

Edgartown Shellfish Committee
Tuesday, May 2, 2017, 4:30PM
Edgartown Public Library

Present: Chair – Christian Thornton, Les Baynes, Ryan Smith,
Shellfish Dept. Paul Bagnall, Warren Gaines, Rob Morrison,
Others: John Conlin, Sandy Fisher,
Great Pond Foundation – Emily Reddington,
Recorder – Marni Lipke

The meeting was called to order at 4:34PM.

MINUTES

• **CHRISTIAN THORNTON MOVED TO APPROVE THE MARCH 23, 2017 MINUTES: LES BAYNES SECONDED: MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.**

DEPUTIES' & CONSTABLE'S REPORT

- The Edgartown Great Pond oyster season closed April 30th with 10 fishermen down from a peak of 20.
- The Major's Cove Oyster Farm was up and running, a second air-drying barge was being built.
- Staff emptied 3 of Ray Gailey's cages (each bag held about 80 lbs. of oysters) and spread them around the Poucha Pond side of the Dike and the family area. There were about 65 cages remaining. The oysters were good sized but brittle shelled from neglect.
- An abutter contacted the Department over concerns about Mr. Gailey's equipment left in Shear Pin Pond (see below: Actions).
- Staff and aquaculturists had started plotting and buoy marking aquaculture lot boundaries with Martha's Vineyard Commission GIS Coordinator Chris Seidell, The Department proposed purchasing its own GPS/Garmin (about \$300) as corner marking was becoming an annual exercise after winter icing shifts. Plots would be returned to their original coordinates— before the Katama breach so that navigation channels were cleared for the seasons sailboats.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Committee Membership** (See documents on file.)

Ryan Smith would be re-appointed and Madeliene Fisher was appointed to one of the two vacancies as a family member. Committee membership was limited to four 3-year terms, after which a member must be off the Committee for one term. Current member appointments were: Les Baynes in January 2014, Christian Thornton in January 2014, and Ryan Smith in May 2010. The Committee discussed possible candidates for the remaining wild fishing vacancy. A wild fishermen representative was needed.

Edgartown Shellfish Committee
May 2, 2017

2

- The Town Accountant reported that the approval of payroll and bills was removed from Shellfish Committee responsibility at a 2009 Special Town Meeting (see documents on file). The procedure was now for a Committee member to review and sign a monthly report.

COMMERCIAL, FAMILY, AQUACULTURE LICENSE APPLICATIONS

Sandy Fisher requested a Middle Flats plot. The Town held one common use lot for the two week relay to avoid possible Katama vibrio issues (see 3/15/16 Minutes p.2). Five other lots were assigned. The application took a couple years to process including State Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) bottom surveys.

- The Committee questioned Mr. Fisher closely regarding his compliance with all regulations, which staff affirmed. Staff and Committee cautioned him that if Katama was declared closed for vibrio, no shellfish could be transferred to the Middle Flats plot.

• LES BAYNES MOVED TO AUTHORIZE SANDY FISHER TO APPLY FOR A MIDDLE FLATS TWO (2) ACRE AQUACULTURE LICENSE; RYAN SMITH SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 3 AYE, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.

- Ryan Smith reported he had never used his plot because navigation of the Harbor currents with a loaded boat/raft, during the busy summer season was too hazardous.

NEW BUSINESS

• Vibrio P. Season

- Katama had a good year, except for the State Amnesiac Shellfish Poisoning (ASP) closing (see 10/18/16 Minutes p. 1). Better ASP testing was now in place. Closings included Wellfleet and Washington—some from the neuro-virus.

- The Massachusetts Shellfish Initiative would hold a forum this Friday (see below: Meetings/Events).

- University of Massachusetts was researching Massachusetts Aquaculture Policy in partnership with the Nature Conservancy and Hook Fisherman's Assoc.

- Les Baynes proposed creating at least one other aquaculture lot to create jobs and relieve the Wait List. Possible complications included:

- the 1% acreage restriction (see 2/2/10 Minutes p.1); and
- not impinging on wild fisheries.

- There was a request for a commercial harvest of Edgartown Great Pond steamer clams. It was agreed that if the crop survived the summer and grew to market size, allowing a commercial hand harvest would do no harm and would relieve the heavy quahog harvest (see below: Actions).

Edgartown Shellfish Committee
May 2, 2017

3

Meetings/Events

- Mass. Shellfish Initiative - 4:30PM, Friday May 5, 2017 at Katherine Cornell Theatre
- Edg. Shellfish - 4:30PM Tuesday, May 16, 2017 at Town Hall
- Edg. Shellfish - 4:30PM Tuesdays, June 20, July 18th, August 15, 2017 at the Library

ADJOURNMENT

- **LES BAYNES MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 5:08PM; RYAN SMITH SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Actions To Be Done:

- Paul - Agenda item: commercial Great Pond Steamer Season - hand digging only.
- Deputies - pick up Gailey's empty cages from Shear Pin
- Paul - have Town Counsel notify Gailey estate re: equipment value and harvest.
- Paul/Committee/Staff - consider more aquaculture plots.

Documents on File:

- Agenda 5/2/17
- Special Town Meeting 2009, Article 11. Move that the Town vote to amend the bylaw which created the Shellfish Committee...