

MEETING MINUTES OF HARBOR COMMISSION
March 4, 2020

The West Haven Harbor Management Commission held a Regular Meeting on Wednesday, March 4, 2020 in the Harriet North Room, 2nd Floor, City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, CT at 6:30 PM

PRESENT: Commissioners Flynn, McKeon, and Potter, Assistant City Planner Killeen, Commissioner of Planning and Development Messore, and Parks and Recreation liaison Mark Paine. Absent were Commissioners Pacapelli and Pimer.

Call to Order -- In Chairman Pacapelli's absence, Vice-Chairman McKeon served as chair for this meeting and called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM.

ROLL CALL

Approval of Meeting Minutes: Commissioner Flynn made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of February 5, 2020, seconded by Commissioner Potter and passed.

Regular Meeting

1. Update on Boat Launching Ramp Feasibility Study
 - Status of Responses from City, State

Mr. Killeen reported that copies of the letters approved at the last meeting were delivered to the Mayor and members of the Administration seeking their assistance in promoting a meeting with West Haven's state legislators to ask State agencies (DEEP and DOT) to reconsider their original stand on the proposed use of the State property on Kimberly Avenue Extension. This was especially important since members of the Administration had expressed concerns about using the City's Compost Facility as the site for the Boat Ramp. Copies of the concept plans for each site were also provided. Once he hears back from the Mayor's Office, he will notify the Commissioners. It was also noted that there was some discussion of past commitments to the Haven developers for possible use of the Compost Facility for parking.

2. Update on 2019 SHIPP Grant Application

Mr. Killeen reported that the letters to the Governor and key state legislators were sent out over the last week asking their help in moving forward with the 2019 SHIPP Grant approvals. Consultant Steadman had heard that decisions might be made on these grant applications at the Port Authority's monthly meeting on March 17.

3. Discussion of Reclaiming Sand Erosion on Beaches
 - a. Capital Request for Sand Management program – Parks and Recreation liaison Paine stated that he had drafted a five year plan for sand management due to erosion, requesting \$100,000 per year for each year. He noted that the City of Milford has a similar sand reclamation process already, and he would like to see the City be able to do something similar. He will forward this request to the Harbor Management Commissioners for their review and support during the upcoming budgeting process. Commissioner Messore noted that the MARB state review process has had an influence on the Capital Budget.

b. Condition of Beach at End of Prospect Avenue – Mr. Killeen reported that Chairman Pacapelli had called him the previous week to report continuing erosion problems along the beach across from Prospect Avenue. The Commission had sent a communication to the City Administration in the past concerning this issue. At the time, it was determined that the erosion was related to the catch basins in the area becoming clogged. When Mr. Killeen heard from the Chairman, he contacted Public Works, and they sent a crew out to clean out the catch basin in that area. Commissioner McCarthy informed Mr. Killeen that another problem causing the erosion was a problem with the drainage pipe itself. It was noted that this might be the kind of a problem that could be addressed with a sand reclamation program for West Haven. Mr. Paine acknowledged he was familiar with the problem with the drainage pipe from his experience as the Assistant Commissioner of Public Works.

Commissioner Messoro circulated maps and background material on a current legal appeal for some of the shellfish beds in Branford. At issue seems to be who has control over these beds, the State or the Town. He asked if we should be trying to take a more active role with managing West Haven’s shellfish beds. Commissioners and Mr. Paine explained how the City had looked into managing the shellfish beds in the past, and it was learned that the extent and costs of testing and monitoring the shellfish beds was beyond the City’s abilities. Without adequate testing, the City would be liable for denoting recreational shellfish areas. For commercial shellfishing, the City would have to appoint a Shellfish Commission to regulate State-designated shellfish beds.

4. REFERRALS:

There were no referrals this month.

5. REPORTS OF STAFF AND COMMISSIONERS – Mr. Killeen called the Commission’s attention to the recent communication from Barbara Blumeris of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. She had transmitted a recently-completed Final Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement for the New Haven Harbor Improvement Project. Mr. Killeen pointed out that the Project still includes the creation of a salt marsh adjacent to Sandy Point as a proposed beneficial use of dredge spoils from the project. Members noted that the expense of transporting dredge spoils farther out in Long Island at designated disposal sites was costly. Since the Commission had previously raised a number of potential concerns about that marsh creation project, Mr. Killeen suggested that this item be discussed at the Commission’s April meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: 7:26 p.m.

Commissioner Flynn made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Potter and passed.