

TOWN OF FAIRFIELD  
HARBOR MANAGEMENT COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 15, 2022

A Meeting of the Harbor Management Commission (HMC) of the Town of Fairfield was held on Tuesday, February 15, 2022 at 4:30 p.m. in the First Floor Conference Room of Town Hall, 611 Old Post Road, Fairfield, CT, and via teleconference.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Kim Taylor, Chairwoman, Jacob Herschler, Sam Cargill, Doug Metchick, and Bill Perugini. **ABSENT:** Eric Sundman and Don Hyman. **ALSO PRESENT:** Geoffrey Steadman, HMC Consultant; Jeff Engborg, Pequot Yacht Club (PYC); Bryan LeClerc, Harbor Master; Mary von Conta, former HMC Chair; and Thomas Steinke, former Conservation Director.

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. by Chairwoman Taylor.

**SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** December 2021 and January 2022: Jac Herschler *moved*, and Sam Cargill *seconded* to approve the Draft Meeting Minutes of December 21, 2021 as presented: *Motion passed unanimously*. Jac Herschler *moved*, and Doug Metchick *seconded* to approve the Draft Meeting Minutes of January 18, 2022 as presented: *Motion passed unanimously*.

**CHAIRWOMAN'S REPORT:** Chairwoman Taylor reported the following communications:

1. January 19, 2022 email to Stephen and Kellie Panus expressing regret that the HMC at this time is not able to provide approval for their proposed installation of a memorial bench in honor of their son; a policy will first need to be developed for considering such requests.
2. January 20, 2022 meeting with Jim Bradley and Santiago Alfageme representing the Country Club of Fairfield and Geoff Steadman to discuss dredging the federal channel at the entrance to the harbor.
3. January 20, 2022 email from Coral Siligato, Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) Project Manager, announcing that ACOE has received \$1.2+ million in funding from the IJA for dredging Southport Harbor.
4. January 25, 2022 email from Suzy Bradford of RACE transmitting the COP issued by DEEP to the Country Club of Fairfield allowing seawall repairs in Southport Harbor
5. February 1, 2022 web-ex meeting with ACOE and DEEP to discuss ACOE plans for dredging the channel. Participants included Coral Siligato, Todd Randall, and Matthew Mroczka from ACOE; Sue Jacobsen, Colin Clark, Sue Baily, and Kristal Kallenberg from DEEP; and Geoff Steadman.

**HARBOR MASTER REPORT:** Mr. LeClerc: Harbor Master Bryan LeClerc reported that the individuals who have not responded regarding their mooring renewals will be contacted by telephone. There may be a loss of 1 or 2 mooring locations because they encroach on the channel. Six waitlist renewals are under review (awaiting payment); the Harbor Master is currently working with PYC on matters regarding the current assignment list.

**PRESENTATION:** Southport Harbor Presentation Historic Navigation Project on the Connecticut Coast: Mr. Steadman provided an informative presentation concerning the history of the Southport Navigation Project. Mr. Steadman reported that Southport Harbor was one of the earliest navigation projects authorized by U.S. Congress in U.S. History. Mr. Steadman noted that he had reviewed various historical documents including those maintained at the State Library, national Archives, and ACOE Archives, discussed the importance of dredging as well as the previous dredging projects. This informative presentation can be heard by listening to the recording of the February 15<sup>th</sup> meeting: [Harbor Management Commission - 2/15/22 - YouTube](#), and can be viewed here: [Federal Navigation Project History 2.10.2022.pdf \(fairfieldct.org\)](#)

**NEW APPLICATIONS:** None.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

1. **LOWER WHARF PROJECT:** Mr. Steadman: Mr. Steadman reported that he is continuing to compile information the finance department needs to act on the request to re-purpose the CT Port Authority grant funds for the re-designed project which no longer includes dredging in and around the boat launching ramp.
2. **SAND MANAGEMENT PROJECT:** Mr. Steadman: Mr. Steadman is continuing to work with the ACOE for the restoration of the 100' channel and will keep the HMC apprised of any new developments. There are two components, restoration of the 100' channel and how can we best manage the sand accumulations over the top of the jetty in the future. A productive web-ex meeting with ACOE and DEEP representatives was held; site visits are being planned.
3. **MOORING COMMITTEE:** Bill Perugini: *(Discussed following new business)*. Mr. Perugini reported on this matter as he had chaired the Mooring Committee meeting in Mr. Herschler's absence on February 7<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Perugini reported that the Committee had received a report from the Harbor Master outlining the status of the 2022 mooring permits and wait list responses. The Committee also reviewed the USGS request for the installation of a water quality monitoring buoy.
4. **PLAN UPDATE COMMITTEE:** Chairwoman Taylor provided an update. A key component of the revised plan will include the ACOE dredging plan and a plan for sand management.
5. **STATUS AND SCOPE OF HMC'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR LOWER WHARF:** Chairwoman Taylor noted that she has not yet received a response from Town Attorney on this matter.
6. **HMC 2022-2023 BUDGET REQUEST:** Chairwoman Taylor indicated that she has not yet received any meeting dates. Sam Cargill will participate in any future hearings/presentations relative to the HMC budget.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. US GEOLOGICAL SURVEY – Plans for Water Quality Monitoring Buoy [USGS buoy2 - MAP.pdf \(fairfieldct.org\)](#): Chairwoman Taylor reported that the USGS recently submitted a request for the installation of a two year water quality monitoring buoy in outer channel of Southport Harbor. A DEEP permit is required. Harbor Master LeClerc has received documentation for the buoy, and reported that the plans have gone through various changes. A number of issues are being reviewed including location, specifications of mooring tackle used to secure the instrument, water depth, and whether the instrument will be secure during storms. First Selectwoman Kupchick forwarded the USGS application for a DEEP permit to Conservation Director Tim Bishop for his review and consideration relative to any Conservation/Shellfish resource concerns. The application requires a sign-off by the First Selectwoman or her designee. Harbor Master LeClerc does not feel that the installation between buoys 9 & 11 would have a significant impact on navigation. Chairwoman Taylor inquired whether there would be an opportunity for the HMC to receive and review the resulting water quality reports. It was the consensus to defer identification of any adverse impacts to the Harbor Master and Conservation Director Bishop. During the course of the meeting, Harbor Master LeClerc received an email from David Armstrong of the USGS. This email confirmed that placement of the buoy will be on the west side of the channel and between buoys 9 & 11. The specifications were reviewed including the size (25' wide); that it will have solar panels; and be secured by 2 mushroom anchors. The USGS intends to have this operational in April. Harbor Master LeClerc will investigate whether a Harbor Master permit should be required and indicated he would issue a permit if necessary. As a condition of approval, the USGS is requested to provide the HMC with reports concerning the collected water quality data. Following this discussion, Sam Cargill **moved** and Jac Herschler **seconded** to recommend to the First Selectwoman or her designee execute on behalf of the Town of Fairfield the USGS application to the Connecticut DEEP for the installation of a water quality monitoring buoy structure to the west of the channel into Southport Harbor, in the HMC's jurisdiction, at a location to be agreed upon by the Harbor Master. Harbor Master Leclerc will forward the location drawings that he received from the USGS to Jeff Engborg and Chairwoman Taylor for their review. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Mary vonConta inquired whether the USGS will remove the equipment when a hurricane or nor'easter is anticipated. Harbor Master LeClerc will review this with the USGS.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business to come before the Commission, Jac Herschler **moved**, and Bill Perugini **seconded** to adjourn at 5:45 p.m. **Motion passed unanimously.**

The audio recording can be found here: [Harbor Management Commission - 2/15/22 - YouTube](#)

Respectfully submitted,

Betty Gabriel