

Waterford-East Lyme Shellfish Commission

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

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

- 1) The meeting was called to order at 7:31 pm and a quorum established.
- 2) Review and approval of previous meeting minutes:
21 Jan 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes – Minutes approved following a motion by Ms. Benvenuti, seconded by Mr. Tytla, vote 5-0, Mr. Kanter abstained.
- 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. Kanter, seconded by Mr. Tytla, vote 6-0. Mr. Kanter inquired if our accountant could provide monthly profit and loss summaries. A CPA needs to be identified to perform our yearly audit as our previous CPA who conducted the audit is no longer providing that service.
- 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.
- 5) Old business:
 - a. Discussion and potential action on recreational oyster regulations: This agenda item discussed together with the next agenda item (clamming regulations and permit).
 - b. Discussion and potential action on clam permit fees. A very thorough discussion ensued covering these two items. A decision was made not to change the oyster regulations including the limit (no motion needed). For clamming, a decision was made to keep all current regulations as is. Although there was discussion about changing the fees and/or senior age, it was ultimately decided the cost of a public notice was too expensive to justify the changes. Mr. Wise and Ms. Benvenuti presented their edit suggestions for the permit and associated regulations handout, minor edits were suggested and they will bring their final draft to the next meeting.
 - c. Review of insurance policy and coverage. Mr. Wise and Mr. Kelly briefed the commission on the insurance policy changes discussed with the insurance agent. The cost of the policy would increase significantly to add coverage not previously included as well as increasing coverage limits. A motion was made by Ms. Benvenuti, seconded by Mr. Harris to approve the existing policy to prevent a potential policy lapse. After further discussion, it was decided a Special meeting would be held on 23 Feb 2021 to get answers to the questions asked. The motion by Ms. Benvenuti was withdrawn.
- 6) New Business
 - a. Review of Annual Shellfish Gathering

Mr. Harris and Ms. Benvenuti briefed the commission on the Annual Shellfish Gathering. The meeting was held virtually this year and provided valuable information regarding harmful algae blooms, how shellfish areas are classified, as well as a reminder on water sampling requirements.

- b. Discussion and potential action on funding publication of SeaGrant Responsible Lawn Care. Mr. Harris presented the Responsible Lawn Care public notice that has been published in the New London Day the past few years, funded by WELSCO and other local commissions. A discussion occurred regarding using the Waterford and East Lyme Times weekly paper in place of the New London Day to increase distribution. Mr. Harris will check into the price of that and report at the next meeting.

7) Ex-Officio comments : Ex-Officio Cunningham not present.

8) Correspondence

Mr. Harris received correspondence that were presented during the agenda items on oyster and clam regulations (agenda items – Old business a and b)

9) Public Comment –Terry Lineberger of Niantic River Rd, Waterford, voiced her support of the Responsible Lawn Care publication and said the Niantic River Advocacy Coalition would help fund this if needed. Ms. Lineberger also suggested WELSCO consider using social media to *communicate WELSCO news as this can be a more effective communication tool than the town websites.* Ms. Lineberger offered to help set up if WELSCO decided to use social media.

10) Meeting adjourned at 10:03 pm on a motion by Mr. Tytla, seconded by Mr. Wise, motion approved 6-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Harris