Town of Stonington
Shellfish Commission
152 Elm Street Stonington, CT 06378

SPECIAL MEETING
December 20, 2023
6:30 PM

A Special Meeting of the Stonington Shellfish Commission (SSC) was held on this date at the Board of Education building at 40 Field Street in Pawcatuck. Members present were Chairman, Mr. Donald Murphy; Mr. Alan Banister; Mr. Donald Raffo; Secretary Mr. Austin Clark. There is a quorum present.

1) Call to order – Meeting called to order at 6:30 pm.

2) Comments from the public – There were no comments from the public.

3) Review and approval of the regular meeting minutes of the November 2, 2023 meeting. A review of the minutes produced a few typographical corrections and the minutes were approved as amended – a motion was made and seconded (Banister / Murphy) Voted 3 – 0 with one abstention.

4) Correspondence

a) The Chair shared with the Commission the annual date for 2024 Gathering of Shellfish Commissions organized by the State. It is scheduled for February 3, 2024.
b) Included in the packet was an e-mail from Oliver Dixon expressing interest in learning about how to acquire a bottom site in Stonington waters for aquaculture.
c) An e-mail was included in the meeting packet where the Shellfish Growers Climate Coalition was looking to have oyster growers work with schools in the area.
d) A brochure was included from the Eastern Connecticut Conservation District highlighting their recent work.

5) Business

c) Under Business the Chair moved item c) to the top of the list to accommodate Chad Frost, the landscape architect for the application for Boat House Park. Mr. Frost briefly described the project and answered questions from the Commissioners. The Chair commented that he would sign the necessary paperwork and return it to the proper party.
a) Water quality results were discussed, and the Chair noted that the recreational beds were open for the entire month of November. Included in the packet was a notice of seasonal reopening of the Lower Mystic Harbor on November 15th. Test results for samples taken on December 13th were shared and the Chair noted that these were taken after 1.77 inches of rainfall on December 11th. Also included were the results of tissue samples taken by the State.
b) Commercial Shellfish Report
Steve Plant report that as of this date due to the amount of rain, the commercial beds are closed which presented some challenges due to the market demand for product around the Holidays.
Kris Simonds mentioned that the State of Connecticut did come to Stonington and make a documentary film about oyster growing and harvesting in Stonington.
d) A lengthy discussion was held regarding the revisions being made to the Commission's Aquaculture

License Agreement. Modification suggestions were made and Commissioner Raffo said he would incorporate all the comments into a new revised agreement. A motion was made and seconded (Banister / Raffo) to accept the modified license agreement. Voted 4 -0.

e) Commissioner Clark updated the Commission on conversations with Online Mooring regarding the move towards initiating the sale of shellfish permits online with Online Mooring processing the application and remitting payments. Commissioner Clark suggested that with Commissioner Raffo's input they would review the proposed MOU submitted by Online Mooring suggesting changes where appropriate.

f) Commission Banister shared with the Commission his work on the Annual Reporting Form that is called for in the requirements for the license agreements. The thought was to provide a standardized form to be used by all the commercial growers showing activity, area and amount of time of licensed bottom worked.

g) Financial Review:
There was no recreational income reported for this period. The Chair shared with the group the commercial payments received to date. Included in the monthly packet, as is every year, the request from the Town for the Shellfish Commission's budget line item. As in year's past, a nominal $50 request for Town funding was made, as the feeling is that the Stonington Shellfish Commission can be self-sustaining. A brief discussion was held regarding the accounting and payment for the legal notice required of Stonington Farms Shellfish, Inc for the July public hearing. The Chair asked Secretary Clark to send a revised invoice to Stonington Farms Shellfish, Inc to reflect this.

6) Adjournment: A motion was made and seconded (Banister / Raffo) to adjourn at 8:07pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Austin P. Clark

Austin P. Clark
Secretary