



SHELLFISH COMMISSION
TOWN HALL – 110 MYRTLE AVENUE
WESTPORT, CT 06880
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**MINUTES
WESTPORT SHELLFISH COMMISSION
AUGUST 3, 2022**

ATTENDANCE

Commission Members:

Heather Williams, Chair
Sam Arciola
Jay Grayson, Alternate
Dick Harris
Clarinda Higgins, Alternate

Ex-Officios:

Alicia Mozian, Conservation Director
Brendan Fearon, Westport Marine Police

Staff:

Susan Voris, Admin. Asst. II

Guests:

Barry Lytton
Matt Murray

The August 3, 2022 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 August 3, 2022 meeting of the Westport Shellfish Commission pursuant to Section 1-225 of the Freedom of Information Act.

Alicia Mozian
Conservation Director

1. Approval of the May 4, 2022 minutes.

The May 4, 2022 minutes were approved as submitted.

Motion:	Higgins	Second:	Williams
Ayes:	Higgins, Williams, Arciola, Grayson, Harris		
Nays:	None	Abstentions:	None
		Vote:	5:0:0

2. Police Report

Cpl. Fearon reported the sewage spill in Norwalk and the rain has affected our season with closures. Marine Police has been doing patrols during regular hours. Most encounters are with permit holders and have revealed no violations. They have seen more small craft boaters coming in from the State boat launch and Calf Pasture Beach that are Spanish speaking and there is a language barrier. Marine Police is utilizing language applications on their cell phones to attempt to help translate to make people understand that permits are required for shellfishing in the Town of Westport. He stated they have only filled one of the overtime shifts due to the staffing shortage at the Police Department. He hopes to fill more yet this season.

Cpl. Fearon noted that activity at Sherwood Mill Pond seems to be less but assumes that this will pick up in September. Those individuals parking along Hillspoint Road without a beach sticker are being ticketed. There have been spot checks for crabbing that have not revealed any violations and the individuals are not taking any clams or oysters.

Ms. Mozian noted that the commercial shellfisherman working the beds in the pond recently reported to her that some of his product was recently stolen.

Ms. Williams asked about the Town imposing a curfew on crabbing.

Ms. Mozian indicated she has called the CT Marine Fisheries Division several times to see if such an ordinance would be in violation of any State regulations but she has not received a return phone call.

Cpl. Fearon stated the CT State DEEP Environmental Police are also short staffed.

Ms. Mozian stated she could pose the question to the Town Attorney.

Cpl. Fearon indicated that 85% to 90% of the interactions the Marine Police have with clammers has shown that people have their permits.

Mr. Arciola noted the Shellfish hotline is still having trouble.

Ms. Voris agreed there have been issues with the hotline and stated AT&T has investigated the line to resolve the issues.

Ms. Williams suggested that the Commission consider moving the phone to Westport or have a designated phone line to call about the Westport beds.

3. Treasurers Report

Ms. Williams read the checking account balance ending June 30, 2022 into the record.

4. Recreational Shellfish Report

Ms. Voris submitted the following report into the record:

The Commission has issued **506 annual recreational permits** as of July 31, 2022. There were **366** renewals and **140 issued to** new permit holders. (72.3%/27.7%)

Adult Resident Permits issued –	279	(\$ 8,340.00)
Senior Resident Permits issued –	206	(\$ 2,985.00)
Adult Non-resident Permits issued –	15	(\$ 900.00)
Senior Non-resident Permits issued –	6	(\$ 180.00)
Daily Permits issued -	12	(\$ 180.00)

The Commission has collected **\$12,585.00** since December 20, 2021 when we began issuing the 2022 recreational shellfishing permits.

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

Month	Days Open	Days Closed	Total Days
January	31	0	31
February	28	0	28
March	31	0	31
April	30	0	30
May	14	17	31
June	27	3	30
July	20	11	31
August			
September			
October			
November			
December			
	181	31	212

Notes:

Closure Events

- 5/10/22 -Transplant
- 6/15/22 - sewage by-pass from Norwalk
- 7/18/22 - rainfall event 2.94"

5. New Business – None

6. Old Business
a. Report on Spring Transplant

Ms. Voris noted the transplant was a little late this year due primarily to water temperature and was conducted shortly after Mother's Day. As a result, Norm Bloom did a very quick transplant so that we could reopen in time for Memorial Day. He moved a total of 200 bushels with about 100 bushels off Canal Beach and another 100 bushels off Cockenoe Island. He was not concerned with the lesser amount because over the past two years he has done much larger transplants. In the last two years ago he has transplanted almost 600 bushels two years ago and last year almost 400 bushels. Ms. Voris added that Mr. Bloom was going to talk with the recreational shellfishermen and see what they are catching and see where product may be needed. If necessary, we may try for a fall transplant but will first and foremost look at the conditions of the season before making any decision.

7. Other Business

- a.** Ms. Mozian noted the invitation to the DEEP Shellfish Restoration initiative at Ash Creek in Fairfield on Monday, August 8, 2022.
- b.** Ms. Mozian noted that a local resident, Rachel Precious, has approached staff about starting a shell recycling program in Westport. Ms. Mozian noted that Fairfield has an established shell recycling program and she likes the idea of recycling the shell. Finding a location for such an operation in Westport may be an obstacle. She noted Ms. Precious was invited to the meeting but was unable to join the Commission this evening due to another commitment.

Members discussed wanting to learn more about a shell recycling program and would like to hear from members of the Fairfield Shellfish Commission as to what their experience has been. They asked that Ms. Precious be asked to attend the next Commission meeting.

Ms. Mozian indicated she is not sure that a shell recycling program would work in Westport, but perhaps the Commission could help Fairfield and make it a regional effort.

- c.** Matt Murray, 27 Old Mill Road, showed pictures of a boat launch for the commercial operation in the Sherwood Mill Pond that may have gone awry earlier in the day. There were issues with the launch and it looks like they abandoned the effort for the day. It also appeared from the photos that some kind of gear was being put in the water.
- d.** Preparation for Clam Bake

Ms. Mozian announced the Clam Bake will be on September 1, 2022.

Ms. Williams stated that we have confirmation from the caterer but we are awaiting the pricing.

Ms. Mozian indicated she would send out last years assignments and if there were any changes to be made, members may contact her.

The August 3, 2022 meeting of the Westport Shellfish Commission adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Motion:	Grayson	Second:	Higgins
Ayes:	Grayson, Higgins, Arciola, Harris, Williams		
Nayes:	None	Abstentions:	None
		Vote:	5:0:0