

# Waterford-East Lyme Shellfish Commission

## Meeting Minutes

Thursday, Jan 21, 2021

Virtual meeting held via Zoom, 7:30 pm

Members present: Chair Peter Harris, J. Patrick Kelly, Tom Bowlen, Marcia Benvenuti, Larry Tytla, Paul Spakowski, and Fred Wise

Members absent: Eric Kanter

Guests: Chief Warden Chmiel, Ex-Officio Dan Cunningham

- 1) The meeting was called to order at 7:33 pm and a quorum established.
- 2) Review and approval of previous meeting minutes:  
17 Dec 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes – Minutes approved following a motion by Mr. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Tytla, vote 7-0.
- 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. Tytla, seconded by Mr. Harris, vote 7-0. Mr. Wise will review WELSCO insurance policies to ensure appropriate coverage as he has insurance expertise.
- 4) Chief Warden's Comments : Chief Warden Chmiel gave a report on the current shellfishing status in the Niantic River. Clamming in the river has been very active. The oyster seed is growing and some may reach legal size this year. Juvenile scallops are occasionally retrieved by clammers indicating a natural set last year.
- 5) Old business:
  - a. Report on funding request to the Town of Waterford : Mr. Harris briefed the Commission on the Waterford Grant Meeting. The request from WELSCO for \$5000 was reduced to \$2500.
  - b. Discussion and potential action on recreational oyster regulations. Discussion ensued to determine if the current oyster regulations and permit fee needs to be updated. Potential quantity limit or a moratorium was discussed. No action taken at this time. Mr. Harris will confirm with the Town Attny the public notice requirement related to any changes made.
- 6) New Business
  - a. Discussion and potential action on clam permit fees  
The Commission discussed the clam permit fees and regulations. The complications of having a dual permit with the East Lyme Shellfish Commission was discussed. No action taken at this time. Mr. Harris will e-mail the East Lyme Shellfish Commission Chair to discuss. Ms. Benvenuti and Mr. Wise will draft an updated permit to be discussed at the Feb meeting.
  - b. Nomination and election of WELSCO Chair, Vice-Chair, and Treasurer  
Mr. Harris was nominated and elected to Chair on a motion by Mr. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Tytla, approved 6-0, Mr. Harris abstained. Mr. Tytla was nominated and elected to Vice-Chair on a motion by Ms. Benvenuti, seconded by Mr. Wise, approved 6-0, Mr. Tytla abstained. Mr. Kelly was nominated and elected to Treasurer on a motion by Mr. Tytla, seconded by Mr. Harris, approved 7-0.

- 7) Ex-Officio comments : Ex-Officio Cunningham briefed the Commission on East Lyme Town matters.
- 8) Correspondence  
Mr. Harris briefed the Commission on 2 correspondence he received, the first being a survey and future meetings by the CT National Estuarine Research Reserve, the second being the Annual Gathering of Shellfish Commissions to be held virtually this year.
- 9) Public Comment –Terry Lineberger of Niantic River Rd, Waterford, voiced her support of the pump-out boat and offered to champion a letter writing campaign to town officials if needed to ensure this program is funded. Ms. Lineberger also would provide perspective on the oyster seeding at a future meeting. Ms. Lineberger also supported WELSCO's efforts to update the shellfish regulations and website.
- 10) Meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm on a motion by Mr. Spakowski, seconded by Mr. Tytla, motion passed 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Harris