

Shellfish Conservation Committee Minutes

DATE 2/01/2022 TIME: 7:00 PM

MEETING LOCATION: COMMUNITY ROOM

Commission Members:

Attendance: A for absent, P for present

Attendance	Name	Town	Term
P	Stephen Demelle	North Yarmouth	June 30, 2023
P	Kevin Oliver	North Yarmouth	June 30, 2024
P	Len Kaminow	North Yarmouth	June 30, 2024
P	Judy Colby-George	Yarmouth	December 31, 2023
P	Brandy Adams	Yarmouth	December 31, 2022
P	Ben Tupper	Yarmouth	December 31, 2023

Staff Members:

Attendance	Name	Title/Role
A	Will Owen	Shellfish Warden
A	Randy Bates	Town Council Liaison
A	Ari Leach	Dept. of Marine Resources

Guests/Diggers : none

Minutes –

Votes/Quorum: All final votes of the commission shall require the affirmative vote of a majority of those members present and voting provided a quorum is present. A quorum shall be deemed present if a minimum of four (4) members are present. A CHAPTER 305 10 quorum shall be required for the transaction of all business except that a smaller number can adjourn to another time.

Reviewed Minutes for January 4, 2021

Notes to minutes: add Warden’s report to minutes and add note that conservation time should accrue to anyone who attends meetings so we will need to add that to the conservation points.

Vote taken, 6 for, 0 against, 0 abstain.

1. DISCUSSION	Warden’s Report	
Will is not attending tonight due to illness, so we get his report next month. Request that he add conservation time for meeting attendance from last year to anyone who attended meetings.		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

2. DISCUSSION		Set Survey Dates			
Date	Low Tide	Tide Level	Meeting Time	Meeting Location	Survey Location
April 10	1:04 pm	+1.5	10:00 am	Town Landing	Lanes Island - North End
May 7	10:30 am	+1.1	7:30 am	Sandy Pt Beach Lot	Sea Meadows

Motion: Set April 10 and May 7 as survey dates, for the time and locations set above.

Moved: Judy Colby-George Second: Stephen Demelle

Vote: 6 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained

There was a long discussion about sampling method, survey locations and survey value for long term management.

Traditionally the surveys have gone laterally along the shoreline at 50 ft intervals both along the shore and out from the shore. There has been a proposal that we have 25 ft intervals out from the shore and then randomly select the starting points of those lines.

The discussion included the question of how you sample species that tend to cluster, so you can miss all the clusters or hit all the cluster, both things would make your data highly inaccurate. The committee is wrestling with how we can account for this clustering and what are the best ways to gather the best data given our constraints related to people to do the surveys and times to go out and survey.

We also had a discussion about how far out we should survey. And ultimately what is the purpose of the survey? We manage multiple species but soft shell clams are the main commercial species. It has been the experience of diggers that the softshell clams are found closes to the shoreline. So, is it a waste of our time to go out more than 50 or 100 ft from the shoreline? Do we need to survey in areas where there are other species? How do we make sure we are understanding the stocks as best we can for decisionmaking? We will continue these discussions.

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

3. DISCUSSION	Discussion of 8:30 end time rule	
<p>We had a spirited discussion related to how we could best use our time during meetings. We agreed we don't want a hard and fast rule because it is important for people to have an opportunity to understand things and share their ideas.</p> <p>The outcomes of this discussion are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We will start setting an agenda with suggested times for various topics and that we would all work harder to stick to the item we are discussing. We will also organize the agenda for a good flow of the meeting and to ensure that the most important (time sensitive) items get discussed early. 2. Judy will check with Jenn Doten if we can change our meeting time to 6:30 pm. 3. For the time being we will continue our rule about holding meeting to 1.5 hours and if we need to extend the meeting the board can agree to do so. 4. We will revisit how things are working in a few months. 		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Ask Jenn Doten about changing meeting time to 6:30	Judy	3/1/2022
4. DISCUSSION	Grant Report	
<p>Tabled until next month. Report will be sent to Granting agency this month and final report provided to committee next month. Committee has seen the draft report it was included in January's minutes.</p>		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Finalize grant report and submit	Judy	3/1/2022
5. DISCUSSION	Shellfish Management Plan	
<p>See previous discussion under surveys related to how we survey.</p> <p>Kevin has talked to a couple firms about surveying for us and what that would cost. He will continue to work with them to come up with specifications for the work and get a cost estimate. The committee discussed what we would want to count. It was agreed that we should count all 5 species in our ordinance: Soft shell clams, quahogs, razor clams, American & European oysters. And we would like to have observations about conditions of mud, other species (ie worms, periwinkles, etc)</p> <p>Judy spoke with Marissa McMahan from Manomet about coming to our next meeting to talk about the survey methodology that they working on. She has agreed to attend the March 1, 2022 meeting.</p>		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Continue conversation and get costs estimates	Kevin	3/1/2022

6. DISCUSSION		
Licenses		
<p>There was some disappointment that DMR did not provide the board with a methodology and detailed information regarding how they determine if towns can change license numbers (up or down).</p> <p>The overall consensus of the board was that we do not have enough evidence to change the license #s at this time and we would likely recommend maintaining the same license numbers as last year. That led us to a discussion of the license which went to a non-resident but was identified as a residential license (no residents applied for the lottery so a second lottery was held and opened up to anyone). Can we return that license to a resident or can it be renewed forever by the non-resident?</p> <p>The board decided that it would be better to get answers to those questions from DMR before making a recommendation to council related to licenses.</p>		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Check with DMR related to non-resident license acquired due to no residents participating in the resident only lottery last year.	Judy	3/1/2022

OLD BUSINESS
<p>Including email from Ari Leach in response to last months discussion:</p> <p>Hello folks,</p> <p>I wanted to follow up with a few of the questions that were raised at the last shellfish committee meeting.</p> <p>The Cousins River designation changes can be found in the attached documents that were sent out; I asked Meryl for clarification on this and she provided these.</p> <p>With regard to annual landings data, we cannot separate depuration from non-depuration reporting.</p> <p>In thinking ahead to the license allocation and what the committee would like to request, my advice is to set the survey schedule, ensuring that Lanes Island, the portions of the Cousins and Royal Rivers that are dug are the focus for early survey work. Both myself and Denis are happy to join for these surveys to ensure the committee feels they are supported in having a thorough survey for each area. This will help DMR with license allocation determinations. I did some analysis of landings from towns with similar open access as Yarmouth and, without violating confidentiality, I can say that the efforts from several other towns along with the landings were similar to Yarmouth, with Yarmouth reporting far fewer harvesters than those other towns.</p>

If there are further questions or you would like more guidance on prepping for allocations or survey work, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Cheers,

Ari Leach, MPS

Marine Resource Scientist II
Maine Department of Marine Resources
PO Box 8, 194 McKown Point Road
West Boothbay Harbor, ME 04575
Mobile: 207.350.7061
Office: 207.633.9539
ari.leach@maine.gov

NEW BUSINESS

Next Meeting Date: March 1, 2021

Meeting will be held at the **Community Room in the Town Hall at 7 pm**. All are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Agenda items	Proposed time	Time for discussion
1. Review minutes	7:00	5
2. Warden's report	7:05	5
3. Shellfish Management Plan - Discussion of survey technique with Marissa McMahan of Manomet	7:10	20
4. License recommendation	7:30	30
5. Setting conservation points	8:00	15
6. Setting meeting time	8:15	5
7. Grant report	8:20	10
8. New business	8:30	5
9. Set agenda	8:35	5
10. Adjourn meeting	8:40	

TIME MEETING ADJOURNED 9:05 pm