

Housatonic River Estuary Commission (HREC)

Representing the towns of Shelton, Milford, Orange, Stratford, Derby, and Ansonia CT.

To: The Honorable Mark A. Lauretti (Shelton), Benjamin G. Blake (Milford), James Zeoli (Orange), John Harkins (Stratford), Anita Dugatto (Derby), and David Cassetti (Ansonia)

From: Bob Gesullo, Chairman of the Housatonic River Estuary Commission (HREC)

Date: December 4, 2014

2014 HREC Year-end Summary Report

This report is intended to summarize the 2014 activities of Housatonic River Estuary Commission (HREC), which is authorized under the State of Connecticut General Statute Sec.25-170 (Chapter 483b) to work collectively with each of these towns as the stewards for the river for which each of these towns share borders. The Commission has been established since 2007.

The Commission is composed of one representative from each town may study any issues relating to the Housatonic River and may make such recommendations as may be necessary to maintain, protect and restore the resources of the estuary of the Housatonic River. *This is a forum in which the these communities regardless of their own local or similar efforts, come together without borders to collectively work together for one common goal, the stewardship of the Housatonic River.*

MISSION STATEMENT

"Our mission is the stewardship of the Housatonic River Estuary and its tributaries to both restore and protect the interest of the Housatonic River in the communities of Shelton, Ansonia, Derby, Orange, Stratford and Milford, Connecticut. This is the forum in which the these communities, regardless of their own local or similar efforts, come together without borders to collectively work with one voice in the common goal for the welfare and the valued resources of the Housatonic River. This will include the collaboration and interactions with other similar local or state organizations that also work to protect, the immediate area as well as the entire length of the Housatonic River and its tributaries as it may then affect one or all our communities at-large. Our mission is to support and foster the many components of this stewardship, including but not limited to restoration, conservation, preservation, recreation, and economics as these actions/intentions relate to the River's ecology, environment, economic development/planning and historical/cultural values. We will seek to find collective, balanced solutions to provide equal value to these components as a strategy to promote continued restoration and responsible economic development of the estuary, and to protect against any future threats, changes or adverse impacts."

The following is an update and summary for 2014:

- At the end of 2013 the Commission decided to temporarily "step down" due to lack of member participation. Only two meetings were held during 2014. The November meeting was the only one with a quorum.
- The Towns of Ansonia, Orange and Stratford were contacted requesting participating replacement members to be appointed.

- The Town of Orange responded by appointing Eric Tashlein as their representative member.
- Edward Scinto was recently appointed to represent the Town of Stratford. Edward is also the Chair of the Stratford Waterfront Commission.
- The Town of Ansonia has not responded and has not yet replaced their non-participating member.
- The HREC website has been updated with news and information throughout the year. (**www.TheHREC.org**)
- HREC commissioners continued their outreach efforts by attending and participating in related meetings with the Harbor Commissions, the CT DEEP, CT Sea Grant, and the Long Island Sound Assembly (LISA). Several commission members serve on various other related commissions and provide valuable information and communication between the groups.

The commission has an established small fund covering the website and ancillary expenses thanks to the towns of Milford and Shelton. No additional funds were requested for 2014 and no funds will be requested for 2015.

Plans for 2015 include:

- Completing the appointments of members so that the Commission may be active once again.
- Continuing to review and comment on State applications for permitted activities in the river and its watershed.
- Continuing to support the annual Housatonic River Clean-up.
- Continuing to support research and restoration efforts by Sacred Heart University at the mouth of the river.

The commission is dedicated to its mission and truly appreciates the support of the local leaders of the towns it represents. Please feel free to contact your town Commissioner as listed below, for any issues relating to the River.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Gesullo

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Lori Romick, Vice Chair - Milford, lromick@optonline.net, Cell: 203-214-4637

William Rohland - Derby

Eric Tashlein - Orange

Scott Corner - Member-at-Large

Edward Scinto - Stratford

Vacant - Ansonia