

TOWN OF FAIRFIELD
HARBOR MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES OF MAY 17, 2022

A Meeting of the Harbor Management Commission (HMC) of the Town of Fairfield was held on Tuesday, May 17, 2022 at 4:30 p.m. in the First Floor Conference Room of Town Hall, 611 Old Post Road, Fairfield, CT, and via teleconference.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Kim Taylor, Chairwoman, Jacob Herschler; Bill Perugini; Sam Cargill; and Jeff Warren. **ABSENT:** Eric Sundman; Don Hyman; Doug Metchick. **ALSO PRESENT:** Geoffrey Steadman, HMC Consultant; Jeff Engborg, Pequot Yacht Club (PYC) Manager; Bryan LeClerc, Harbor Master; Harry French, Former HMC Commissioner, John Short, Shellfish Commission Chairman; David DiQuinzio of Annapolis Hybrid Marine

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 4:35 p.m. by Chairwoman Taylor.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: MARCH 15, 2022: Bill Perugini *moved*, and Jac Herschler *seconded* to approve the meeting minutes of March 15, 2022. *Motion passed unanimously.* **APRIL 19, 2022:** Bill Perugini *moved*, and Jac Herschler *seconded* to approve the meeting minutes of April 19, 2022. *Motion passed unanimously.*

CHAIRWOMAN'S REPORT: Chairwoman Taylor reported the following communications:

1. May 2, 2022 email from Joseph Salvatore of CT Port Authority. Announcement of Request for Applications for the Small Harbor Improvement Projects Program (SHIPP) from municipalities seeking funds to improve the infrastructure of their local water ways including dredging, boat ramp improvements. The deadline is July 1, 2022.
2. May 3, 2022 email from DEEP to Mr. Bishop, Director of Conservation, and other Fairfield officials transmitting the license to replace culverts at South Pine Creek.
3. May 12, 2022 email from RACE to Mr. Bishop, Director of Conservation, Mr. Short, Chair of the Shellfish Commission, and the HMC attaching the Structures, Dredging, and Fill Application submitted to CT DEEP in connection with the proposed structure at 1143 – 1155 Sasco Hill Rd.

SPECIAL REPORT:

Introduction: Mr. Herschler. Commissioner Herschler introduced David DiQuinzio of Annapolis Hybrid Marine who, via teleconference, provided an informational presentation on electric boats and charging stations, as well as the changes that his company has seen in this field. Following discussion, it was the consensus of the HMC to include this subject in the Harbor Management Plan for future consideration in Southport Harbor.

HARBOR MASTER REPORT: Mr. LeClerc: Harbor Master Bryan LeClerc reported that only three mooring applications remain incomplete – and that the applicants have indicated they will provide the missing data. Information about docked vessels and boats in the north anchorage is being compiled.

The Southport Harbor annual report is almost complete and will be uploaded onto the Town's website. There was a delay in the installation of the USGS water quality monitoring buoy due to supply issues.

NEW APPLICATIONS: Structures, Dredging, and Fill Application submitted by RACE to CT DEEP in connection with the waterfront structure at 1143 – 1155 Sasco Hill Road: The HMC discussed this matter at length, and had several concerns regarding the proposal which included, but were not limited to: potential disruption of boating activity near Kenzie Point; encroachment of the dock into the shellfish beds; water depth at the location; and adverse impacts that this project may have on the natural resources in that area and pedestrian passage along the shoreline waterward of Mean High Water. Following considerable discussion, it was the consensus of the HMC to submit a letter to the DEEP outlining the concerns as discussed. It was also the consensus of the HMC to invite DEEP representatives and Shellfish Commission Chairman John Short to conduct a site visit at the location.

OLD BUSINESS:

LOWER WHARF PROJECT: Mr. Steadman: Mr. Steadman reported that he is continuing to compile information the finance department needs to act on the request to re-purpose the CT Port Authority grant funds for the re-designed project. As previously reported, the Port Authority has no objection to the planned repurposing of the funds. Chairwoman Taylor appointed the following LOWER WHARF COMMITTEE relative to the newly acquired area at the Lower Wharf: Sam Cargill and Eric Sundman. Commissioner Herschler noted that the HMC is still waiting for opinion from Town Counsel relative to the HMC's responsibilities to manage this area.

SAND MANAGEMENT PROJECT: Mr. Steadman: Mr. Steadman provided the HMC with a slideshow concerning piping plover habitat in and near the area to be dredged by the Corps of Engineers, including areas previously roped off for protection of nesting habitat. Mr. Steadman reported that it is his understanding that no nesting of piping plover has been observed on this site since 2011. In addition, the nesting habitat, as assessed by Mr. Bull from CT Audubon, should not be considered as especially valuable habitat. Chairwoman Taylor indicated that it appears that although it does not appear that the piping plover are nesting in this area, DEEP and US Fish and Wildlife Service may require some other area to be provided for possible nesting as mitigation for loss of any existing habitat as may be caused by the dredging project.

MOORING COMMITTEE: Jac Herschler: Commissioner Herschler reported that the Mooring Committee had met on May 10th. In addition to the items discussed above by Harbor Master Bryan LeClerc, Commissioner Herschler noted that the Committee discussed the role of a possible Deputy Harbor Master who, at the request of the HMC may be appointed by the Governor; it was the consensus of the Mooring Committee that a job description for a Deputy Harbor Master include the following language: "the Deputy Harbor Master, at the direction of the Harbor Master, may be delegated any of the responsibilities outlined in the Harbor Master job description. The required skills and experience would be the same as those required of the Harbor Master.

PLAN UPDATE COMMITTEE: Chairwoman Taylor reported that she was advised that the high school students/teachers originally identified as possibly coordinating the narration effort would not be available because school is almost over; the Committee will seek alternatives to complete this project.

LOWER WHARF MEMORIAL BENCH: Mr. Cargill: Commissioner Cargill asked the Parks and Recreation Department about the process for the addition of dedicated or memorial benches at the Lower Wharf. Parks and Rec which mows and cleans up the Lower Wharf area can purchase any benches authorized by the HMC. The HMC discussed the deed restrictions one of which limits the total number of benches and how those restrictions would impact a process for identifying those who wanted a memorial bench. It was noted that there are still open issues related to the 2019 acquisition and land swap. Including uncertainties concerning management responsibilities. Commissioner Herschler noted that opinion from Town Counsel is still needed.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Annual Report: Mr. Steadman: The IT Department has confirmed that it will be able to track how many hits the links imbedded in report receive. Although paper copies will be made available at Town Hall, the PDF will be uploaded onto the Town website.
2. Deputy Harbor Master Selection Committee: Chairwoman Taylor provided the HMC with a description of the process that must be followed when selecting a Harbor Master, and noted that the same process will be followed for the selection of a Deputy Harbor Master. Following a request for volunteers, Chairwoman Taylor appointed Bill Perugini to work with Bryan LeClerc.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to come before the Commission, Jac Herschler *moved*, and Bill Perugini *seconded* to adjourn at 6:25 p.m. *Motion passed unanimously.*

The audio recording can be found here: [Harbor Management Commission - 5/17/22 - YouTube](#)

Respectfully submitted,
Betty Gabriel