

Mayor's Water Quality Committee Agenda

For July 1, 2021

- a. Call to order;
- b. **Roll call;** Steve Bartush, Jim Bartley, Bill Mooney, John Crespo, Diane Lauricella, Dick Harris, Pete Johnson, Chris Malik, Harry Rilling, John Romano, Joe Schnierlein, Geoff Steadman, Louise Washer
- c. **Communications;**
 - DEEP
 - Dept. of Transportation via Shellfish Comm.
 - Dept. of Aquaculture
 - Dept of Health
 - Harbor Commission
- d. **Old business;**
- e. **New business;**

1) Mission Statement from Jim Bartley and Geoff Steadman

The purpose of the Norwalk Mayor's Water Quality Committee **1** is to objectively analyse the waters of Norwalk Harbor, and to suggest measures to protect and improve the quality of its waters. Findings and recommendations formulated by the Committee, shall be shared with all appropriate City agencies/commissions, notably the Norwalk Harbor Commission and the Norwalk Shellfish Commission, who act as the regulatory guardians of Norwalk Harbor. In addition to ongoing communications with the aforementioned parties, the committee shall provide an annual report and recommendations of their findings.

2) Review of Recommendations to be passed on to Harbor Commission, Shellfish Commission Planning and Zoning, Health Dept., Water Dept., Dept of Public Works. etc

- a) Eliminate all PFAS and PFOS from drinking water either by filtration, drilling new wells or better collection of rain water.
- b) Provide drinking water that does not contain sediments/dirt in it
- c) Reservoirs must be able to store enough drinking water for growing population's demand during dry periods. This means possibly making them deeper, wider or longer. Deeper is the best option as the surface area of water will remain the same and less water will be lost during evaporation.
- d) Reduce growth rate of Norwalk so water supply, sewage treatment and other City services are not strained.
- e) Where ever possible create a buffer zone between roads and buildings and water. 50+ feet or more would be ideal.
- f) Where ever storm drains enter Norwalk's water, even if on private land, they must comply with city and state standards and permitting process.
- g) Set up a water quality monitoring station that is capable of monitoring temperature, dissolved oxygen, salinity, turbidity and nitrogen 24 hrs. a day and data is downloadable from a website real time by anyone. This station should be able monitor surface water (1 meter) and bottom water (1/2 meter).

- h) Hire two interns to walk, paddle, or use drone surveillance to identify and map shoreline drains in Norwalk visible during low tide. The last time this was done was 1991.
- i) Collect water samples from storm drains that have not been previously tested and have them tested for bacteria, as well as other harmful ingredients that might be detrimental to humans and aquatic life.
- j) Continue testing the drains that have been identified as problem drains, and have the bacteria tested for whether or not is human or other source (avian, rodents)
- k) Eliminate all construction, homes and buildings in all areas designated as flood prone areas.
- l) Ensure adequate tree canopy in Norwalk, especially along waterways as the trees help stabilize banks and keep the water cooler, thus helping keep dissolved oxygen in the water.
- m) Expand the Health Dept. Lab to do more environmental testing
- n) Anything else.

f) Public comments

g) Reading and approval of minutes from 6-3 21 – SEE BELOW.

H) Next meeting tentatively August 5, 2021 or cancel?

I) Adjournment.

CITY OF NORWALK
MAYOR'S WATER QUALITY COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 3, 2021

ATTENDANCE: OTHERS:

Joe Schnierlein, Chair; Steve Bartush, Jim Bartley, John Crespo, Dick Harris, Pete Johnson, Diane Lauricella, John Romano, Geoff Steadman

Thomas Closter.

This meeting was conducted by Zoom Teleconference.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Schnierlein called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. There was a quorum present. COMMUNICATIONS:

DEEP – No report.

Dept. of Transportation via Shellfish Comm. – No report.

Dept. of Aquaculture– Mr. Bartush gave a brief overview of a recent meeting with the Department of Aquaculture involving the restoration of some intertidal shellfish beds. The Department of Aquaculture is interested in doing some survey work, including creation of a database and determining the feasibility of the two sites: the west side of the Five Mile River and the southern terminus of Veteran's Park. Mr. Bartush thanked all those who attended, and Mr. Steadman for his excellent presentation to the group. A brief discussion followed the potential funding, and the issue of clean water vs. clear water.

Dept. of Health – No report. Harbor Commission – No report.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to consider at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

Introduction of Bill Mooney, new Sanitarian from Dept. of Health to WQ.
Farewell

to Tom Closter.

Mr. Schnierlein thanked Mr. Closter for all his hard work.

Update from Dick Harris on Mitten Crabs

Mr. Harris thanked Mr. Closter for all his assistance over the years in his work.

Mr. Harris said that they received another crab, which was a pregnant female. The total is now 15. He said that he would send some pictures and his report to the Committee members.

Mission Statement – Geoff Steadman

Mission Statement from Tom Closter: Notes found from the Harbor Management Plan 2009 Amendment indicate the Mayor formed a Water Quality Committee in the fall of 1990 to analyze pollution problems and recommend measures to protect and improve the quality of water in Norwalk Harbor. The Committee should identify sources of pollution and increase public awareness of water quality concerns. Recommendations formulated by the Committee should be implemented by the Mayor's Office, Common Council, Harbor Management Commission, Health Department, DPW, and other City offices with authorities and responsibilities to protect water quality.

Mr. Steadman said that the Committee is not based on City Code or statute but was based on a recommendation from the Harbor Management Commission to protect water quality. The original mission statement was to "objectively analyze pollution problems and recommend measures to protect and improve the quality of water in Norwalk Harbor and along Norwalk's Long Island Sound shoreline." The Committee was to investigate solutions and sources of pollution and prepare recommendations for implementation by the Mayor, the Common Council, the Harbor Management Commission, the Shellfish Commission, DPW and other City agencies with authorities and responsibilities to protect Water Quality.

Mr. Steadman said that the original motivation for this were complaints that the Waste Water Treatment Plant was polluting the Harbor. It turned out that the storm drains were a major source of the bacteria in the Harbor.

Ms. Lauricella said that Terry Backer had indicated there were some issues with the Waste Water Treatment Plant at the time. Mr. Schnierlein noted that there were also a number of beach closures that impacted the shellfish beds. Canada geese were another source of e-coli via their feces.

Mr. Schnierlein stated that if anyone had any potential changes to the mission statement, they should email it to the members for discussion at the next meeting. Discussion followed.

Norwalk River Watershed Initiative to have meeting on July 9 via Zoom.

Mr. Schnierlein announced that the Norwalk River Watershed Initiative would be reforming via a Zoom meeting on June 9th at 3 p.m. Discussion followed about adjusting the timing of the meeting.

Recommendation to City for future discharges from private neighborhoods into Norwalk waters have approval of DPW, Harbor Commission, Shellfish Commission.

Recommendation to City to fund another low tide intern survey for discharge pipes into Norwalk waters.

Mr. Schnierlein said that these recommendations had come about because of the issues at Wilson Point. He said that having the intern survey would help in identify the discharge pipes. Mr. Steadman suggested that they consider redirecting the Harbor Watch interns onto the project. Discussion followed about reallocating the resources, which would be approved by the Health Department in conjunction with Harbor Watch. Ms. Lauricella had several suggestions regarding how the project should be handled. She will draft a summary of her remarks for the Committee. Discussion followed regarding follow up on submitted "as built" plans.

The discussion moved to the upcoming Shellfish Commission meeting where the issues regarding the Norwalk Yacht Club marina was on the agenda. Mr. Schnierlein noted that while there had been accusations of pollution, there was no documentation of it.

Ms. Lauricella said that the Water Quality Commission should encourage citizens who have concerns. Discussion followed about previous investigations. Ms. Lauricella objected to any negative language regarding this complaint and pointed out that there was citizen science involved. Additional discussion followed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There was no one from the public that wished to comment at this time. READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM 5-6-21.

** MR. BARTLEY MOVED THE MINUTES OF MAY 6, 2021.

** MR. HARRIS SECONDED.

** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 6, 2021 MEETING AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Next meeting tentatively July 1, 2021.

Mr. Bartley asked if it would be possible to meet in person. Mr. Closter said that the administration had not approve in person meetings. Ms. Lauricella stated that she wished to know who was vaccinated.

ADJOURNMENT ** MR. JOHNSON MOVED TO ADJOURN.

City of Norwalk
Mayor's Water Quality Committee Regular Meeting
June 3, 2021

** MS. LAURICELLA SECONDED.

** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m. Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

