERS ABSENT: Gregory D. Lanute, Vice Chairman; Sally Harold

ALSO PRESENT: Thomas J. Steinke, Conservation Director; Mary von Conta, Chair of the Harbor Management Commission, and Nelson North, HMC

CALL TO ORDER: Sanford J. Wakeman, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:32 PM

I. BILLS AND COMMUNICATIONS

A. Meeting Minutes of March 14, 2012

Edward Crowley *moved*, Cathy Raynor-Catropa *seconded* to accept the minutes of March 14, 2012. *Motion passed unanimously.*

B. Committee Reports

1. *Clam Relay/Planting:* Crowley – Because the water temperature is rising, Edward Crowley will speak to Jim Salce about a relay.
2. *Water and Habitat Quality:* Wakeman, Harold, Raynor-Catropa – Sanford J. Wakeman reported that the water quality has been good and the shellfishing area open. He further reported that he and David Thornton attended the Sasco Brook Pollution Abatement Committee meeting and that testing is being conducted. Sewer lines in that area leak into the street drains, and the pollution, including prescription drugs, ends up in the river. Shellfish are not being tested. Representatives from the Hunt Club attended the meeting and indicated that they are working to reduce pollution from horses. Thomas J. Steinke described the spread of pollution with the tide.
3. *Permits and Access:* Thornton – David Thornton reported that approximately 25 permits have been issued.
4. *Commercial Shellfish Regulations:* Crowley, Wakeman, Harold – No report presented this evening

5. *Oyster Bed Development*: Lanute, Thornton, Harold – No report presented this evening

II. OLD BUSINESS

A. CT DEEP-OLISP, Notice of Tentative Determination - Notice of Intent to Waive Public Hearing, Application #200400010-TS, Town of Fairfield Harbor Management Commission, proposal to remove derelict structures, repair existing pier, install new community sailing dock consisting of ramp, float and piles, repair and expand existing boat ramp, install float atop existing boat ramp, and conduct new dredging for recreational boating. Proposed activities to be conducted in Lower Wharf and Ye Yacht Yard

David Thornton commented on the memo Thomas J. Steinke presented and noted his concerns about dredging and black mayonnaise. Edward Crowley stressed the importance of the applicant conducting a study to determine the extent of shellfish living in the dredge area. He noted that a study had been done but it was not complete nor was it acceptable to the State. He discussed alternatives, including building the boat launch ramp in the same location as the present one.

With respect to the sailing program, Edward Crowley, David Thornton, and Cathy Raynor-Catropa discussed the program's location and whether the boats have a fixed keel. Mary von Conta, Chair of the Harbor Management Commission, replied that the keels from the program's boats cannot be raised.

Sanford J. Wakeman discussed the need to comment to DEEP as the deadline was approaching. Thomas J. Steinke discussed the need to provide recommendations to the DEEP, including avoidance, minimization, and restoration of a previously disturbed condition. He noted that the benthic survey is key, and that if the area had been previously dredged, then it could be considered for redredging. He reported that the proposed dredging goes well beyond what had been done in the past. He described the process by which the Shellfish Commission would comment or intervene in the DEEP procedure.

Paul Nelson summarized the two major issues: first, that the Harbor Management Commission must review previously dredged area as an element in the plan before they propose to go beyond that dredge area. Second, shallow draft boats must be used in the community sailing program. Paul Nelson also discussed some of the previous iterations of the project and changes made during the application process. Thomas J. Steinke also reviewed another of his recommendations to move the pier back approximately 10 feet back to where the old deck pier had been.

Edward Crowley *moved*, David Thornton *seconded* to intervene in the DEEP procedure. *Motion passed unanimously.*

B. Review of Shellfish Commission Management Plan

Thomas J. Steinke inquired of some of the goals and procedures of reviewing the Shellfish Commission Management Plan as he was not present for the initial discussion at the previous meeting. He mentioned specifically the issues of off harbor moorings and strut rather than timber supported floats being included in any plan revision. Edward Crowley and Paul Nelson noted that no actual review had been done, just that the subject was briefly discussed at the previous meeting.

Thomas J. Steinke reminded the Commissioners that any revisions must be submitted to the state agriculture commissioner. He also suggested sending draft versions to David Carey of DA/BA and Tonia Selmeski of DEEP/OLSIP, as well as soliciting public comment. He discussed the need to draft different provisions for different estuaries/coastal areas.

C. Shellfish Commission 2012-2013 Budget Request

The Board of Finance has approved the Shellfish Commission's budget request as presented. Thomas J. Steinke indicated that should the Commissioners want to change the request at this point, the right to appeal to the RTM does exist.

Thomas J. Steinke reminded the Commissioners that the shellfish fund still exists and that once the fund balance reaches \$30,000, the town would recommend placing the balance in an interest bearing account.

III. NEW BUSINESS

None

IV. INFORMATIONAL

None

V. OTHER

None

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

VII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Edward Crowley *moved*, David Thornton *seconded* to adjourn at approximately 9:00 PM. *Motion passed unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,
Anthony Monelli