



**HOUSATONIC RIVER ESTUARY COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

**7:00 P.M., Thursday, July 24, 2008
Craft Room 3, Shelton Community Center
Shelton, CT**

1. CALL OF THE MEETING/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Gesullo called the meeting to order at 7:10 P.M.
All in attendance pledged allegiance to the flag.

ATTENDANCE

Robert Gesullo, Chairman, Shelton
Lori Romick, Vice-Chairman, Milford
Phil Marcucio, Commissioner, Derby
Jason Blake, Commissioner, Orange
Jeff Snyder, Member at large, Naugatuck
Scott Corner, Representative Commissioner, Stratford (arrived at 7:20 P.M.)
Bill Urban, Commissioner, Ansonia (arrived at 7:40 P.M.)

Also in attendance:

Marianne Chaya, Clerk, HREC

2. PUBLIC PORTION OR GUEST

None

3. APPROVAL OF THE MAY 22, 2008 MEETING MINUTES

Vice-Chairman Romick MOVED to accept the minutes from the May 22, 2008 meeting. SECONDED by Commissioner Blake. All were in favor; MOTION PASSED.

4. FINANCE REPORT

Commissioner Blake asked Vice-Chairman Romick and Marianne Chaya if they received their checks. Both said yes. He asked if Marianne would continue to email the invoices to him. Marianne mentioned that in the past she would email them to Sandy Nesteriak who would forward it to Finance. It was decided to continue to do that and copy Commissioner Blake.

The balance in the account is \$1976.74. We have received checks from Shelton, Milford, and Derby. Sharon Scanlon was unable to confirm that Shelton has paid, but I know we had to start with some money. I spoke with Orange and they just passed their budget and we are in the budget for the 08-09 year. They said

give us 2-3 weeks and they should have something. We still have not received anything from Ansonia.

I don't have a statement, but I am assuming we spent about \$1000.

When we do our year-end report I will make sure to get a written statement from Finance.

5. COMMISSIONER'S REPORTS – REMARKS AND/OR OUTREACH EFFORTS

Chairman Gesullo reported that he attended the Low Impact seminar held in Shelton on July 1. The Greater Valley Chamber of Commerce handed out a pamphlet on the Housatonic River. The purpose of this meeting was to get us involved in the low impact issue and support it. I don't see that it would be a big deal for us to do that. It was for the municipalities, Commissions and the developers to support this effort and for this to become a policy, not a trend. They had speakers, some of who do this type of work, talking about lawn seeding, tree species, the sewer system and usage of swales. There was a good turnout but they were also disappointed of the representation of the Commissions. They will have this again and were going to work on getting a better representation. They also said they were happy I was there to represent this Commission.

Chairman Gesullo also reported that the public meeting regarding the filling in of the Shelton canal has been cancelled since the applicant has pulled the application.

The other issue is the Dredging Needs study. It was sent out to all the Commissioners and as I read the cover letter I was confused. As it turns out Bill Batell never sent this to the towns/cities. I got the list of whom they sent it to. They sent it to Matties Marina, Ayer's Landing, Beacon Point, Enterprise Yacht Sales, Harbor Valley and River's End Marina. If you read the form it makes sense as to whom they sent it to since it was so specific. You can't answer it from a municipal standpoint. I hope that the marinas respond. I spoke with Bill Rock from Stratford and he said this is a waste of time for us. We were expecting something else. When we went to the Maritime Commission they were preparing something similar that would be going to each town.

Commissioner Snyder and Chairman Gesullo discussed what they recalled about the questionnaire and who it would be sent to.

Chairman Gesullo commented that Rick Dunne (VCOG) sent it to the towns. There was discussion of how to maybe answer the questionnaire, for instance using Beacon Point in Shelton and the riverfront park area and the municipalities using the local businesses as examples.

Commissioner Blake asked about the dredging on the river and they noted that the dredging already took place at the power plant. They are now talking about the Route 1 bridge out.

Commissioner Corner said that what the Stratford Harbor Commission has been asked to do is to give a list of the boats on the river and the depths of the boats. A letter was sent to the Devon Power Plant to ask them if they have any

intentions of bringing the barges back up the river. The answer is no. They said they may use jet fuel and have to redo the generators. If that happens they will dredge it back to 18-20'. Bill Rock is going to be sending a request to Milford for a list of boats on their side and their depths. We would send it to Shelton but since there is no Harbor Master we don't know who to send it to. Chairman Gesullo said to send it to him and he would forward it on.

There was discussion of the dredged material, where it needs to go and the movement of the material.

Vice-Chairman Romick asked the Commissioners if in the survey, they knew of anywhere in the Housatonic (public access points) that is not going to get a survey response that needs consideration? Commissioner Corner said that the municipalities have to fill it out for the moorings, which would be filled out by the Harbor Master. Commissioner Snyder commented that the Shelton ramp needs to be done over. Vice-Chairman Romick stated that if no one is going to fill the survey out for the Shelton ramp maybe we should do it for them.

Chairman Gesullo read Bill Rock's email regarding the form and concluded that he said thru his Commission he has asked Jeff Stedman, their consultant, to investigate the survey so that a form can be created to reflect the needs of organizations like Harbor Management Commissions and our Commission.

Chairman Gesullo said it seemed that the Army Corps was satisfied with Stratford and Milford but sent this on to Shelton, Orange and Derby. I would suggest that Milford talk with their Commission and see if they are taking any action. Is there anything we should do in our own towns?

Commissioner Snyder suggested doing something about the ramp in Shelton and to contact Parks & Recreation.

Chairman Gesullo concluded his take on the dredging survey that it is directed towards private facilities and wasn't meant to be public. Each Commissioner will check in their own towns to see if they are going to respond.

The Commissioners discussed what type of work is going to go on at Beacon Point in Shelton.

Chairman Gesullo asked Commissioner Corner what kind of dredging would take place in Stratford. He said that there will be dredging and that they have done the test samples and surveys.

Commissioner Blake reported that Milford harbor dredging has been stalled because of information they are waiting from DEP. This is the dredging of the duck ponds and going up to the Wopowog. The mouth of the harbor was dredged last year.

Commissioner Snyder reported that HVA (Housatonic Valley Assoc) in conjunction of the low impact development issue is trying to set up a water testing program in the river utilizing the boats from the members of FOTHR (Friends of the Housatonic River). This will be simple type of sampling to get data points.

Vice-Chairman Romick said there is grant money available for this type of work. The list of impaired water bodies that I emailed everyone noted that the

Housatonic is not being funded right now, no one is running the water samples and there is money available. DEP is providing the grant money. There is a group called Harbor Watch in Westport that has a state certified lab and federal EPA certified lab. The samples could be processed at that location.

Commissioner Blake asked how the samples are taken and Vice-Chairman Romick explained how it is done and she could certify the Commissioners if they wanted to do it.

Chairman Gesullo asked Vice-Chairman Romick how to access the results for the Commission's benefit.

Commissioner Urban said he complained to his town about them not sending their contribution to this Commission's fund. He said he is very disturbed because he was asked to volunteer for this Commission and the town is not reciprocating in kind. Chairman Gesullo asked Commissioner Urban for a phone number to make a call to help move this process along.

Tape 1, Side B

Vice-Chairman Romick discussed some of her involvement with other groups, such as the National Conservation Service, Norwalk river plan and stream corridor restoration project. She is also on the Westport watershed commission, which has developed a watershed plan that includes buffers, sampling and water quality issues. This may help us some time down the line if we start getting involved with these other groups along the river this will give us some kind of "cook book" information that we can use to promote what can happen along the river for improvements.

She mentioned that we have two DEP representatives; one is Jack Goucher, who was going to try and make one of our meetings. I have been emailing him our minutes.

Commissioner Urban commented that he is concerned about the coordination of the information, such as the sampling, and who in the DEP is going to maintain the data library so that we can have good results with the EPA and the government. Vice-Chairman Romick responded that the database is very good now and you can get on it through the CT State Library (Magic system).

Commissioner Urban asked who in the department is going to do this? They keep shedding personnel.

6. NEW BUSINESS/OLD BUSINESS

Chairman Gesullo brought up the topic of the Commission's annual report. He would write the draft but each Commission will need to edit it. This is going to also set the direction for next year. There was discussion last meeting of who should receive this report, and the method (hard copy or email).

Commissioner Urban suggested that the VCOG should received a copy or two as well. Vice-Chairman Romick also suggested sending one to HVA and the Harbor Masters and the Town Clerk's. Chairman Gesullo suggested the heads of each Commission as well.

After discussion it was determined that each Commissioner will email their list of who needs a copy of the report.

The report will be reviewed and approved by each Commissioner and it will be approved for distribution at the next Commission meeting.

Chairman Gesullo commented that at the Low Impact Development seminar he attended he asked Elaine LaBella from HVA if they were interested in attending our September 25th meeting. He would try to make the arrangements.

Vice-Chairman Romick brought up the idea of a river cruise and they tossed around the idea of doing it maybe in September and Chairman Gesullo said he might be able to arrange it on a Coast Guard Auxiliary boat or Commissioner Blake offered his boat. They talked about maybe inviting some of the local officials on this cruise as well.

7. NEXT MEETING PLACE

Chairman Gesullo asked to have the next meeting at Shelton so they can get the annual report approved and then plan to have future meetings in some of the other towns.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Urban MOVED to adjourn. SECONDED by Vice-Chairman Romick. All were in favor, MEETING ADJOURNED at 8:23 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Marianne Chaya
Clerk, HREC