

Five Mile River Commission Minutes
March 8, 2012

Commission members in attendance:

John deRegt
William Jessup
Dirk Leasure
Ray Meurer, Harbor Superintendent
David Snyder, Assistant Harbor Superintendent

Guests:

Tony Carlo, lobsterman, Norwalk, CT

William Jessup took the chair at 7:48 p.m. and welcomed Tony Carlo, lobsterman, who keeps his 36 foot lobster boat on a mooring in Five Mile River just off of the All Seasons Marine Works docks.

Tony said he wanted assurance from the commissions that he would be able to keep his boat on his mooring during the months of December, January and February in the event he is hauling his lobster traps. He was aware that winter storage of boats during that period of time is prohibited. The commissioners agreed it was acceptable for him to keep his boat on its mooring if he was working his lobster traps. Most winters Tony keeps his boat at a dock at All Seasons Marine Works. He currently has 800 lobster traps stored in Long Island Sound for the winter in groups of 50 traps tied together in a string. Last year was the first time Tony did not set traps to catch lobsters.

Tony is a member of the Western Long Island Sound Lobstermen's Association whose 50 members represent a \$100-200 million business and are concerned about the use of chemicals to combat the West Nile Virus. The chemicals in the form of brickets are placed in storm drains that empty into the waters of Long Island Sound. The lobstermen believe use of the chemicals kills lobsters. A massive kill off occurred in 1999. Clams and oysters are not affected by the chemicals.

The commissioners assured Tony he could store his lobster boat on its mooring January, February and March in the event he is actively working his lobster traps. Mr. Jessup and the commissioners thanked Tony for his comments. Tony left the meeting at 8:16 p.m.

The minutes of the February 9, 2012, meeting was unanimously approved by the commissioners.

Tammy Papp, administrative support, financial reports showed YTD March 7, 2012 income of \$17,100 and expenses \$2,980.92.

Dirk Leasure reported on his briefing of the five member Town of Darien Board of Selectmen regarding Five Mile River Commission activities. Mr. Leasure talked about the mission of the commission, the status of the law suit with a marine service provider, plans for future dredging of the river, pollution in the river and other key issues.

A general discussion then ensued regarding what needs to be done to prepare for the next dredging of the river such as taking sounding in the northern section of the river, hiring a marine consultant to oversee the permitting process and spot dredging rather than doing the whole river. It was suggested that the commission start a newsletter to create awareness about the need for dredging among boat owners, community organizations, waterfront property owners, as well as Darien and Norwalk government representatives. Inviting the Sixth Taxing District and the Darien Selectmen to attend a future meeting also was suggested.

Wim Jessup directed the harbor superintendent to put together a list of marine consultants who could be asked to propose to the commission how they would help in managing the dredging of the river and what they would charge.

A discussion of the current lawsuit ensued with unanimous agreement that the ten service moorings in dispute should be immediately assigned to boat owners on the wait list.

It was also the sense of the meeting that the harbor use fee be increased to \$200 for all boats berthed in the river in an effort to accumulate additional funds for future dredging given that federal assistance may not be available. .

The meeting was adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

The next meeting of the commission is April 26, 2012.

All meetings are held in the Boardroom of the Rowayton Community Center, 33 Highland Ave., Rowayton, CT beginning at 7:30 p.m.

Remaining 2012 scheduled meeting dates are: June 7, September 20 and November 15

Respectfully submitted,

Ray Meurer
Harbor Superintendent