

EL Harbor Management Commission

August 18th, 2025, Meeting Minutes

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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Minutes of East Lyme Harbor Management & Shellfish Commission - 08/18/25

Date and time: 08/18/25 07:00 pm to: 08/18/25 07:47 pm

Present: Brooke Stevens, Recording Secretary, Pro Tem, Members Present:, Don Landers, Jim Allen, Secretary, Steve Dinsmore, Chair, Ron Johnson, Suzanne Gonzalez, Absent:, Hull Manwaring, Treasurer, Craig Mason

CC: Absent:, Rick Kanter, Jason Deeble, Ex-Officio, Also Present: , James Spang, Harbor Master

Location: East Lyme Town Hall, Conf. #1

Topics

1. Call to Order

Note Chair Dinsmore called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

2. Approval of Minutes of the Regular Meeting of July 21st, 2025

Note see attachment.

 [Minutes of East Lyme Harbor Management Shellfish Commission 07 21 25.pdf](#)

Decision MOTION (1)

Mr. Allen moved to approve the July 21st, 2025, Meeting Minutes as submitted.

Mr. Johnson seconded the motion.

Motion carried, approved unanimously.

3. Public Delegations

3-1. Delegations from the Public

Note Steve Albert of 35 Nehantic Drive, Niantic introduced himself as a candidate for Mr. Spang's position upon his retirement.

Mr. Albert highlighted his background:

*Licensed 100-ton Master Captain with the Coast Guard; served during 9/11 on harbor security; later served in Cape Cod with a port security unit until 2010.

*Civilian career- Hospital manager for 31 years, holds a master's in leadership, and owns the Black Point Market (seasonal).

*Has lived in Niantic for about 4 years.

Note Mr. Albert asked about the status of repairs to the Harbor Master's boat trailer.

Note The Commission briefly discussed the Harbor Master Boat trailer repairs noting that repairs are pending, with no clear update from Public Works. The Commission approved proceeding independently if needed due to hurricane season urgency.

4. Reports

4-1. Treasurer

Note Mr. Hull was not attendance. The Commission discussed emailing Mitch Nixon for a financial report.

4-2. Ex-Officio- Jason Deeble

Note Mr. Deeble welcomed Ms. Gonzalez and thanked Mr. Albert for expressing interest in the Harbor Master position. He briefly detailed the ongoing discussion regarding a moratorium on new sewer connections and how a public hearing is scheduled for September 3rd, 2025.

Note Mr. Deeble said in terms of the boat trailer he will speak to Public Works.

4-3. Harbor Master

Note Mr. Spang gave his report and some of the following was discussed with the Commission:

- *Implementing a \$25 non-refundable application fee for new applicants (in addition to the \$100 annual fee).

- *Fee structure would align with online mooring practices.

- *Applicants who pay the \$25 fee would be placed on the waiting list.

Note *An invoice was presented for mooring removal in June, with more removals expected this fall.

*Harbor Master training and succession planning discussed; the new candidate will be shadowing Mr. Spang.

5. Old Business

5-1. Shellfish Area Signage

Note This item was tabled.

5-2. River Aquaculture determination

Note This item was tabled.

5-3. Fishing line Disposal Units

Note Mr. Deeble and Mr. Dinsmore discussed the Fish line disposal units. Modifications are underway to prevent misuse (garbage being stuffed inside). The possible addition of garbage cans near the units was also discussed.

5-4. West Black Point Shellfish areas

Note Mr. Dinsmore noted this is going to be a long-term project. He added that Paul Grady, a local resident, is volunteering to assist with meat and water sample collection at West Black Point. Coordination with DEEP and labs in progress.

Note Mr. Dinsmore inquired about shellfish permits and whether the river is still differentiated from the bay. Ms. Stevens clarified that Niantic Bay shellfish permits remain available through the Town Clerk's office and are still separate from river permits.

5-5. SHIPP Proposal

Note Mr. Allen reported that the Connecticut Port Authority small harbor improvement projects are delayed but funding is expected soon.

Note The Commission discussed possible projects which include a feasibility study at Cini Park boat launch.

Note Mr. Allen mentioned two Black Point projects which include the Kayak rack/dock restoration on backside of Black Point as well as the Black Point beach erosion control (major jetty repair). Both groups are preparing documentation and contractor bids to be ready when funding opens.

Note Mr. Allen added that he spoke with Fayola Haynes, the Finance Director of the Connecticut Port Authority, and they hope to have the SHIPP Grant Funds open within the month.

5-6. Review of Mooring Fees

Note Mr. Landers inquired whether it has been determined that a public hearing needs to be held.

Note It was discussed how the Board of Selectmen must formally adopt fee changes; public hearing not required, but public input recommended. Vote scheduled for next meeting before referring to Selectmen.

5-7. POCD

Note Mr. Johnson reported that the POCD (Plan of Conservation & Development) is not due until 2030 and that the Harbor Management Plan was last updated in 2018.

Note Mr. Dinsmore suggested that they may want to add potential long-term projects like the Cini Park day dock, fishing pier, and so forth, to future revisions.

6. New Business

6-1. Requirement of Insurance for moorings

Note The Commission continued their ongoing discussion about requiring mooring holders to carry insurance.

*Past incidents of uninsured boats breaking loose caused high removal costs (e.g., \$25,000).

*Commission funds are insufficient for such liabilities; may need umbrella coverage from town.

*No decision made; Mr. Deeble will do some research and will consult with the First Selectman on options.

6-2. Shellfishing Permits

Note This item was discussed earlier in the meeting.

7. Communications

Note There was none.

8. Adjournment

Decision MOTION (2)

Mr. Allen moved to adjourn the August 18th, 2025, East Lyme Harbor Management & Shellfish Commission Meeting at 7:42 p.m.

Mr. Landers seconded the motion.

Motion carried, approved unanimously.

Note Respectfully Submitted,
Brooke Stevens,
Recording Secretary Pro Tem

Open tasks from previous meeting(s)

Task ☐ Mr. Johnson will review the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) to determine if updates are needed for the Harbor Management section.

*Owned by **Ron Johnson***

Task ☐ Mr. Dinsmore will continue discussions with DABA regarding shellfishing west of Black Point and coordinating water testing.

*Owned by **Steve Dinsmore, Chair***

Task ☐ Mr. Landers will discuss this matter with Mitch Nixon, Deputy Finance Director/Purchasing Agent.

*Owned by **Don Landers***

Task ☐ Mr. Dinsmore said he still needs to prepare a report on the history of commercial aquaculture leases in the river for the Board of Selectmen.

*Owned by **Steve Dinsmore, Chair***