



TOWN OF FREEPORT
Shellfish Conservation Commission
Minutes –Thurs., Nov. 21, 2019, 6:30 P.M.

Members Present: Thomas Bennett, Chris Grimm, Jared Lavers, and Sara Randall

Members Not Present: Megan Hudson, Malcolm McIntosh, and Chopper Sawyer

Staff Present: Charles Tetreau, Shellfish Warden

Public Present: Mike “The King” Brown, Chad Coffin, Jessica Joyce, Dr. John Kraeuter, and Ethel Wilkerson.

Call to Order

Tom Bennett called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Chris Grimm announced that after six years of service on the Shellfish Committee, the last few of which he served as both the Chair and Secretary, he is stepping down. The Committee thanked him for his service and leadership. Warden Charlie Tetreau will inquire with the town as to the appointment process for the vacated seat.

1. Minutes Review and Approval

Upon review of the minutes Randall pointed out that in regards to the Marine Resource Conservation Officer Report, the notable activity on Oct. 3 was the retrieval of 30 recruitment boxes from the cove at Winslow Park by the 7th grade class of Freeport Middle School. The students processed the contents of the boxes and have performed an analysis on the amount of shellfish recruits and survivorship and are able to present their findings at the next Shellfish Committee meeting. Also, “depuration” clamming occurred on Oct. 3 and 6.

Tom Bennett motioned to approve the October 2019 minutes, Jared Lavers seconded. **Vote: 3-0-1 (Grimm abstained).**

2. Marine Officer’s Report

On Oct. 20 there was a shoreline survey conducted and two potential sources of pollution were found. Codes enforcement has been notified.

Nov. 18 recruitment boxes from Cove Rd. were pulled off the mud.

November 18 was the first Casco Bay Regional Shellfish Working Group meeting, which was attended by Shellfish staff from towns such as Brunswick and Scarborough. Warden Charlie Tetreau was the only representative from Freeport.

OLD BUSINESS

3. Weighted commercial license lottery

Motion to table by Randall, seconded by Lavers. **Vote: all in favor.**

4. Update on quahog project

Ethel Wilkerson of Manomet and Jessica Joyce of Tidal Bay Consulting presented information about the project in response to concerns submitted by Dr. John Kraeuter, Committee members and members of the public regarding the project's methodology and ability to provide information that the Committee can use to make management decisions. The project has a small budget, is small in scale, takes place on one site on a tidal gradient that commercial populations of quahogs are not growing, is exposed to air temperatures for longer periods of time than areas in the mid and low intertidal gradient where quahogs are found, and does not differentiate between the possible causes of mortality. These limitations will be documented in the project's final report and it will be up to the Committee to decide if the information is useful. When digging the plots during the target winter air temperatures the time of exposure to air will be estimated. Projects funded by the Maine Shellfish Restoration and Resilience Grant are focused on community engagement as much as they are about research or conservation initiatives.

The project was discussed and public comment was taken. Chad Coffin suggested applying what we already do know about the biology quahogs and the quahog industry to current and future investigations, such as the monetary value of quahogs declining as they grow and GoM temperature increases creating ecological conditions favorable to quahogs.

NEW BUSINESS

5. Consideration of applying for a Limited Purpose Aquaculture (LPA) site

Warden Tetreau recommended applying for an LPA site in light of state rules and to obtain more options and flexibility. The Committee discussed the option.

Sara Randall motioned to apply for an LPA, Jared Lavers 2nded. **Vote: all in favor.**

6. Proposal Ideas for Maine Shellfish Restoration Project RFP

Warden Tetreau advised that the Broadreach Foundation's Maine Shellfish Restoration Resilience and Resilience Project is now accepting grant proposals and ideas for proposals are welcome. He distributed a copy of the RFP. Ideas discussed were a legal review of current, past and possible shoreside access routes and public right-of-ways for clambers to use in light of changed coastal landowner access customs, as well as funding the Middle School students to continue collecting shellfish recruitment and survival data.

There was a discussion about loss of traditional coastal access routes. People expressed frustration and concern about the lack of access to the intertidal. Regarding the draft letter to the town regarding the use of airboats, it was agreed to

rewrite it to tie-in more context like the loss of waterfront access, and to soften the tone before finalizing it.

Mike Brown said if the Committee choose to look into access points that he has in his possession paperwork and documentation regarding paper streets and access routes from when the town went through this process ten to twenty years ago. The Committee is welcome to examine the papers.

7. Adjourn

Chris Grimm moved to adjourn the meeting at about 8:00 pm, seconded by Tom Bennett. **Vote: All in favor.**

