

**CONNECTICUT MARITIME COMMISSION (CTMC)  
REPORT OF MEETING (Mtg. #08-4)  
16 April 2008**

**Location of Meeting:** Bridgeport Regional Vocational Aquaculture School  
Bridgeport, CT

**Attendance:**

**Commissioners**

***Present***

Chuck Beck (for Commissioner Boice)  
Sue Decina (for Commissioner McDonald)  
Tom Dubno  
Judy Gott  
G.L. "Doc" Gunther  
Joseph P. Maco (for TSB Chair Kelleher)  
Joe Riccio  
Martin Toyen

***Absent***

Vincent Cashin  
John Johnson  
Phil Smith (for Secretary Genuario)  
David Shuda  
John Wronowski  
George Wisker (for Commissioner McCarthy)

**Guests**

Jim Bajek	Bill Dwyer	Mike Griffin	Frank Gulis	Jack Karalius	Tony Mobillia
Kevin Oditt	John Pinto	Bill Rock	Dave Rossiter	Joe Salvatore	Bob Sammis
Judi Sheiffele	Geoff Steadman		Alan Stevens	Chris Tymniak	Kurt Walton

**I. Call to Order:**

- The Vice Chair, Joe Riccio, opened the meeting at 9:39. A quorum was not present until the late arrival of the Chairman at 9:55.

**II. Review of Meeting Minutes:**

- After the arrival of the Chairman and a quorum was obtained, a motion to accept the minutes of the 19 March 2008 CTMC meeting was made by Tom Dubno, seconded by Joe Maco and approved by unanimous vote.

**III Discussion Open to Public**

- Bob Sammis provided information about his recent visit to the Panama Canal. He explained the carrying capacity of PANAMAX sized vessels (those that were built to fit through the existing Cana) and the larger post-PANAMAX sized vessels (12,000 containers). The point of Mr Sammis' presentation was that Panama has undertaken a project to improve the capacity of the Canal via infrastructure improvements including dredging the channel in a very short order. An award to remove 7 M cubic yards of material to widen the channel to 750 ft with a depth of 50 feet was solicited and awarded within a 7 month timeframe.
- Jim Bajek, a dredging consultant, provided information on the coordination that has been ongoing among consultants involved in a number of private dredging projects along the CT shoreline. Most if not all of the projects have funding and permits provided that a source of capping material can be found. He stated that the group is looking for State/Federal leadership relative to coordinating details to move dredging projects along this fall. He stated that he had been in talks with Joe Salvatore and is encouraged.

Doc Gunther provided some background information about a 1968-69 effort to establish a Greenwich, CT harbor transit anchorage. He then asked questions of Mr Bajek concerning the scope of the Greenwich dredging projects. Mr Bajek explained that the anchorage and channel projects were two different projects. Doc Gunther provided some additional information on the harbor management bill he introduced years ago (1968).

Tom Dubno provided information on the steps being taken by the CT Maritime Coalition (CMC) relative to dredging the State's waterways. He summarized the CMC's work to form the CTMC as well as establish the Maritime Manager's and the Dredging Coordinator's positions within CONNDOT. He further stated that the CMC has worked hard to insure that the Governor's office, DECD, DEP and CONNDOT are aware of the state's dredging needs. Bill Gash provided some additional information on the Economic Impact Study commissioned by the CMC in coordination with DECD.

**V New Business:**

- Due to a lack of a quorum, it was decided to listen to the presentations scheduled as New Business pending the anticipated arrival of the Chairman and a quorum.

Mr. Robert Gesullo, Chairman of the Housatonic River Estuary Commission (HREC) provided some background information on his organization and the dredging needs of the Housatonic River. He stated that the Commission was proposed in 1990 but not formed until 2007 by CGS Chapter 483(b) Sec. 25-170 to 25-174. The towns of Shelton, Derby, Ansonia, Orange, Stratford and Milford are members. All of the towns are currently represented on the HREC except Stratford. By-laws and a mission statement are in place.

- Mr. Bill Rock, Chairman of the Stratford Waterfront and Harbor Management Commission (SWHMC), provided a detailed timeline of the Housatonic River dredging project starting with the last time dredging was accomplished (1976) up to the present. Mr. Rock read from a document that Doc Gunther requested be "introduced for the record". Mr. Rock provided additional information on the migration of sand from the east (Milford) into the mouth of the Housatonic on an annual basis. He mentioned the proposed plan by the Devon Power Plant just north of the I-95 and Metro North Railroad Bridge to establish two new turbine generators and the potential need to provide fuel via barge which can not be done now due to draft limitations. Mr. Rock also provided information on the recent sale of the Army Engine Plant and the potential for marine related development of the property as well as a commercial dock project adjacent to the existing harbor master facility. Joe Maco made mention of the course of Mother Nature with respect to shifting sands and the formation of coastal sand bars and islands. Doc Gunther produced a 1968 letters from the Housatonic Sand & Gravel Corporation and the U.S. Department of Interior that discussed dredging the Housatonic from 8 miles south the Shelton Dam to a point south of Fowler Island. He submitted the letters "for the record". There is no verbatim record required or kept for CTMC meetings. However, the documents provided by Mr. Rock and Doc Gunther are attached.

Upon his arrival, the Chair asked several questions concerning the Devon Power Plant upgrades and channel depth needs to barge fuel to the Plant. Jack Karalius reported that the last barge trip to the power plant was in 2004. Thus, there is little justification at this time for maintenance of the existing 18 foot channel depth. There was additional discussion on the proposed Devon Power Plant generator improvements as possible justification for dredging among the Chair, Bill Rock and Jack Karalius.

Judy Gott inquired about how presenters' organizations (HREC and the SWHMC) were working together. Mr Gesullo restated the relatively newness of the HREC but added that they were working on a regional approach to the dredging issues. Mr Rock stated that membership by Stratford to the HREC was being delayed by "political matters" but anticipated full membership in the near future. Joe Maco asked what Milford's stand on the Devon Power Plant was since the facility is actually in Milford. He also asked about the involvement of other organizations such as the regional planning organizations (RPO). It was explained that Stratford, Milford and the other members in the HREC were in three different RPOs (Greater Bridgeport Regional Planning Association, Valley Council of Governments and South Central Region Council of Governments).

Mr. Rock stated that the SWHMC was working on establishing a dredging maintenance schedule for routine work to facilitate obtaining annual funding. Joe Riccio reminded all of the attempts by the CTMC through SB 302 to establish a State fund to facilitate long range planning of dredging projects. Marty Toyen emphasized that funding was the key and the purpose of SB 302. However, he misstated the Bond process requiring a correction as to not confuse everybody. Doc Gunter reported that SB 302 had been rolled into the greater Transportation Bill (HB 5746) as a \$5M dredging fund. He emphasized the need for all to contact legislative leadership and the Governor's office to obtain support. He identified and introduced Chris Tymniac, a representative from the Governor's SWCT regional office.

Joe Maco stated that the lengthy permitting process is another issue that needed to be overhauled referring to it as antiquated. Doc Gunther stated that Joe Salvatore as the dredging coordinator should review the permitting process. Bill Rock made mention of the different permitting standards between the Federal and State agencies. Chuck Beck stated that the Federal and State "standards" used relative to acceptable levels of the biological and chemical composition of dredge materials were the same. He explained the difference between standards and management practices as well as the need (pressures by NY, EPA and other organizations) to have and use best management practices for disposing of materials in Long Island Sound. The Chair reminded all that DEP had previously explained the dredge material management issue. He further stated that north coast of Long Island does not have rivers that deposit large quantities of sediments into its channels/harbors. He further made comment on the LIS DMMP as the long term solution. An attempt to get back to the agenda was made.

- Due to the absence of representatives from the City of Bridgeport and Coastline Terminals the scheduled presentations were deferred.
- Gary Montano was introduced as the Chairman of the Milford Harbor Management commission (MHMC). He explained that the mouth of the Milford Harbor was constantly under pressure from migrating sand from the east (West Haven New Haven, etc). Milford used \$100K of its own money to move sand from the eastern break wall back to its origin at the east end of Golf Beach. Milford has had DEP permits to "plow the sand" back to the east but only above the water line. A more long term solution would be to be allowed to dredge material below the water line to re-nourish the eastern end of Golf Beach. Mr Montano repeated the need for a regional approach as well as state financial assistance. Doc Gunther provided information on a recent dredging of Caswell Cove which cost Milford an additional \$140K due to a last minute change in scope of work. There was some additional discussion on the use of Milford Harbor as well as the possibilities of using mud cats. Marty Toyen asked how often the Milford Harbor had to push sand back to the east (yearly) and how many other CT harbors had a similar problem. He was informed most if not all of them.

#### **IV Old Business:**

- Goals and Objective – Information had been provided prior to the meeting about Goals and Objectives, or more accurately the lack thereof. The closest that the CTMC has come to setting goals and objects is the State Maritime Policy Statement which puts dredging and its economic impact as the top issues of the CTMC. Doc Gunther stated that the goals and objectives were good but needed to be strengthened by more emphasis on the river restoration and positive ecological impacts. Judy Gott stated that the CTMC needed to continue to concentrate on dredging, obtaining dredging funding and perhaps permitting issues. All agreed but it was still not clear what document needed to be amended to reflect a greater environmental benefit.

- SB 302 “An Act Concerning Harbor Improvement Projects” - Chuck Beck stated that he had been told that the SB 302 had been absorbed in the Transportation Bill (as previously reported by Doc Gunther) but that he had not seen written confirmation. He repeated Doc Gunther’s previous remark about \$5M being added to the language but had not seen any changes to either HB 5746 or SB 27. Doc Gunther repeated his comments about the need to contact the legislative leaders and the Governor’s office to obtain support.
- LIS LNG Task Force Update – Chuck Beck provided a quick update on the status of the Broadwater project. Several articles were part of the meeting package including the decision by the State of NY to disapprove Broadwater and a more recent article concerning the myth of the alternative offered to Broadwater; i.e. they are not approved at this time. It is expected that Broadwater will appeal to the Secretary of Commerce. It is also expected that CT will continue to fight against Broadwater including law suits.
- Dredging – Although not on the agenda Joe Salvatore was asked for an update on dredging issues. Joe stated that there would be a meeting of the LIS DMMP PDT on 29 April 2008 at CONNDOT HQ in Newington. He also provided information on the questionnaire that was being revamped to be sent out by the ACOE as part of the LIS DMMP development process. There was discussion on the need for all towns to reply to the questionnaire and how the CTMC could facilitate. It was explained that the dredge project coordinator would track replies and reach out to those delinquent. Questions on how to make certain the questionnaire reached the right person within a municipality were raised. Judy Gott stated that the RPOs could assist. Bill Rock suggested that the CT Harbor Management Association could assist. There was additional discussion on the need to make the new questionnaire more user friendly. There was also a decision made based on a recommendation to make a draft of the questionnaire available to the CTMC and interested parties and solicit suggestions.

The conversation drifted away from the dredging update to how many other river estuaries have management commissions. The Chair indicated a need to invite them to make a presentation of issues to future CTMC meetings provided the discussion would be limited to the navigable waters. Mr. Gesullo appreciated the CTMC recognizing the importance of the estuary commissions.

The conversation returned to dredging update. Information was provided relative to an ongoing project in Westbrook Harbor being paid for by municipal funds. The lengthy list of private dredging projects in the queue was discussed. It was asked if all of the private projects were clean material. The response was no.

- Errata – .Chuck /Beck introduced a draft methodology for the CTMC to consider adopting relative to prioritizing dredging projects, particularly the list of private projects that will be looking to slip under the potential capping material offered from the North cove project. The need for prioritizing may be driven by either not enough time to accommodate all of the projects in the queue, not enough capping material and/or not enough dredge companies. The methodology started with a premise that a project would already have all permits/water quality certificates, already be funded and have a contractor line-up. The pecking order for projects would then be as follows: (1) Other federal/state/municipal/public funded projects (2) Projects with the oldest dated permits (3) Projects with the most contaminated dredge materials (4) Projects offering the best economical benefit. There was considerable discussion concerning the need for a methodology, whether the methodology would apply to future dredging projects and other details. The Governor’s representative raised a question about the applicability of the State’s ethics and or lobbying regulations/laws relative to the CTMC selection process. The consensus is that neither would apply since the CTMC is merely an advisory organization to the Governor and DOT Commissioner. Joe Riccio and Joe Maco agreed commenting that the goal of having a known selection criteria would take the politics out of the process. Tom Dubno moved to adopt the methodology. Joe Riccio provided a second. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote. All agreed to keep the concept on the agenda to refine the broader need for prioritizing future projects.

**VI Date of Next Meeting:**

- All were reminded that the next meeting of the CTMC is scheduled at 9:30 AM **Wednesday** 21 May 2008 at the CONNDOT HQ building in Newington, CT.

**VII. Adjournment:**

- A motion was made by Judy Gott, seconded by Joe Riccio and approved unanimously to adjourn. The meeting ended at 11:38 AM.