

**MINUTES  
WESTPORT SHELLFISH COMMISSION  
March 1, 2017**

ATTENDANCE

Commission Members:

Clarinda Higgins, Chair  
Matt Dembski  
Leo Cirino  
Richard Harris  
Heather Williams

Ex-Officios:

Alicia Mozian, Conservation Director  
Brandan Fearon, Westport Marine Police  
Mark Cooper, Westport/Weston Health Department Director

Staff:

Susan Voris, Recording Secretary

Guests:

Mike Oravez, Shellfisherman

The March 1, 2017 meeting of the Westport Shellfish Commission was called to order at 6:30 p.m. in Room 309 of the Westport Town Hall, 110 Myrtle Ave., Westport, Connecticut, by Chairman, Clarinda Higgins.

This is to certify that these minutes and resolutions were filed with the Westport Town Clerk within 7 days of the March 1, 2017 meeting of the Westport Shellfish Commission pursuant to Section 1-225 of the Freedom of Information Act.

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Alicia Mozian  
Conservation Director



Ms. Higgins reviewed the changes made to the Seed Oyster Regulations. She noted the seed oyster definition has been added and verified with the Bureau of Aquaculture. She suggested adding verbiage that clarifies what size is allowed.

Officer Fearon asked if enforcement is based on a Town Code.

It was clarified that the Seed Oyster Regulations are not a Town Code. The enforcement comes from the State Statutes.

Ms. Higgins asked Mr. Oravez about trucking of oysters from place-to-place immediately after harvest.

Mr. Oravez stated it is difficult, time consuming and it has to be legally witnessed at both ends.

Ms. Higgins reviewed the section on the proposed 500-bushel limit per company.

Ms. Mozian relayed the input from a discussion with Norm and Jimmy Bloom. During that, the Blooms emphasized the importance of working the beds to stimulate growth. Having a limit on the beds will encourage people to harvest the maximum number of bushels allowed rather than what the river can give. It was suggested that we should be doing a survey to see what is out there. Our regulations allow for a moratorium should it become apparent that the river is being overworked. Messrs. Bloom talked about doing a transplant from the prohibited area into the restricted relay area if the meat samples are good enough to do so.

Mr. Oravez agreed that it is a good thing to work the river bottom. It is what promotes a set.

Ms. Higgins stated the Commission has heard from three oystermen that the 500-bushel limit limits the ability to work the natural beds.

It was suggested that the 500-bushel limit per company be eliminated.

Ms. Higgins discussed the reporting requirement.

Mr. Oravez noted it depends on an honor system and asked the purpose if there is no limit per company.

Ms. Higgins responded that this would be for assessment purposes to help the Commission keep track of what is in the river.

Officer Fearon added that the inspections would also include the review of proper dredging equipment and sizes.

**b. Presence at March 4, 2017 Farmer's Market**

The Commission discussed its presence at the March 4, 2017 Farmer's Market. Ms. Higgins reported she had information coming from SeaGrant.

Mr. Dembski and Mr. Harris also volunteered to help.

**7. Other Business**

- a.** The Commission reviewed the Fairfield Shellfish minutes.
- b.** Mr. Cooper gave the Commission an update on the DNA grant. The preliminary analysis of the Sasco Brook, Goodwives, and Branford River had no markers found. There were only low level bacteria contamination. There were no septic or human sources found but there was a problem with the testing for avian sources.

**8. Public Comment**

**9. Next Meeting:**

The next meeting of the Westport Shellfish Commission will be held on April 5, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. in Room 309 of Westport Town Hall.

**9. Adjournment:**

The March 1, 2017 meeting of the Westport Shellfish Commission adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

**Motion:**Higgins

**Second:** Harris

**Ayes:** Higgins, Harris, Cirino, Dembski, Williams

**Nayes:** None      **Abstentions:** None      **Vote:** 5:0:0