

**CITY OF NORWALK  
MAYOR'S WATER QUALITY COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING  
AUGUST 3, 2023**

**ATTENDANCE:** Joe Schnierlein, Chairman; Dick Harris, Diane Lauricella,  
Geoff Steadman

**OTHERS:** William Mooney, Health Department

The meeting was held via Zoom teleconference.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Schnierlein called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

The roll was called. A quorum was present.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

**DEEP** – any one

Mr. Harris gave a very brief overview of the testing costs and their results. Mr. Harris said that they had done some comparative testing of the more expensive (York) and least expensive (Cyclopure) testing kits by the well fields near the new playing fields. The least expensive test yields test results at about 2/3rd of the results from the more expensive test kit results. He gave the details.

**Dept. of Aquaculture** – Steve or Geoff, sampling for Vibrio – Joe

Mr. Steadman said that they had not received written communications from DEEP, there have been discussions with the DEEP staff about the Walk Bridge and potential damage to the shellfish resources. There have also been conversations about the Harbor Master's authority.

Mr. Schnierlein said that he had recently encouraged two Aquaculture staff members at the beach and spoke with them about his concerns about Vibrio. The Department of Health had issued warnings about Vibrio. There has been one death and two others had developed infections. The victim who passed away had eaten shellfish from another state. The other two victims had been wading in the water with open sores on their legs. Mr. Schnierlein asked Mr. Steadman to send the statement to all the Committee members.

**Dept. of Health – Bill**

Mr. Mooney said that the testing at the 15 beach sites had all been good. There have been no reported cases of swimmer's itch.

**Harbor Commission –Geoff**

Mr. Steadman said that the Harbor Master was going to be replacing the mooring conditions. He also provided a brief update on the Plan of Conservation and Development and the proposed zoning changes. There will be many coastal management issues.

Mr. Schnierlein said that he had seen the work crews setting up to remove phragmites between Oyster Shell Park and the Maritime Aquarium. He added that the water temperature by the Aquarium was in the 70's and the oxygen levels were very low. Fortunately, there have been no large schools going up the river.

**Planning and Zoning – Dick Harris**

Mr. Harris said that the local water treatments were trying to get to 10 parts per trillion. He said that it would only be a matter of time before an advisory would be issued for the Norwalk River.  
Mr. Harr

**DPW – treatment plant tour – cancelled.**

Mr. Schnierlein said that Ralph cancelled the tour because only three people signed up.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Directory of who to call – Diane**

Ms. Lauricella said that she had sent out a draft directory and she was contacting any department that might have any involvement with water quality. She said that she hoped to have the final document finished by the end of the year and spoke about possibly having a page on the City website.

Ms. Lauricella said that she had been thinking about how to have anonymous complaints. She will be speaking with the new Communications Director who oversees the Customer Service Department about this. There is a page for the water utility companies on the Health Department website.

**NEW BUSINESS**

a) **PFAS future testing comparison with expensive test vs. less expensive test – Dick**

Mr. Harris said that they did not have enough information on the test results to make a clear decision on which test to use at this time.

Mr. Harris said that there had been a meeting with Save the Sound about the DEEP consent order and the #2 discharge.

**b) Potential zoning changes -still intent on multiple family housing on Water St.**

Mr. Steadman said that there had been quite a bit of interest on this and there would be requirements in the POCD. He said that there had been an earlier zoning change proposal that was rejected by the Harbor Commission. The top area of Water Street would be a mixed use, urban density redevelopment district because it is near the train station. He reminded everyone that the upper portion of Water Street is often subjected to flooding. The Planning Department feels that the properties are of significant value to the City. The goal is to increase the density at the upper harbor but this area is in the 100 flood year zone.

Right now, the Harbor Commission is reviewing the POCD changes. There were also concerns about the future development of Manresa Island.

Mr. Schnierlein said that when he had been teaching, he took a class to a Planning Committee meeting where the development around the Harbor was being reviewed. He said that people were amazed back then to see the development so close to the water with no consideration for flooding.

Ms. Lauricella said that it was still not too late to submit comments to the Planning Department. Ms. Lauricella mentioned a meeting that had taken place the night before and noted that there were errors in the contaminated properties study. She said that she would like to speak to Mr. Steadman about the issues she identified. Ms. Lauricella then gave an example some of the brownfield sites. Discussion followed about the potential of the Harbor Commission holding a public meeting.

**c) Update on progress made on CT DEEP Sewer Violations: Invite WPCA Staff or DPW Council Chair Barbara Smyth - Diane's request**

Ms. Lauricella said that she had located an article about the April 2022 consent order, which is enforceable. She said that she was sure that Mr. Cole and the City were aware of this and working on it. There is an Ann Street siphon and some issues with the microscreens at the treatment plan. She said that she wished to know if any progress had been made and if funding had been set aside.

Mr. Harris said that plans had been submitted to the DEEP and the City was waiting to hear back. Ms. Lauricella said that she had hoped that one of the other City officials would be present to speak about this. She said that they should find a way to have an update on this. Recently, she

noticed a number of “flushable” wipes, which often cause problems. Mr. Schnierlein said that the Committee had been invited to attend the WPCA meetings.

**d) Climate change, heat, and WQ: Brief general discussion about current and near-future effects – Diane’s Request**

Ms. Lauricella said that this discussion could be held next month since the Committee has such a wealth of knowledge and should be educating the public. She suggested they think about it for the future.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There was no one from the public who wished to address the Committee at this time.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**• July 6, 2023**

The following corrections were noted:

Page 1, under **Communications, Department of Health**, line 2: please change the following from:

“Mr. Schnierlein discussed, Mr. Harris did a sample a few weeks ago due to red water. Milford waters contained red algae and a note was sent to Diana.”

To: “Mr. Schnierlein said Mr. Harris had picked up a sample and delivered that sample containing the red algae to Milford. Mr. Schnierlein said that he had sent a note to Diana because the test results indicated there was *Provost stromium* minimum, which is a hazardous algae bloom. Mr. Schnierlein’s concern was that he had encountered two dog walkers at Taylor Farm. The dog walkers told him their dogs had been swimming and became violently ill within 24 hours. When this was communicated to the head of the DPW, the DPW director informed Mr. Schnierlein that it was a tidal pond. Mr. Schnierlein felt they should have posted a notice that the water was potentially hazardous. Mr. Schnierlein said that he had not followed up with any other dog walkers and no warning was posted. There was a dog show scheduled for that week-end. Mr. Schnierlein did not want any other members of the AKC becoming upset.”

Page 2, under **Old Business**, first bullet point, line 2: please change the following from:

“did not approve the new turf by only 4 votes”

To: “did not approve the new turf by only 49 votes”

**\*\* MS. LAURICELLA MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 6, 2023 MEETING AS CORRECTED.**

**\*\* MR. HARRIS SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 6, 2023 MEETING AS CORRECTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Next meeting is Sept. 7, 2023.

**ADJOURNMENT.**

**\*\* MR. HARRIS MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**\*\* MS. LAURICELLA SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted.

S. L. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Services