

Town of Waterford Shellfish Commission

Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, June 7, 2016 – 7:00 p.m.
Waterford Town Hall

1. Call to Order

Chairman Lawson called the regular meeting of the Waterford Shellfish Commission to order at 7:03 p.m. after establishing a quorum.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Welcome Members and Guests

4. Roll Call

Present were Commissioners Lawson, LeBelle, Havens, Miller, Malley and Calkins. Absent were Commissioners Francolino, Corriveau, and Meehan.

Alternate Commissioner Calkins was appointed to sit as a regular voting member of this meeting in the absence of Commissioner Francolino and alternate member Havens was appointed to sit as a regular voting member of this meeting in the absence of regular voting member Meehan.

5. Approval of the May 3, 2016 regular Meeting Minutes

Motion made by Commissioner Malley, seconded by Commissioner Calkins to approve the May 3, 2016 regular meeting minutes as reviewed and submitted. Discussion, none, voice vote, 6-0, all in favor, motion carried.

6. Public Input

There was no one from the public present for discussion at this meeting.

7. Correspondence

Chairman Lawson reviewed various meeting minutes, agendas, emails and correspondence sent to the Shellfish Commission over the past month. He discussed correspondence regarding sampling, closures and activity as it relates to the Waterford Shellfish Commission that was sent to him either by mail or email over the course of the past month.

He stated Zofia Baumann, Assistant Research Professor at the UConn Department of Marine Sciences in Groton had requested permission at the last Waterford Shellfish Commission meeting to start sampling the Waterford recreational shell fishing areas for the University of Connecticut project being funded by the Connecticut Sea Grant. Chairman Lawson stated he has given her permission to sample last month and she will be conducting the second set of samples as requested on June 10th at 8:10 a.m. with her team. They will be sampling sediment, water, zooplankton, fish, hard shell clams and oysters.

Chairman Lawson reviewed a document sent to him from Tessa Getchis of UConn stating she will be taking orders from Shellfish Commissions for posters and printed sheets with the Connecticut Shellfish infographic displayed on them. She stated funding for this outreach project is provided by the National Sea Grant program for public information purposes. Chairman Lawson stated the informational posters can be displayed at the recreational shell fishing areas.

8. Treasurer's Report

Commissioner Francolino was absent from the meeting so Chairman Lawson reviewed the Treasurer's Report in his absence with the data he received from the Waterford Finance Department via email. He discussed revenues and expenditures incurred throughout the past month including a request for payment for hours worked by the Warden that he submitted for payment. A discussion was held regarding who is in charge of taking samples to the lab while Warden Chmeil is out on leave due to a death in the family.

Motion made by Commissioner Malley, seconded by Commissioner Miller to approve the Treasurer's Report as reviewed. Discussion, none, voice vote, 6-0, all in favor, motion carried.

9. Monthly Monitoring and Sampling Report

Chairman Lawson stated the recreational shell fishing areas are currently closed and they are waiting on the return of satisfactory testing results after the last rain fall due to the abundance of rain last week. He will keep the Commission members posted to the openings and closings throughout the month as he receives them.

10. New Business

Commissioner Miller discussed a proposal from Niantic Bay Shellfish Farm to be heard at the next WELSCO meeting. The individual is requesting permission to commercially harvest hard shell clams, oysters and scallops in the Niantic Bay. He explained the proposal would allow the company to harvest hard shell clams in the public access areas and these areas will be subject to commercial harvest if it is approved as the areas he is requesting are conditionally open areas. He stated he will attend the meeting and report back to the Waterford Shellfish Commission with any decisions made by WELSCO. He stated the individual is looking for shallow waters and the Commission discussed potential alternate areas for

use. The Commission members discussed options for commercial shell fishing sites that are not in the recreational areas as a non public access area would be the best option for the proposed use. It was the consensus of the Commission members to entertain offers for leases in the Waterford waters if the company owner would like to present it to the Commission but the Commission members are not in favor of leasing areas of bottom land that are public access sites.

11. Old Business

- a. Update/Discussion regarding the proposed FY 2016-2017 Waterford Shellfish budget request.

Chairman Lawson stated that the budget has been approved and will be transferred to the Commission on July 1st in the amount requested. A discussion was held regarding the Commission becoming less dependent on Town funding in the upcoming years. Chairman Lawson stated it is his goal to generate as much income as possible from leasing bottom land and the sale of permits that the Commission will no longer have to rely so heavily on the Town for its operating costs.

- b. Update regarding oyster and little neck clam restock.

Chairman Lawson stated he will order clams and oysters for re-stock now that the waters are warm enough and the boats are in the water. He will keep the Commission updated regarding the restock progress.

- c. Update regarding the new and extended lease agreement.

Chairman Lawson stated the Town Attorney has drafted the four lease agreements but before the leases can move forward with signatures from all parties it is required to advertise the lease proposals in the New London Day on two separate days to inform the public of the Commission's intentions and to give anyone who is opposed to the leases and opportunity to come forward. Chairman Lawson stated the advertising costs are substantial and he inquired if the Commission members would be open to contributing a portion of the costs to the Town from the Waterford Shellfish budget to offset the advertising costs. It was the consensus of the Commission members that shared costs for advertising the proposed leases would be fair to all parties involved.

Motion made by Commissioner LeBelle, seconded by Commissioner Calkins to authorize the payment of one hundred dollars (\$100.00) to the Town from the Waterford Shellfish Commission budget per lease toward advertising costs for the four proposed leases of bottom land in the Waterford waters under the control of the Waterford Shellfish Commission for a total of four hundred dollars (\$400.00). Discussion: none. Voice vote: 6-0, all in favor, motion carried.

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Chairman Lawson stated the shared expenses will alleviate the burden of the advertising costs to the Town and the revenue from the leases will be beneficial to the Waterford Shellfish Commission long term.

12. Adjournment

Motion made by Commissioner Calkins, seconded by Commissioner Miller to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m., discussion, none, voice vote, 6-0, all in favor, motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Audrey Ulmer,

Recording Secretary for the Town of Waterford Shellfish Commission.