

**TOWN OF FAIRFIELD
SHELLFISH COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES – August 14, 2013**

The Shellfish Commission of the Town of Fairfield held a regular meeting on August 14, 2013 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; Robert Bilek, Vice-Chairman; David Thornton, Secretary; Richard Ferrari; Paul Nelson; Cathy Raynor-Catropa

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sally Harold

ALSO PRESENT: Jan Reber, FairPLAN

CALL TO ORDER: Sanford J. Wakeman, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM

I. BILLS AND COMMUNICATIONS

A. Meeting Minutes of July 10, 2013

Robert Bilek *moved*, Richard Ferrari *seconded* to accept the minutes of July 10, 2013.
Motion passed unanimously.

B. Meeting Minutes of July 18, 2013

David Thornton *moved*, Richard Ferrari *seconded* to accept the minutes of July 18, 2013.
Motion passed unanimously.

C. Meeting Minutes of August 1, 2013

Richard Ferrari *moved*, Robert Bilek *seconded* to accept the minutes of August 1, 2013.
Motion passed unanimously.

D. July 29, 2013 Letter to Linda Snelham-Moore regarding impacts of Hurricane Sandy/possible lead or other heavy metal sediment deposition along banks of Mill River

Informational

E. Committee Reports

1. *Clam Relay/Planting:* Bilek, Thornton – No report presented this evening

2. *Water and Habitat Quality:* Bilek, Wakeman, Harold, Raynor-Catropa – Robert Bilek reported that Fairfield’s recreational shellfish bed, unlike Westport, Norwalk and Darien, has been open since Fairfield has not yet been adversely affected by the Vibrio bacteria. According to the DA/BA, the other towns might be more prone to the Vibrio bacteria due to their off shore islands and water flow. The commissioners conducted a general discussion of the Vibrio bacteria, water temperatures, and testing.
3. *Permits and Access:* Thornton – David Thornton reported there have been 71 permits issued.
4. *Commercial Shellfish Regulations:* Wakeman, Harold – No report presented this evening
5. *Oyster Bed Development:* Thornton, Harold – No report presented this evening

II. OLD BUSINESS

A. Proposed Remediation of the Mill River Estuary associated with the former Exide Battery Site, 2190 Post Road, Fairfield, CT: Discussion regarding mitigation measures by Exide; Report by Sally Harold regarding fish ladder requirement for the Tide Mill Dam; and overall status

Robert Bilek reported that the Shellfish Commission received a letter from Exide indicating that they would consider mitigation if our recreational shellfish beds were seriously negatively impacted and all parties agree it was caused by the Exide dredging process. Exide is reluctant to commit to specific dollar amounts up front.

Jan Reber of Beaumont Street, a member of FairPLAN, noted that his organization has withdrawn its intervention with DEEP. FairPLAN will continue to pursue the Department of Transportation due to the fact that Exide previously removed over 60 tons of lead from its Post Road drain. He also pointed out discrepancies previously noted by Thomas J. Steinke in maps showing the location of drains.

Due to the absence of Sally Harold, there was no discussion about a possible fish ladder requirement associated with the Tide Mill Dam repairs.

B. CT DEEP Permit #201206527-TS, 1907 Fairfield Beach Road, Fairfield, LLC, Approved structures, dredging and fill and tidal wetlands and intent to waive public hearing; Replace existing bulkhead and install dock at 1907 Fairfield Beach Road, Fairfield, CT

Informational

C. Shellfish Commission Management Plan

No discussion

D. Proposed Addendum to the Shellfish Memorandum of Understanding with respect to reopening of the recreational shellfish beds on weekends and holidays

Robert Bilek reported that there is now a procedure to reopen Fairfield's recreational shellfish beds on weekends and holidays after a period of closure. If the DA/BA determines that the shellfish beds could reopen on a day the Conservation Department would be closed, the Conservation Department will notify the Shellfish Commission Chairman and Vice Chairman, who will then be responsible for changing the hot line recording and the sign at Sasco Hill Beach to the open status.

E. CT Sea Grant - Request for input - Participation in development of State of Connecticut Shellfish Management Plan

Robert Bilek briefly commented that he has not had a chance to review this request. Other commissioners indicated they had not reviewed it either.

Robert Bilek *moved*, Richard Ferrari *seconded* to not pursue providing input to the Connecticut Sea Grant. *Motion passed unanimously.*

F. Letter to Parks and Recreation Commission regarding commercial shellfishermen access to a town dock for off-loading of harvested shellfish

Sanford J. Wakeman reported that the letter approved by the Commission had been sent. Robert Bilek received a call from Jim Salce, who reported that he is still trying to obtain approval to offload his shellfish harvest on week days at a marina dock. The commissioners discussed the Shellfish Commission's position on the issue. Paul Nelson will contact Mary von Conta, Chair of the Harbor Management Commission, about possible access to a dock in Southport.

G. Clam Dig report by Commissioner Ferrari

Richard Ferrari reported that over 50 people attended the event, and reviewed press coverage, feedback, and increased permit applications. For a similar future event, he discussed providing additional rakes, mesh bags, and ice.

Cathy Raynor-Catropa's clam chowder was reported to be excellent. If there is a possibility of selling shellfish permits on site, Richard Ferrari believes direct issuance of permits would likely be even more positive. The commissioners discussed various methods of procuring equipment and promotional methods for future events. The commissioners then discussed the possibility of developing oyster grounds in Fairfield.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. CT DA/BA and Laboratory - Recreational Shellfish Harvesting and Vibrio: Vibrio Parahaemolyticus Background and Summer Harvest Precautions

This matter was discussed under Committee Reports – See Section I.E.2 above.

B. CT Department of Agriculture closure and voluntary shellfish recall

Informational

IV. INFORMATIONAL

None

V. OTHER

Robert Bilek *moved*, Richard Ferrari *seconded* to add a letter from NOAA regarding an open house to this agenda for discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Robert Bilek reported that there will be an open house for NOAA in October. Paul Nelson briefly described previous NOAA open houses. The commissioners discussed various resources which might be available from NOAA and the format of the meeting.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

VII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, David Thornton *moved*, Cathy Raynor-Catropa *seconded* to adjourn at 8:35 PM. *Motion passed unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,
Anthony Monelli