

Edgartown Shellfish Committee
Tuesday, May 16, 2017, 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: Joe Smith, Todd Godell, Kevin Hathaway, Nick Viera

The meeting was called to order. (*Discussions have been summarized and grouped for clarity and brevity.*)

OLD BUSINESS

• Aquaculture License Issues

• The Committee expressed sympathy and support for Tracy Sharples and his family on the diagnosis of his illness. There was a general discussion on a request to transfer his lease/license to his wife Patsy Sharples (see also below: Actions):

- Aquaculture regulation allowed transfer to immediate family;
- whether and how Ms. Sharples could work the lease (employees, transaction card, etc.), support and help of the aquaculture community and Shellfish staff;
- logistics and policy around equipment/asset sale to wait listed person and/or outsiders;
- status of the static wait list;
- importance of aquaculturists knowing factors influencing the value of their business: assets, annual multipliers, lease terms, etc.

• **RYAN SMITH MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE TRANSFER OF TRACY SHARPLES AQUACULTURE LEASE/LICENSE TO PATSY SHARPLES; LES BAYNES SECONDED: MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.**

* Nick Turner entered the meeting at 4:48PM.

• The Committee considered and declined to limit the amount of cages/equipment that could be put on a lot. This depended on how hard a leaseholder could or was willing to work. Some packed them in marked with buoys (which could be removed in case of complaints).

• There was also a discussion on expanding the number of lots in order to move the wait list forward and increase business/employment opportunities for young Islanders. The main difficulty was suitable locations (depth, bottom, tides, accessibility, away from boat traffic) considering: the Katama Flats, Shear Pin Pond, Poucha Pond, Cape Pogue, and Sengekontacket Pond. Other factors included market demand, gluts, and slow downs from vibrio.

• Rules and Regulations Update Hearing May 30th (See below: Meetings/Events)

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COMMERCIAL, FAMILY, AQUACULTURE LICENSE APPLICATIONS

• IT WAS THE CONSENSUS OF THE EDGARTOWN SHELLFISH COMMITTEE TO AUTHORIZE CHAIR CHRISTIAN THORNTON TO SIGN THE COMMERCIAL SHELLFISHING APPLICATION FOR TODD GODELL.

DEPUTIES' & CONSTABLE'S REPORT

- Deputies continued to work on getting Ray Gailey's gear out of the water. Shellfish Constable Paul Bagnall informed Gailey's attorney about cleaning up Ray's aquaculture gear, which at this point didn't have much value. Staff would store cages and bags at the Fisherman's Depot for distribution to whoever wanted them.
- The State Mass Shellfish Initiatives (see 5/2/17 Minutes p.2) would study issues, and poll fisherman and aquaculturists, with a view to imposing uniform regulations across the Commonwealth. Paul Bagnall advocated for local control in order to better address differences in place, crisis, and municipalities (see below: Actions).
- Paul Bagnall had been pressuring the State to upgrade Sengekontacket Pond status after three years of clean tests. Hopefully the Pond could be opened with the exception of rainfall closures for Majors Cove and Crab Creek. The Committee speculated on water quality causes: oyster farms filtering, Little Bridge Channel dredging, fertilizer regulation.

NEW BUSINESS

Staff had no objections to a commercial season for hand digging steamer clams in Edgartown Great Pond, provided the set survived (see below: Actions). Hand digging was self-limiting, easy to police, preserved the bottom and spread out the harvest among more fishermen.

• IT WAS THE CONSENSUS OF THE EDGARTOWN SHELLFISH COMMITTEE THAT A COMMERCIAL STEAMER SEASON BE OPENED IN EDGARTOWN GREAT POND ON JUNE 20, 2017 OR EARLIER, PENDING STAFF SURVEY AND DECISION.

Meetings/Events

- Selectmen Hearing on Shellfish Regulations - 4:00PM Tuesday, May 30, 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; MADELINE FISHER SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

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Actions To Be Done:

- Paul - get and send new member email addresses.
- Staff/Committee - urge all fishermen/aquaculturists to fill out EPO Mass. Initiative questionnaire.
- Deputies - distribute Gailey gear as needed.
- Deputies - survey Edg. Great Pond steamers.
- Committee - call Rob if you want to go on the survey.
- Paul - send Selectmen letter re: transfer of Sharples' license.

Documents on File:

- Agenda 5/16/17