



TOWN OF FREEPORT
Shellfish Conservation Commission
Minutes – June 13, 2019, 6:30 P.M.

Members Present

Thomas Bennett, Chair
Chris Grimm
Jared Lavers, Vice Chair
Malcolm McIntosh
Sara Randall
Dale “Chopper” Sawyer

Members Absent

Megan Hudson, Secretary

Staff Present

Charles Tetreau, Shellfish Warden

Call to Order

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

I. Minutes Review and Approval

A motion was made by Thomas Bennett to modify item 5 of the draft minutes from the May 9, 2019 meeting, “License Allocation for July 2019 - June 2020” to “After further discussion, a motion was made by Thomas Bennett, seconded by Chopper Sawyer, to not re-issue the surrendered license.” Seconded by Jared Lavers.

Vote: 4 in favor, Malcolm McIntosh and Chopper Sawyer abstained.

II. Agenda Items

1. Marine Officer’s Report

Charles Tetreau reported that, at times, there will be two additional police acting as Shellfish Wardens during the summer.

2. Discussion on a Weighted Commercial License Lottery

Discussion regarding asking clammers to do extra conservation time for additional chances to win in the lottery (may be how it is done in Yarmouth). Further discussion that Yarmouth only has a handful of commercial clammers (4-5) and that with Freeport's much larger shellfish program it would make this method unwieldy for the Marine Conservation Officer to coordinate.

Discussion regarding an added fee that would give an applicant a higher chance (more draws in the lottery).

Public comments provided by Cooter Harriman, Chad Coffin (opposed to additional fees for more draws or extra conservation time for more draws), Mike Ashby, Scotty O'Hara, and Lashaya Dibattista.

3. Aging Clammer Population Discussion

Sara Randall discussed the need to provide a way for young clammers to enter the fishery and the evidence of a high interest in obtaining a license (17 applications in the 2019 lottery). She reiterated her position that an apprentice program would meet this need and acknowledged that she heard the concerns from the existing commercial clammers about her original proposal. Sara Randall proposed a pilot apprentice program which would allow 10 active, full-time clammers to have an apprentice.

Public comments provided by:

- Mike Ashby- In support: "Don't close your mind to the young kids."
- Corey Wentworth- he was able to get a license through a lottery so in his opinion there is a mechanism in place to allow new people in.
- Chad Coffin- Chad pointed out that he was on the Freeport Shellfish Committee at the time when young clammers Corey and Jared Lavers received their licenses in the lottery. He reminded the Committee that that year the Committee allocated six licenses to be available through the lottery, ensuring a high probability that those who submitted applications would be chosen. He also reminded the Committee that allocating 6 licenses was very unpopular with the current license-holders at that time as well, but that Committee thought, as guardian of the resource for current and future townspeople, it was very important to allow new entrants.
- Scott O'Hara. Scott remarked that when he first started digging in Freeport there were 100 licenses in the 1980s. You didn't have to win a license in a lottery.
- Cooter Harriman. Said that Randall's first proposal was like a bomb, but he appreciates the fact that Randall listened to their comments at the last meeting and came back with a scaled-down proposal. He is now in support of the idea of a pilot apprentice program. He suggested that the first class of apprentices be 16 people that did not receive a license in the lottery this year.
- Lashaya DiBattista- She has been "yelling for a license for years." It is a dream of hers to obtain a commercial shellfish license. She is very interested. She is in favor of a proposal that would allow young people like her to access the fishery.

- Joe Ashby- It is not easy to get a commercial license in Freeport. He has been putting his name into the lottery for the past 9 years and hasn't won it yet. It is very important to him to be able to carry on his family's fishing heritage.

4. Regional Shellfish Workgroup

Jessica Joyce discussed the Southern Maine Community Sustainability Council's funding of an effort to hold regional meetings with municipal shellfish committees from Biddeford to Bath to discuss 1) best practices, 2) the resource generally, and 3) the possibility of starting an equipment library.

Sara Randall asked about the definition of "best practices" and how that determination was made. Jessica Joyce discussed the possibility that towns award conservation points for meeting attendance to encourage participation. Sara Randall suggested paying clammers the equivalent of a couple bushel minimum (a small day's pay) to compensate for taking time away from working.

V. Adjourn



SHELLFISH

Agenda June 13th 2019

1. Approval of minutes from previous meetings
2. MRCO Report

Open to public comment, three minutes per person

3. Old business
4. Weighted Commercial License Lottery

Open to public comment, three minutes per person

5. What is the plan for addressing the aging clammer population?

Open to public comment, three minutes per person

6. New business
7. Regional shellfish work group (Jessica Joyce)
8. open to public comment
9. Adjournment

