

Five Mile River Commission
July 19, 2018 Meeting Minutes
Norwalk City Hall, Room 101
Norwalk, CT

Commission members in attendance:

Matthew Marion - Chairman
Dirk Leasure (by phone)
John deRegt (by phone)

David Snyder, Harbor Superintendent
Steven Bartush, Assistant Harbor Superintendent

Absent: Commissioner Wim Jessup

The Five Mile River Commission meeting commenced at 7:30 with a quorum of Commissioners participating. Upon motion by Chairman Marion, the Commission unanimously voted to ratify its prior approval of the June 7, 2018 meeting minutes, which had been filed electronically with Darien and Norwalk within the statutory period shortly after the Commission's May meeting.

In his opening remarks, Chairman Marion discussed the need to enforce, and improve communications about, the Five Mile River "No Wake" zone based on the commissioners' observations of harbour traffic in the river this summer. He noted the importance of the Harbor Superintendent's presence on the river, directly or through assistants, whenever practicable to encourage compliance, and also the usefulness of additional "No Wakes" signs. Signage will be ordered and installed by Harbor Superintendent Snyder in the next two weeks.

Harbor Superintendent Snyder then proposed that the Commission vote on a patrol boat operating budget that he had submitted prior to the meeting. Under the proposed arrangement, Mr. Snyder would purchase and retain ownership of a skiff for exclusive use by the Harbor Superintendent, his deputies, and the Commissioners on Five Mile River patrols, and the Commission would reimburse him for the boat's insurance, fuel, and other ancillary expenses according to the budget. The Commission unanimously approved the budget and thanked the Harbor Superintendent for his considerable efforts in this regard.

Next, the Chairman discussed the protocol for reporting emergencies on the river, recommending that Norwalk Marine Police should be contacted in the first instance along with the Harbor Superintendent. He noted that cellular phone calls to "911" are routed away from Norwalk initially due to limited cell tower access. Thus, contact details are different for cellphone users. The contact numbers that the Commission and Harbour Superintendent will use are:

Norwalk Marine Police: 203-854-3076
Coast Guard Eaton's Neck: 631-261-6959
Emergency (landline): 911
Darien Marine Police: 203-662-5300
Marine VHF: Channel 16

Chairman Marion praised the efforts of Assistant Harbor Superintendent, Steve Bartush, the Norwalk Shellfish Commission, and the Department of Agriculture in removing several dozen unauthorized oyster traps recently found on both shores of the Five Mile River. Assistant Harbor Superintendent Bartush reported that as of the July meeting, 2/3rds of the unpermitted oyster traps had been removed and the balance would be removed within a few days. The traps are now in the possession of the state of Connecticut, and their owner has not yet acknowledged ownership. The Commission will remind river users in the next newsletter that the Five Mile River is an aqua-culture free zone.

Next, the Commission reviewed the Harbor Superintendent Snyder's recommendations related to the mooring field. The Harbor Superintendent circulated written proposals and supporting documents. Full review of those recommendations was tabled until the Commission's September meeting. The status of a Transient Mooring program was then discussed and Chairman Marion agreed to finalize DockWa papers allowing the Commission to manage the mooring online.

Harbor Superintendent Snyder reported on the Commission's current financial results based upon income from the mooring and dock users, as well as current expenses, and noted that the results were nearly identical to the late July 2017 results.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm. The Commission's next meeting is scheduled for September 6, 2018 at 7:30 pm at Norwalk City Hall, Room 101, 125 East Avenue, Norwalk Connecticut.

Respectively submitted, David Snyder, Harbor Superintendent.