

**MINUTES  
WESTPORT SHELLFISH COMMISSION  
APRIL 5, 2017**

ATTENDANCE

Commission Members:

Clarinda Higgins, Chair  
Matt Dembski  
Leo Cirino  
Heather Williams

Ex-Officios:

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

Staff:

Susan Voris

Guests:

Mike Oravez, Shellfisherman  
Steve Schafer, Stella Mar Oyster Co.

The April 5, 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 April 5, 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

**1.** Approval of March 1, 2017 meeting minutes.

The March 1, 2017 meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

**Motion:** Higgins **Second:** Dembski  
**Ayes:** Higgins, Dembski, Cirino, Williams  
**Nayes:** None **Abstentions:** None **Vote:** 4:0:0

**2.** Treasurer's Report

Ms. Higgins read the checking account balance ending February 28, 2017 into the record.

**3.** Police Report

Officer Fearon stated there was nothing to report. He stated the new boat was ready to go in the water. The Marine Police station will open in mid-May. He is hoping to do extra patrols for Shellfish enforcement.

**4.** Recreational Shellfish Report

Ms. Voris submitted the following report:

We have issued **277 annual recreational permits** as of March 31, 2017.

Adult Resident Permits issued –	<b>126</b>	<b>(\$ 3,780.00)</b>
Senior Resident Permits issued –	<b>139</b>	<b>(\$ 1,935.00)</b>
Adult Non-resident Permits issued –	<b>7</b>	<b>(\$ 420.00)</b>
Senior Non-resident Permits issued –	<b>5</b>	<b>(\$ 150.00)</b>
Daily Permits issued -	<b>0</b>	<b>(\$ 0.00)</b>

The Commission has collected **\$6,285** since January 3, 2017 when we began issuing the 2017 recreational shellfishing permits.

**10** senior permits were issued to people who are 85 and older for free.

Ms. Voris noted the permits are behind by 22 permits from the same time last year.

Ms. Voris reported the Dock Shop has their permits and they are ready to go for issuing permits.

**5.** New Business

**a. 28 Owenoke Park:** Review of proposal to install a dock configuration comprised of a 4' by 14' fixed access ramp, a 4' by 35.5' fixed pier, a 4' by 20' ramp with hinge connections at each end and an 8' by 12.5' floating dock with four (4) stop legs that will rest on 1' by 1' driven stop pads, and is secured by two (2) anchor pipes and cross-brace ropes.

David Provencher of Coastline Consulting & Development Inc. presented the application on behalf of the property owners. He stated this proposal will require a full DEEP and ACOE permit under structures and dredging. There is a large presence of spartina that they are looking to span. There is a gap in the spartina growth due to past practice of

laying down kayaks in the spartina. They are proposing the dock at the narrowest width of the existing growth of spartina. They will not be attaching the dock to the bulkhead since it is a bit unstable. Instead there is a fixed ramp from the land to the pier. The pier will be raised 5 feet above grade. The overall length of the dock is 62 feet. The dock will be used for kayaks. The ramp and float will be removed during the winter. Float stops will prevent it from resting on the mud flat. The work will be done by hand or from a small work boat. The ramp and float is constructed off-site. The pier will be build on-site with material brought in from land.

Ms. Mozian noted this is the longest dock on this side of Owenoke Park.

Mr. Provencher stated that DEEP will not allow them to land in the spartina. This is the minimum width to span the spartina.

Ms. Higgins asked about its vulnerability to storms.

Mr. Provencher stated it is not built above the 100-year storm but it does not have to be. Grey's Creek is protected from storms.

Ms. Mozian read comments from the Commission relating to the dock proposal at 22 Owenoke Park. She noted this proposal has addressed many of the concerns the Commission had with that dock. She added that there are shellfish in Grey's Creek though it is a Prohibited area.

The Commission discussed there would be no long-term adverse impact to the shellfish once it is installed.

Ms. Mozian asked about orienting the dock to a true north/south orientation.

Mr. Provencher stated that turning the dock to a true north/south orientation would span more spartina.

Mr. Cirino cautioned that the Creek in the past has iced over quickly and can be thick and the depth of the pilings will need to withstand these forces.

Mr. Provencher stated construction drawings have not been done yet but they do plan on installing it to withstand icing.

The Commission made the following finding:

The proposed activity **will** adversely impact a shellfish area.

The Westport Shellfish Commission has the following concerns with the proposed dock:

1. There will be disturbance of a healthy spartina bed during construction.
2. There will be disturbance to shellfish beds during construction. Working by barge in Grey's Creek is not realistic. Work will need to be done by hand, small work boat or by land.

<b>Motion:Dembski</b>	<b>Second:</b>	<b>Cirino</b>
<b>Second:</b>	<b>Dembski, Cirino, Higgins, Williams</b>	
<b>Nayes:</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Abstentions: None</b>
		<b>Vote: 4:0:0</b>

**b.** Town-wide clean up, Commission's participation at Canal Beach – April 29, 2017

Ms. Mozian noted that the Town-wide clean up is on April 29, 2017. The Commission traditionally does clean up Canal Beach. She asked if anyone would be available to help with the clean up. Ms. Williams agreed. Staff will contact Mr. Grayson to determine his availability.

Ms. Mozian stated the Commission will have a presence at Earth Day at EarthPlace.

**6.** Old Business

**a.** Progress Report of the Seed Oyster Regulation Sub-Committee

Ms. Voris reviewed the changes to the Seed Oyster Regulations as discussed with Gail Kelly. She noted that many were edits for clarity and grammar. The sub-committee and the Commission did take into consideration comments from several shellfishermen. Therefore, the previously proposed annual bushel limit was removed.

Officer Fearon left the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

Mr. Oravez and Mr. Schafer both commented that there is no reason to have a limit on the number of bushels per day because the bulk of the seed bed is protected by the Prohibited status. They felt the limit of 50 bushels per boat is a disadvantage to those with a smaller operation.

The Commission still intends to conduct a survey of the river to determine existing conditions. Ms. Voris stated a tentative date for the survey of the river for Tuesday, April 11, 2017.

The sub-committee will meet after the survey has been done.

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

Ms. Higgins stated the indoor market was great. There was a good presence with a central location. She was able to speak with many people. She would recommend trying to be at this market again.

**7.** Other Business

**8.** Public Comment

The April 5, 2017 meeting of the Westport Shellfish Commission adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

<b>Motion:</b>	<b>Cirino</b>	<b>Second:</b>	<b>Dembski</b>
<b>Ayes:</b>	<b>Cirino, Dembski, Higgins, Williams</b>		
<b>Nays:</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Abstentions:</b>	<b>None</b>
		<b>Vote:</b>	<b>4:0:0</b>