WESTPORT

SHELLFISH COMMISSION

TOWN HALL – 110 MYRTLE AVENUE WESTPORT, CT 06880 P 203.341.1087 F 203.341.1088

MINUTES WESTPORT SHELLFISH COMMISSION DECEMBER 6, 2023

ATTENDANCE

Commission Members:
Jamie Walsh, Chair
Barry Lytton, Vice-Chair
Dick Harris
Clarinda Higgins, Alternate

Scott Reichhelm Heather William, Alternate

Ex-Officios:

Colin Kelly, Conservation Director Brendan Fearon, Westport Marine Police

Staff:

Susan Voris, Admin. Asst. III

Guests:

Jeff Northrop, Sr.

The December 6, 2023 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, Jamie Walsh.

This is to certify that these minutes and resolutions were filed with the Westport Town Clerk within 7 days of the December 6, 2023 meeting of the Westport Shellfish Commission pursuant to Section 1-225 of the Freedom of Information Act.

Colin Kelly	
Conservation Director	

1. Approval of the September 6, 2023 minutes.

The September 6, 2023 minutes were approved as submitted.

Motion: Lytton Second: Harris

Ayes: Lytton, Harris, Williams

Nayes: None Abstentions: Higgins, Walsh Vote: 3:0:2

2. Treasurers Report

Mr. Walsh read the checking account balance ending October 31, 2023 into the record.

Mr. Reichhelm arrived at 6:40 p.m.

3. Police Report

Cpl. Fearon reported there are no new issues to report. The season has closed for Marine Police. There have been a couple of rescues. One resulted in two drownings with both victim recovered. The other a couple was stranded on the sand bar out on Cockenoe at low tide. Marine Police responded to ensure they were safe. The boater had to wait until the next high tide to get off the sandbar.

4. Recreational Shellfish Report

Ms. Voris submitted the following report:

The Commission has issued **502 annual recreational permits** as of November 30, 2023. There were **364** renewals and **138** new permits. (72.9%/ 27.1%)

Adult Resident Permits issued –	257	(\$	7,650.00)
Senior Resident Permits issued –	216	(\$	3,195.00)
Adult Non-resident Permits issued –	16	(\$	960.00)
Senior Non-resident Permits issued –	9	(\$	270.00)
Daily Permits issued -	16	(\$	240.00)

The Commission has collected **\$12,495.00** since December 20, 2022 when we began issuing the 2023 recreational shellfishing permits.

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

Month	Days Open	Days Closed	Total Days
January	25	6	31
February	27	1	28
March	31	0	31
April	22	8	30
May	13	18	31
June	29	1	30
July	6	25	31
August	20	11	31
September	10	20	30
October	16	15	31
November	13	17	30
December			
	212	122	334

Notes:

Closure Events

1/26 - rainfall > 1.5"
4/23 - rainfall > 1.5"
4/29 - rainfall > 1.5"
5/20 - rainfall > 2.5"
5/22 - sewage line bypass < 500 gallons
6/30 - rainfall > 1.5 "
7/14 - rainfall > 1.5" and flooding events
8/15 - rainfall > 1.5"
8/18 - rainfall > 1.5"
9/10 - rainfall > 2"
9/18 - rainfall > 1.5"
9/29 - rainfall > 1.5"
10/17 - transplant
11/23 - rainfall > 1.71"

a. Review of 2024 renewal season

The Commission and Ms. Voris discussed the renewal letter and updates to the 2024 season.

5. New Business

a. Discussion by Dick Harris on PFA sampling in abutting watersheds and what that testing could provide the Commission regarding the Saugatuck River.

Mr. Harris discussed testing that has been done by the State within Central Connecticut for PFAs and some of the resulting remedies that have included providing water for residents and/or upgrades. The State has not got enough funding to continue at this point. They will at some point be testing all watersheds and making remediation recommendations. PFAs are chemicals that stay in your system for at least 8 years.

He has done some testing within local waters in Norwalk and Wilton. These test run about \$295 per test. He has found a test that is backed by the Sierra Club that is about 75 to 80 percent accurate when run along site the same other test and would give background information on hot spots in watersheds. He is looking at watersheds. His interest is in having background information. The Cyclopure test runs \$79 per test. He was asking the Commission to back a testing of the Saugatuck River watershed for a baseline.

Ms. Voris noted comments Colin Kelly, Conservation Director, wrote to the Commission that supported this proposal for sampling and gathering data because it gives a regional overview of the impact to local waters.

Members of the Commission asked how these chemicals affect the shellfish.

Mr. Harris indicated that this is still an unknown. However, he noted that shellfish are filter feeders.

The Commission discussed the type and amount of testing they were comfortable with.

Motion to allow the purchase of 25 Cylcopure tests with costs being no greater than \$2,500.

Motion: Walsh Second: Williams

Ayes: Walsh, Williams, Higgins, Lytton, Reichhelm

Nayes: None Abstentions: Harris Vote: 5:0:1

6. Old Business - None

7. Other Business

- **a.** Ms. Voris highlighted comments from Mr. Kelly regarding the Save the Sound event on November 15, 2023 to help recycle abandoned lobster pots, which were covered from Long Island Sound.
- **b.** Ms. Voris noted the Gathering of the Shellfish Commissions meeting is scheduled for Saturday, February 3, 2024 in New Haven. When the registration opens, she will reach out to members for interest in attending and set up the registrations.

8. Next Steps

a. Staff will work with Mr. Harris and the Finance Department to order the Cyclopure.

The December 6, 2023 meeting of the Westport Shellfish Commission adjourned at 7:39 p.m.

Motion: Walsh Second: Lytton Ayes: Walsh, Lytton, Harris, Higgin, Reichhelm, Williams

Nayes: None Abstentions: None Vote: 6:0:0