

Housatonic River Estuary Commission (HREC)

Representing the towns of Shelton, Milford, Orange, Stratford, Derby, and Ansonia CT.

To: The Honorable Mark A. Lauretti (Shelton), Benjamin G. Blake (Milford), James Zeoli (Orange), John Harkins (Stratford), Anita Dugatto (Derby), and David Cassetti (Ansonia)

From: Bob Gesullo, Chairman of the Housatonic River Estuary Commission (HREC)

Date: November 27, 2013

2013 HREC Year-end Summary Report

This report is intended to summarize the 2013 activities of Housatonic River Estuary Commission (HREC), which is authorized under the State of Connecticut General Statute Sec.25-170 (Chapter 483b) to work collectively with each of these towns as the stewards for the river for which each of these towns share borders.

The Commission is composed of one representative from each town may study any issues relating to the Housatonic River and may make such recommendations as may be necessary to maintain, protect and restore the resources of the estuary of the Housatonic River. *This is a forum in which the these communities regardless of their own local or similar efforts, come together without borders to collectively work together for one common goal, the stewardship of the Housatonic River.*

MISSION STATEMENT

“Our mission is the stewardship of the Housatonic River Estuary and its tributaries to both restore and protect the interest of the Housatonic River in the communities of Shelton, Ansonia, Derby, Orange, Stratford and Milford, Connecticut. This is the forum in which the these communities, regardless of their own local or similar efforts, come together without borders to collectively work with one voice in the common goal for the welfare and the valued resources of the Housatonic River. This will include the collaboration and interactions with other similar local or state organizations that also work to protect, the immediate area as well as the entire length of the Housatonic River and its tributaries as it may then affect one or all our communities at-large. Our mission is to support and foster the many components of this stewardship, including but not limited to restoration, conservation, preservation, recreation, and economics as these actions/intentions relate to the River’s ecology, environment, economic development/planning and historical/cultural values. We will seek to find collective, balanced solutions to provide equal value to these components as a strategy to promote continued restoration and responsible economic development of the estuary, and to protect against any future threats, changes or adverse impacts.”

The following is a summary of accomplishments completed during 2013 supporting the mission statement of this commission since its’ establishment in 2007:

- Actively participated for the fourth year in the Housatonic River Clean-up. Organizers reported more than 300 volunteers removed 30 tons of debris which is a record amount for this event. HREC strongly supports the river clean-up and its’ volunteers.

- Submitted written testimony before the legislature supporting HB 6528 - The Clean Marina bill.
- Requested a review of the permit renewal for the Housatonic Wastewater Treatment Facility in Milford which revealed recent DEEP permit violations.
- Submitted a letter of support for a grant application to the CT Department of Agriculture for a river study in Milford to be conducted by the newly formed Wepawaug River Watershed Alliance.
- The HREC website has been updated with news and information throughout the year. (**www.TheHREC.org**)
- HREC commissioners continued their outreach efforts by attending and participating in related meetings with the Harbor Commissions, the CT DEEP, CT Sea Grant, and the Long Island Sound Assembly (LISA). Several commission members serve on various other related commissions and provide valuable information and communication between the groups.
- Requested more of a CT DEEP Encon presence near Wooster Island, Shelton.

The commission has established a small annual stipend funding (operating budget) for recording fees, the website and ancillary expenses and has requested that each participating town support the Commission with these small expenses. ***“We would like to express our gratefulness to the towns of Shelton and Milford for their ongoing support .”***

Plans for 2014 include:

Due to the retirement of commissioners from the towns of Stratford, Orange, and Derby and lack of attendance from the commissioner from Ansonia; the remaining members have decided to “step down” the commission until such time that town leaders can appoint active participating members.

The commission is dedicated to its mission and truly appreciates the support of the local leaders of the towns it represents. Please feel free to contact your town Commissioner as listed below, for any issues relating to the River.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Gesullo

Bob Gesullo, Chairman, Shelton, bobge@sbcglobal.net, Phone: 203-929-6957

Lori Romick, Vice Chair, Milford, lromick@optonline.net, Cell: 203-214-4637

~~William Reek~~, Stratford, 203-377-653

~~William Rohland~~, Derby

Scott Corner (Member-at-Large)

William Urban, Ansonia, 203-735-2341

(Vacant) , Orange