

Waterford-East Lyme Shellfish Commission

Meeting Minutes
Thursday, Mar 18, 2021
Virtual meeting held via Zoom, 7:30 pm

Members present: Chair Peter Harris, J. Patrick Kelly, Marcia Benvenuti, Larry Tytla, Fred Wise, Paul Spakowski, Tom Bowlen, and Eric Kanter
Members absent: none
Guests: Ex-officio Dan Cunningham

- 1) The meeting was called to order at 7:31 pm and a quorum established.
- 2) Review and approval of previous meeting minutes:
 - 18 Feb 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes – Minutes approved following a motion by Ms. Benvenuti, seconded by Mr. Spakowski, vote 8-0.
 - 23 Feb 2021 Special Meeting minutes. This item was added to the agenda on a motion by Mr. Spakowski, seconded by Ms. Benvenuti, motion approved 8-0.
 - 23 Feb 2021 Special Meeting Minutes approved following a motion by Ms. Benvenuti, seconded by Mr. Spakowski, vote 8-0.
- 3) Review and approval of treasurer's report

Treasurer's report given by Mr. Kelly. Treasurer's report was approved on a motion by Mr. Spakowski, seconded by Mr. Tytla, vote 8-0.
- 4) Chief Warden's Comments : Mr. Harris had a conversation with Chief Warden Chmiel prior to the meeting. Chief Chmiel has had the warden boat out of the water recently due to the frequent winter storms in the region. It was requested a more formal report be obtained from the Warden when he could not attend the meeting. Mr. Spakowski commented that the river was quite busy with clammers when he went clamming recently.
- 5) Old business:
 - a. Discussion and potential action on recreational oyster regulations: Further discussion ensued on the number of oysters it takes to reach a limit (2 gallons) and potential regulations that could be adopted to prevent overfishing. No action taken at this time.
 - b. Discussion and potential action on clam permit fees. Ms. Benvenuti and Mr. Wise presented the final version of the revised clam permit along with their proposal on the map and regulation handouts. Quotes from the Town of Waterford to print the permits were presented. Having the town print the permits has significant cost savings compared to other printing services. A motion was made by Ms. Benvenuti, seconded by Mr. Spakowski to print 1000 permits at a cost of up to \$600 by the Town of Waterford, motion was approved 8-0.
 - c. Review of insurance policy and coverage. Mr. Harris presented the e-mail from the East Lyme First Selectman regarding obtaining Workman's Comp coverage for the Wardens through the town. Further discussions with town officials are needed. Mr. Cunningham will discuss with the EL First Selectman as well. In the interim, purchase of a Worker's Comp policy to ensure coverage, through a private insurance company, at a projected cost of \$1800 per year was proposed. This was passed on a motion by Mr. Spakowski, seconded by Mr. Tytla, approved 8-0.

- d. Discussion and potential action on funding publication of SeaGrant Responsible Lawn Care announcement. Mr. Harris described the current funding for the Responsible Lawn Care ad. Five other groups (East Lyme Harbor Management/Shellfish, Waterford Harbor Management, Waterford Shellfish, Niantic River Watershed Committee, and The Niantic River Advocacy Coalition), have agreed to contribute equally to funding the ad. With WELSCO contributing, each group will pay \$203.63, for a total of \$1221.80. The ad will run in the New London Day on Sunday Mar 28, 2021. A motion was made by Mr. Tytla, seconded by Mr. Kanter to approve up to \$250 for this ad, motion approved 8-0.

6) New Business

- a. Review and potential action on identification of an accounting firm to perform our audit. Ms. Benvenuti obtained quotes from 2 CPA's that could perform our annual audit. Mr. Kelly will contact those CPA's to further discuss the audit requirements. It was also discussed that a 2 year audit would be appropriate at this time.
- b. Purchase of clams or oysters in 2021. Discussion took place regarding purchase of additional clams and/or oysters to ensure adequate shellfish stock are in place to meet the demand. Mr. Wise will contact the commercial growers from last year to obtain quotes for this year.
- c. E-mail to Waterford 1st Selectman regarding WELSCO dock condition. Mr. Harris briefed the commission that the Waterford First Selectman has not replied to his e-mails about the condition of the town dock. The commission requested Mr. Harris e-mail the Waterford Chief of Police for assistance with this issue as it presents a safety and liability risk.

- 7) Ex-Officio comments : Ex-Officio Cunningham briefed the commission on East Lyme matters which included continued discussions with the Town of Waterford regarding the town boundary in the Niantic River as well as funding of the police boat.

8) Correspondence

Mr. Harris presented a letter from the East Lyme Planning and Conservation Commission regarding the POCD document and if a WELSCO commissioner would be interested in working with them to help implement the plan. Ms. Benvenuti volunteered and will contact the Planning and Conservation Commission.

9) Public Comment : none

- 10) Adjournment : Meeting adjourned at 9:17 pm on a motion by Mr. Spakowski, seconded by Mr. Tytla, motion approved 8-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Harris