

**MINUTES
WESTPORT SHELLFISH COMMISSION
SEPTEMBER 12, 2012**

ATTENDANCE

Commission Members:

Ron Silverman, Chair
Beth Brucker
Clarinda Higgins

Ex-Officios:

Mark Cooper, Director, Westport/Weston Health District
Alicia Mozian, Conservation Director
Robert Myer, Westport Marine Police

Staff:

Susan Voris, Recording Secretary

The September 12, 2012 meeting of the Westport Shellfish Commission was called to order at 6:30 p.m. in Room 201 of the Westport Town Hall, 110 Myrtle Ave., Westport, Connecticut, by Chairman, Ron Silverman.

This is to certify that these minutes and resolutions were filed with the Westport Town Clerk within 7 days of the September 12, 2012 meeting of the Westport Shellfish Commission pursuant to Section 1-225 of the Freedom of Information Act.

Susan Voris
Recording Secretary

1. Approval of July 10, 2012 meeting minutes.

The July 10, 2012 meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

Motion: Brucker Second: Silverman
Ayes: Brucker, Silverman
Nayes: None Abstentions: Higgins Vote: 2:0:1

2. Treasurer’s Report

Dr. Silverman read the balance of the checking account ending June 30, 2012 into the record.

3. Police Report

a. Report on patrol activity to-date

Officer Myer stated the extra patrols have been very successful in that several arrests were made in the Mill Pond for not having a permit, shellfishing in a closed area and taking of undersized shellfish. He indicated that 15 infractions were issued, which included fishing and crabbing violations.

b. Scheduling Fall overtime for police patrol of the recreational shellfish beds.

The Commission and Officer Myer discussed overtime patrols for the fall. Officer Myer noted the water is still warm and the shellfish boat will be in the water until the end of October. The Marine Police building is not manned anymore for the season. He indicated that any extra patrols should concentrate their effort on the closed areas since it has been his experience that people have permits in the open area.

It was the sense of the Commission to allow for 2 more overtime patrols before Columbus Day dependent on when coverage is available.

c. Request by Marine Police Department for jet ski funding.

Officer Myer explained that the shellfish boat is sometimes too slow or the water is too shallow for access for enforcement activity by the boat. The Police Department found and have been approved for a grant for a jet ski for next season. He stated the Town of Westport would be responsible for maintenance and any damage done to the jet ski. He noted that a dock is needed for the jet ski, which would cost approximately \$2200 including shipping. He indicated that would guess that the jet ski would be used at least 70% of the time for shellfishing. The grant is good for one year but can be renewed on a yearly basis. He added that both Bridgeport and Fairfield have jet skis for accessing the shallows.

Ms. Higgins expressed concerns about the need for jet ski and questioned whether it worth the investment.

Officer Myer stated that as it stands, Marine Division cannot get into the shallows quickly. Also, some of the clammers see the boat coming and head for land. The jet ski would allow an officer to go right up to shore. He indicated that patrols would likely use both the jet ski and the boat.

Ms. Higgins asked why a patrol officer could not be called to catch those heading in.

Officer Myer stated an officer may not be available if he is on another call. The Marine Division has called for officers in the past but the patrol officer may not be Marine certified and the Marine officers still have to get to shore.

Ms. Brucker noted the dock is a one time purchase. The cost amortized over 10 years makes it affordable.

Dr. Silverman stated the Marine Police enforce our regulations and indicated he supported the proposal.

Ms. Mozian stated she would like the dock to be counted as part of the Police Department's Capitol Inventory, though the Commission would pay for it.

Motion to approve the purchase of the dock.

Motion:	Silverman	Second:	Brucker
Ayes:	Silverman, Brucker		
Nayes:	Higgins	Abstentions:	None
			Vote: 2:1:0

4. Recreational Shellfish Report

a. Status of permit activity to-date

Ms. Voris reviewed the following recreational report:

The Commission has issued **892 annual recreational permits** as of September 12, 2012.

603 are renewals and **289** are new permit holders. (67.5% / 32.5%)

Adult Resident Permits issued –	625	(\$ 12,500.00)
Senior Resident Permits issued –	251	(\$ 2,510.00)
Adult Non-resident Permits issued –	8	(\$ 400.00)
Senior Non-resident Permits issued –	8	(\$ 200.00)
Daily Permits issued -	2	(\$ 20.00)

As of September 12, 2012, the Commission has collected **\$15,630.00** since December 19, 2011 when we began issuing the 2012 recreational shellfishing permits.

Westport Outfitters has issued 147 permits as of September 12, 2012. He was issued another 25 permits.

A transplant to the recreational beds has not taken place. The recreational beds closed due to rainfall on July 16, 2012 and remained closed until August 31 to clams only. Oysters may not be taken.

b. Review of letter sent to Bureau of Aquaculture regarding shellfish bed closures.

Ms. Mozian noted that the letter written by Dr. Rice and Dr. Silverman to the Bureau of Aquaculture was superseded by e-mails received from the Bureau of Aquaculture. She noted the Conservation Department staff received numerous phone calls related to the lengthy closure without having received much information from the Bureau of Aquaculture. She indicated she wasn't sure if the letter prompted the e-mails or if it was coincidence, but added that the shellfish hotline was also updated at the same time.

5. New Business

- a. Presentation by David Brant, Executive Director of the Aspetuck Land Trust on proposed phragmite removal program in the downtown area of the Saugatuck River.**

Ms. Mozian noted this presentation was postponed to the October 3, 2012 meeting. She added that the Aspetuck Land Trust would be holding a public presentation on Monday, November 5, 2012 in Town Hall.

6. Other Business:

- a. NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Science Center Open House: Saturday, October 13, 2012, Milford**

Ms. Mozian noted the inclusion of the NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Science Center Open House invitation in the Commissioner's packet.

- b. Review of Fairfield's August 8, 2012 Shellfish Commission minutes relating to its meeting with Westport staff.**

Ms. Mozian noted that Ms. Voris and she met with two members of the Fairfield Shellfish Commission about closures.

- c.** Ms. Mozian noted the Code of Ethics that was e-mailed to the Commission members today. She stated the League of Women Voters will be holding a meeting on this on September 19, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. in the McManus Room of the library.

- d.** Ms. Higgins expressed a thank you to Drew and Dale Rice for hosting and their efforts in making the clambake a success.

6. Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the Westport Shellfish Commission is scheduled for October 3, 2012 at 6:15 p.m. in Room 309.

7. Adjournment:

The Shellfish Commission adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Motion:	Brucker	Second:	Silverman	
Ayes:	Brucker, Silverman, Higgins			
Nays:	None	Abstentions:	None	Vote: 3:0:0