

Housatonic River Estuary Commission (HREC)

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

HREC Minutes

*Regular meeting of the Housatonic River Estuary Commission
Tuesday, January 29, 2013
6:30 pm at the Parson's Complex, Milford, Connecticut*

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Bob Gesullo at 6:30 PM.

The members present were:

Bob Gesullo, Chairman - Shelton

Lori Romick, Vice-Chairman – Milford

Scott Corner, Member-at-Large

2. Public Portion

No one from the public spoke.

3. Approval of the November 2012 Minutes and Annual Report were approved by electronic vote by all except Bill Urban (no response). Since there was not a quorum an e-mail request for an electronic vote to approve these January 29, 2013 minutes will be sent out.

4. Finance Report

Bob Gesullo reported that is currently approximately \$6,291.00 in the account. Bob and Lori submitted letters to Shelton and Milford requesting only \$500.00 each for 2013. No donation was made to Sacred Heart University during 2012 so the three commissioners discussed making a donation during 2013. Lori will request an update on the study and a description of a piece of equipment that SHU may need a donation for as part of the river study. Another \$500.00 donation will also be planned for the 2013 River Clean-up scheduled for April 27, 2013.

5. Website

Bill Rohland is still away at FEMA and will update the website as soon as he can with the annual report and the 2013 meeting schedule. He will give Bob an invoice for the web-hosting fees for 2012 when he returns.

6. Commissioner's Reports –

Bob Gesullo - Shelton

Bob sent a letter to Mayor Zeoli of Orange requesting appointment of a replacement HREC commissioner that will actively participate. The names of two orange residents were submitted for consideration. Bill Urban has still not been to a meeting in a very long time nor has he had any regular communication with the commission.

Scott Corner – Member-at-Large

Scott suggested requesting Milford to have two dumpsters placed at the Riverview Bistro restaurant for the River Clean-up. A payloador would also be useful if Milford would allow it to be moved out of town.

Scott discussed the dredging and that 63,000 yards were removed from the channel but that much of that has already filled back in after Hurricane Sandy. Additional dredging will be needed. Stratford fared better after Hurricane Sandy than after Tropical Storm Irene.

Lori Romick – Milford

Lori had sent requests to Sacred Heart University for an update on the debris study and to ask if there was any specific equipment that they needed.

The Long Island Sound Assembly Annual Report would be out the next week.

Tim Visel sent comments on the need for dredging to the DEEP and USACE.

Lori will also send out a request to Steve Johnson for an expanded clean-up along the shore in Milford during the River Clean-up event.

7. New Business -

Lori presented a copy of the CT Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Summary of Legislative priorities.

She suggested a similar summary be submitted from the HREC annually to our local politicians. Both Bob and Scott agreed and felt that priority items for the river would include: dredging, enforcement, debris and water quality.

8. 2013 Meeting Schedule –

It was decided that the current schedule will remain “as is”. Bill Rock requested a change in location for the May 28th meeting due to renovation at the Birdseye USCG Auxiliary building. Both Scott and Bob felt that the renovation would be completed before then. If it is not finished the meeting location will be changed to the Stratford Town Hall. And a notice will go out to the Clerk’s office 48 hours prior. With a sign also posted on the USCGA building.

Scheduled 2013 Regular Meetings for the Housatonic River Estuary Commission (HREC)

Regular meetings are held at 6:30 PM on the last Tuesday of every other month.
The respective Commissioners – Bob (Shelton), Bill Rohland (Stratford), and Lori (Milford)
Will contact their towns to reserve the meeting locations, dates, and time.

Week Day	Date	Time (PM)	Location
Tuesday	January 29, 2013	6:30	Milford Parson’s Building (2 nd floor Conference room B)
Tuesday	March 26, 2013	6:30	Shelton Community Center
Tuesday	May 28, 2013	6:30	US Coast Guard Auxiliary (Birdseye) in Stratford
Tuesday	July 30, 2013	6:30	US Coast Guard Auxiliary (Birdseye) in Stratford
Tuesday	September 24, 2013	6:30	Milford Parson’s Building (2 nd floor Conference room B)
Tuesday	November 26, 2013	6:30	Shelton Community Center

8. Old Business –

None

9. Next meeting – Tuesday, March 26, 2012 at 6:30 at the Shelton Community Center.

10. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 1930 hours.

Amended addition to the minutes:

Report from Bill Rock – Stratford

HREC members,

After reading over the minutes....

Although I was not able to make the meeting , I would like to clarify the dredging situation...

It is true that we dredged 63,000 Cu Yds of material (clean sand) from the channel. This was more than anticipated and exceeded our expectations, but there was little if any re-filling of the channel following Hurricane Sandy. Following Irene hydro-graphic surveys did show an additional 50,000 Cu yrds had flowed down river to the dredge area. This was due to the nature of the storm. It was a rain event up river. The additional water flow brought that material down river where it collected , specifically down river of Pepe's rock.

However Sandy was a wind, wave and tidal surge storm that did not result in down stream depositing in the channel , even though it may have resulted in wave action depositing of sand towards short beach, but this was not in the channel.

Another point is that 2012 dredging operation was a compromise from the original 650,000 cu yard project that would have brought the channel back to a depth of 18 ft throughout the dredge area. A compromise of 14 ft was reached to accommodate all vessels that currently navigate the channel. This "Compromise" was made for budgetary reasons in order to facilitate the beginning of a project that otherwise would have more than likely never been funded. A significant part of the channel had silted in to a depth of 2 and 3 feet half way across the channel. That area has been dredged to 12 to 14 feet.

With that said I am pursuing , on behalf of the Stratford Waterfront and Harbor Management Commission, additional dredging funds from the DOT in cooperation with the DEEP to plan a "phase 2" operation , hopefully later this year as part of a continuing maintenance dredging project to keep those potentially problematic areas dredged to at least 12 to 14 feet and and at the same time aggressively go after other areas that are marginal. Dredging should be an on going process. So far Stratford is the only Connecticut town that has actually made significant strides in maintenance dredging

among the non deep water ports such as New Haven, New London and Bridgeport. BTW Bridgeport is yet to make any headway in dredging its harbor.

IN regard to my making arrangements for room 213 in Stratford town hall for our May meeting, I was operating on information provided in a reply from a request to use the facility that I had made to the president (Walter Case) of the corporation that owns the building. He told me that due to budgetary considerations he did not feel the building would be ready for meetings for another three to six months. As he is in charge of the restoration project , I took him at face value. It matters not to me where we meet. We do need permission , however , to meet at the CG Aux building. I was just trying to avert a situation where a meeting was scheduled in a building that may not open for meetings. IF you would like I will cancel the request for room 213. Please be advised however that this room is a popular meeting room and if not booked in advance may not be available. IF you wish to keep it reserved, I will need sufficient time to cancel the request so another organization that wishes to use it can do so.

Thank you,

Bill Rock
Commissioner from Stratford

Respectfully submitted,
Lori Romick, Vice-chair, Milford Representative

Bob Gesullo, Chair (Shelton) bobge@sbcglobal.net , Lori Romick, Vice Chair (Milford) lromick@optonline.net, William Rock (Stratford), William Rohland (Derby), William Urban (Ansonia), Scott Corner (Member-at-large), Vacant (Orange)