

Edgartown Shellfish Committee
Tuesday, September 17, 2019, 4:30PM
Edgartown Public Library

Present: Chair – Christian Thornton, Les, Baynes, Madeline Fisher, Ryan Smith,
Nick Turner,
Shellfish Dept. Paul Bagnall, Warren Gaines, Rob Morrison,
Others: Liam Cosgrove, Emma Greenbeach, Nevette Previtt,
Recorder – Marni Lipke

The meeting was called to order at 4:33PM. (*Recorder's Note: discussion has been summarized and grouped for clarity and brevity.*)

MINUTES

• **CHRISTIAN THORNTON MOVED TO APPROVE THE MAY 21, 2019, AUGUST 20, 2019, SEPTEMBER 3, 2019 MINUTES: MADELINE FISHER SECONDED: MOTION PASSED: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, ABSTENTIONS AS ABSENCE.**

PUBLIC HEARING – BAY SCALLOP SEASON RULES & REGULATIONS 2019-2020 SEASON

- Staff reported the bottom was choky with weeds, eelgrass was not very healthy and they were not finding much seed, presaging an unpromising scallop year. Consequently it was hard to recommend anything but basic seasonal standards. The Committee debated:
 - postponing the start of the commercial season;
 - waiting to see if more information was available in late October;
 - limiting the catch to two washbaskets;
 - pushback on staff,
 - predictions for other regional harvests,
 - pressure from high market prices.
- **CHRISTIAN THORNTON MOVED TO RECOMMEND:**
 - **OPENING THE RECREATION/FAMILY BAY SCALLOP SEASON MONDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2018 AS USUAL AT ONE (1) LEVEL TEN (10) GALLON WASHBASKET INCLUDING SHELLS PER WEEK; AND**
 - **NO DRAGGING IN CAPE POGUE BEFORE FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2019;**
 - **OPENING ALL AREAS TO THE COMMERCIAL SCALLOP SEASON MONDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2019;**
 - **WITH A COMMERCIAL LIMIT AT THREE (3) LEVEL TEN (10) GALLON WASHBASKETS INCLUDING SHELLS PER DAY, MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY; AND**

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**- AND ALL OTHER RULES AND REGULATION APPLY;
LES BAYNES SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5
AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.**

- Chair Christian Thornton closed the public hearing at 4:47PM.

CONSTABLE'S & DEPUTIES' REPORT

- Staff was wrapping up propagation:
 - thinning out Major's Cove Oyster Farm for winter with some final air drying;
 - shoveling out the good crop of quahogs to Katama;
 - planting scallops in Cape Pogue and Sengekontacket Pond;
 - shutting down the Chappaquiddick Nursery, having pulled the pumps and expecting to drain the fresh water shortly.
- Families were still quahogging at high tides.
- Shellfish Constable Paul Bagnall reported on a raucous meeting at the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) and urged aquaculture farmers to send in written comments to the Legislature on HB746 regarding the Massachusetts Shellfish Initiative that could favor corporate aquaculture (see below: Meetings/Events, Actions & 2/5/19 Minutes p.2).
- Paul Bagnall commended the staff on their excellent work getting ready for the hurricane that fortunately missed the Island.

NEW BUSINESS

The Conservation Commission (ConCom) would be reconsidering Katama Boat Ramp due to objections from the summer community on increased use (see below: Meetings/Events & Actions). The Committee noted:

- savings from the wider ramp that allowed dredge accessibility;
- the current 1992 "temporary" ramp installed after Hurricane Bob and the need for a larger structure to resist storms;
- a more functional ramp able to handle current boat traffic, (more functional, not busier).

Towards the end of the meeting:

• CHRISTIAN THORNTON MOVED TO DIRECT CONSTABLE PAUL BAGNALL TO WRITE LETTER OF SUPPORT ON KATAMA BOAT RAMP; NICK TURNER SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.

Oyster Fest – Emma Green-Beach, Nette Previtt (See below: Meetings/Events)
Farm. Field. Sea. was partnering with the Martha's Vineyard Shellfish Group (MVSG) to premier a new Martha's Vineyard Oyster Fest in May 2020 at the Martha's Vineyard Museum. Other Island organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce and Fisherman's Preservation Trust were also supporting the effort. Grant and sponsor funding was being explored. The Committee also pointed out oyster farm nitrogen remediation. The festival would:

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- take advantage of the trend in culinary tours;
- feature oyster farm tours;
- expand versatility of oysters to beyond the raw bar;
- help promote Island brands;
- bring people to the source of their food including other local fish;
- increase environmental health with all proceeds going to shell recycling/reclamation both commercial and residential;

COMMERCIAL, FAMILY, AQUACULTURE LICENSE APPLICATIONS

Liam Cosgrove was interested in the Committee work and was thinking about his own aquaculture farm—he had been working for Cottage City Oysters. The Committee welcomed him and discussed wait list issues, encouraging ideas for any non-Katama lots.

• IT WAS THE CONSENSUS OF THE EDGARTOWN SHELLFISH COMMITTEE TO AUTHORIZE CHAIR CHRISTIAN THORNTON TO SIGN THE AQUACULTURE WAIT LIST APPLICATION FOR LIAM COSGROVE.

Meetings/Events

- Con Com - 5:00PM, Wednesday, September 25, 2019 at Town Hall
- Mass. Shellfish Initiative - 7:00-8:30PM Monday, September 30, 2019 at Katherine Cornell
- Edg. Shellfish - 4:30PM Tuesdays, October 1 & 15, 2019 at the Library
- MV Oyster Fest - May 8 & 9, 2020 at the MV Museum

ADJOURNMENT

• RYAN SMITH MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 5:19PM; CHRISTIAN THORNTON SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Actions To Be Done:

- All - attend ConCom re: Katama Boat Ramp, 5PM, 9/25/19 at Town Hall
- Paul - send ConCom letter of support on Katama Boat Ramp.
- All - send comment letter to DMF and/or Legislature on Mass. Shellfish Initiative
- Emma/Nevette - include Town oyster farm nitrogen remediation efforts
- October Agenda
- Kite-boarding update

Documents on File:

- Agenda 9/17/19
- Martha's Vineyard Oyster Fest card May 8 & 9, 2020