



**SHELLFISH COMMISSION**  
TOWN HALL – 110 MYRTLE AVENUE  
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**WESTPORT™**

**MINUTES  
WESTPORT SHELLFISH COMMISSION  
MAY 4, 2022**

**ATTENDANCE**

Commission Members:

Heather Williams, Chair  
Jamie Walsh, Vice-Chair  
Dick Harris  
Clarinda Higgins, Alternate

Ex-Officios:

Alicia Mozian, Conservation Director  
Brendan Fearon, Westport Marine Police

Staff:

Susan Voris, Admin Asst. II

Guests:

John Hilts

The May 4, 2022 meeting of the Westport Shellfish Commission was called to order at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom by Chairman, Heather Williams.

This is to certify that these minutes and resolutions were filed with the Westport Town Clerk within 7 days of the May 4, 2022 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. New Business

- a. **17 Wakeman Place:** Request by John Hilts for review and comment of proposal to construct a 4' by 25' timber ramp, 4' by 99' piling-supported timber pier, 3' by 40' aluminum ramp, 6' by 5' ramp landing float, and 7' by 14' timber floating dock for a private recreational boating as part of permit application to CT DEEP.

John Hilts presented the application on behalf of the property owner, Greg Naughton. He stated that after the initial review with CT DEEP, the dock was moved from the southern section of the property to the north. The angle of the dock is to keep it more in the float more in the center of the property. Mr. Hilts noted there is approximately 140 feet between this proposed dock and the closest dock on the other side of the Saugatuck River. This also provides better visibility from the house. The previous owner received a zoning variance for the concrete walkway to the south. Mr. Hilts noted the properties to the south on Imperial Landing have deed restrictions over the marsh that prevent a dock from being constructed. Mr. Hilts acknowledged there is a buoy float in close proximity to the proposed dock but the Harbormaster said the float could be moved. Mr. Hilts is not sure who the float belongs to.

Ms. Mozian noted the proposed dock is located in the area classified as "Prohibited" but there is still some shellfish growth near the embankment. She asked how the impact to the tidal wetland vegetation and spartina will be minimized.

Mr. Hilts stated the pile driving is localized. There are 10 pilings within the vegetated area and the area should revegetate. They chose this area because it is the area with the least width of spartina.

Ms. Mozian asked about how they will access the dock due to the steep slope on the property.

Mr. Hilts indicated the access to the ramp will likely be across the top of the embankment from the existing walkway to the south.

Ms. Higgins asked what the minimum height requirement is to allow people to walk under a pier.

Mr. Hilts stated it is 68 inches measured at mean high water.

Sgt. Fearon noted that regarding navigation he sees no issues with the length of the proposed dock. The swim float was authorized by the Harbormaster. With regard to the proposed dredging in the Saugatuck River, Sgt. Fearon cautioned that the owners should schedule the installation of the dock around the dredging project.

Ms. Mozian asked how the work will be conducted.

Mr. Hilts stated that the more waterward pilings will be installed by barge. The four pilings closer to the land may have to be installed by land and could be replaced with helicals.

Ms. Higgins asked about the protections for storm surge.

Mr. Hilts stated the float will be high and will have three pilings to secure it.

Ms. Mozian asked if there are float stops.

Mr. Hilts stated float stops are not necessary as the float will be 28 inches above the substrate. The float could be removed during the winter.

Ms. Mozian asked about the timing.

Mr. Hilts stated that by the time they finish the permitting process, it would most likely be May 2023 at the earliest.

Ms. Voris noted that spawning season is June through September. Therefore, they could be looking at the Fall of 2023.

Motion to approve the application with the recommendations of avoiding the spawning season and to remove the float during the winter.

<b>Motion:</b>	<b>Walsh</b>	<b>Second:</b>	<b>Higgins</b>
<b>Ayes:</b>	<b>Walsh, Higgins, Harris, Williams</b>		
<b>Nayes:</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Abstentions:</b>	<b>None</b>
			<b>Vote: 4:0:0</b>

**b. Report on Spring transplant**

Ms. Voris reported she has spoken with Norm Bloom. Mr. Bloom has indicated that the water temperature is about 50°. He plans to begin the transplant after Mother's Day and will be in touch then. The hope is to have the recreational beds reopened by the first week of June.

**2. Approval of the March 2, 2022 minutes.**

The March 2, 2022 minutes were approved as submitted.

<b>Motion:</b>	<b>Walsh</b>	<b>Second:</b>	<b>Harris</b>
<b>Ayes:</b>	<b>Walsh, Harris, Williams</b>		
<b>Nayes:</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Abstentions:</b>	<b>Higgins</b>
			<b>Vote: 3:0:1</b>

**3. Police Report**

Sgt. Fearon stated Marine Police will be opening on May 19, 2022. He noted the "Gloria", formerly owned by shellfisherman, Al Sterling, has broken apart off the coast of Finch's Island in Grey's Creek. Mr. Calise, who acquired the boat after Mr. Sterling's passing and whose property the boat abuts, will be working on getting it out of there. There is an outboard motor but gas does not seem to be evident. There is no sheen.

Sgt. Fearon noted the email from the owners of 52 Canal Beach Road and their trespass concerns. The owner should call the Police at the non-emergency number.

Sgt. Fearon noted the water temperature is 49.2° as of today. He indicated that they need to watch out for boaters and hypothermia. With the price of gas being high, it is expected that non-motorized boat use will be higher this summer.

With regard to the upcoming summer enforcement schedule, the Marine Police still plan on doing their shellfish surveillance including Old Mill Pond, Hendrick's Point and Cockenoe Flats. Anecdotally, shellfishing activity is low since the water temperature is still low.

Ms. Williams asked about activity in the Mill Pond.

Sgt. Fearon stated last summer, they found that crabbers were not taking clams or oyster. He did speak with the State DEEP Enforcement Division and they are willing to do a joint enforcement with our Police for crabbing but their territory is huge and staffing is minimal. He touched on discussion on controlling parking on Hillspoint Road, which has not been resolved. He stated that the crabbing in the Mill Pond will be monitored again this summer. Peak season for crabbing is usually August and September.

Ms. Voris asked the Commission if they could work with Sgt. Fearon to come up with overtime dates starting in June including the weekend of June 17-19 and at the next meeting, the Commission and Sgt. Fearon could discuss more thoroughly.

Sgt. Fearon stated last summer, due to staffing shortages, they only did about 6 of the allowed 10 overtime patrols that were approved. He also cancels any that are on rainy days.

Mr. Walsh suggested that the Commission should follow the same protocol as last year and give Sgt. Fearon the discretion to fill the overtime as he can.

Ms. Williams stated the dates should include late afternoon tides as well.

Sgt. Fearon agreed and stated there appears to be much more activity at night and on weekends.

Motion to grant Marine Police 10 to 12 overtime shifts including late afternoon, weekend and holiday shifts.

**Motion: Walsh Second: Harris**  
**Ayes: Walsh, Harris, Higgins, Williams**  
**Nayes: None Abstentions: None Votes: 4:0:0**

**4. Treasurers Report**

Ms. Williams read the checking account balance ending March 31, 2022 into the record.

**5. Recreational Shellfish Report**

Ms. Voris submitted the following Recreational Shellfish Report as of April 30, 2022:

The Commission has issued **275 annual recreational permits** as of April 30, 2022. There were **236** renewals and **39** new permits. (85.8%/14.2%)

Adult Resident Permits issued –	<b>122</b>	<b>(\$ 3,630.00)</b>
Senior Resident Permits issued –	<b>143</b>	<b>(\$ 2,070.00)</b>
Adult Non-resident Permits issued –	<b>7</b>	<b>(\$ 420.00)</b>
Senior Non-resident Permits issued –	<b>3</b>	<b>(\$ 90.00)</b>
Daily Permits issued -		<b>(\$ 0.00)</b>

The Commission has collected **\$6,210.00** since December 20, 2021 when we began issuing the 2022 recreational shellfishing permits.

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

Closures:

Month	Days Open	Days Closed	Total Days
January	31	0	31
February	28	0	28
March	31	0	31
April	30	0	30
May			
June			

