

**Edgartown Shellfish Committee**  
**Tuesday, March 4, 2014, 7:00PM**  
**Edgartown Town Hall**

Present: Chair - Jack Blake, Les Baynes, Donald Benefit,  
Shellfish Dept. Paul Bagnall, Warren Gaines,  
Others: Dudley Levick  
Marni Lipke - Recorder

The Meeting was called to order at 7:04PM.

DEPUTIES' & CONSTABLES' REPORTS

The Deputies were finishing the Major's Cove upweller components. The upweller was plastic wood and would weather well and last 20 years. Storage at the Fisherman's Depot was not recommended.

Chappaquiddick Nursery

- The Nursery was looking better with the walls primed with white epoxy and the purple rubber floor. New tank holders, better shelving for equipment and a rack for sieves were the next steps. Algae could be grown on the back deck (see below: Actions.)
- At the Martha's Vineyard Shellfish Group (MVSG) Directors meeting Chilmark stated it was not interested in more scallop seed. The Nursery would be used as usual for quahog propagation before spawning and setting scallops for Edgartown in July. It was hoped Abbe Larsen would come back as summer staff. A holly shed and/or use of the front porch would increase work space without having to expand the building.

Major's Cove

Floats with a walkway down the middle were needed for the Major's Cove Oyster Farm (see below: Actions). The oysters were about 1 in. long and the bags should be split before the growing season. Shellfish Biologist Paul Bagnall placed a tentative order for 500,000 seed for this year, but a reduction was still possible. The Department would need a heavy duty winch before the season was finished.

Milford Aquaculture Seminars

Paul Bagnall reported on the Seminars and the New England Shellfish Sanitation Association. It was likely that the ice slurry requirement would be dropped but that oysters would have to be brought to 50° within two to five hours. Other discussions included: bacteria build up in the slurry; proactive closures, and sampling labs and methods. The State acted only when people began to get sick but the Edgartown Aquaculture farmers had the capacity to test, along the entire market route from fishermen to restaurants. The farmers were also interested in tracking not only the illnesses but the total number of servings.

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PUBLIC COMMENT

Dudley Levick asked about Edgartown Great Pond management. He was concerned about the dredge removal of the sand delta as tending to increase and lengthen Pond openings and suggested that after two weeks an opening should be closed as the longer openings were detrimental to the Pond.

- The current target for the next opening was March 15<sup>th</sup> as laid out in the Plan presented by the Edgartown Great Pond Committee. In general, openings were best when the Pond was 4 ft. above sea level; the goal being: four openings in a good year, but varying with weather to two openings in a dry year or five in a wet year, for about 28PPT salinity.
- The Pond recharged on rain and/or spring water which depended on the weather.
- There was considerable debate on what were appropriate salinity levels which dictated the type and health of a variety of wildlife and algae, the higher the salinity the better for oysters and steamers, on the other hand fish such as herring and aquatic plants did better in fresh water. The salinity ceiling was 32 PPT.
- Paul Bagnall argued that although it was possible to close a smaller low flow opening, closing a larger opening with a strong current would be impossible and prohibitively expensive. Openings cost about \$1,400 each.
- Pond opening history and effects over the last three or four years was argued.
- Extreme weather opened the Pond for an entire year about once a century.
- There was some agreement with the concern that with the delta gone, the openings would be unpredictable—although the delta was likely to build back in about four years.
- The Shellfish Department was following the Pond Committee's Management Plan and any amendment or alteration of the Plan should be taken up in the Pond Committee.
- The Committee asked that Mr. Levick speak to Chair Jack Blake before submitting his report to the Selectmen.

OLD BUSINESS

Leland/Schifter Water Sampling Agreement (See documents on file.)

The letter was approved and signed (see below: Actions).

Middle Flats Aquaculture Area

Joe and Ryan Smith's aquaculture applications were being processed. The Committee reviewed the consensus to have 20 acres surveyed: 4 leased plots of two acres each, and six vacant lots for future applications. The current regulations allowed 10 acre plots in the Outer Harbor but the Committee considered smaller size limits particularly in the pilot period.

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- **LES BAYNES MOVED THE FIRST READING OF THE EDGARTOWN SHELLFISH COMMITTEE POLICY THAT ALL LEASES WITHIN THE TOWN'S 2014 PRE-APPROVED MIDDLE FLATS/OUTER HARBOR TWENTY (20) ACRE AQUACULTURE PLOTS BE NO MORE THAN TWO (2) ACRES EACH; DONALD BENEFIT SECONDED; MOTION PASSED, 2 AYES, 0 NAYES, 1 ABSTENTION – DONALD BENEFIT.**

Bay Scallop Update

Three fishermen were still making a fairly decent living dip netting in Sengekontacket.

Meetings/Events

- Edg. Shellfish – 7:00PM Tuesdays, March 18, & April 1, 2014 at Town Hall
- Dredge Committee – Thursday, April 6, 2014 (Paul will not be there.)
- Edgartown Annual Town Meeting – Tuesday, April 8, 2014

ADJOURNMENT

- **JACK BLAKE MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 8:29PM; LES BAYNES SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Actions To Be Done :**

- Jack/Paul – get Gary Look signature on Leland/Shifter letter,  
- copy testing protocol to Shellfish Dept. stationary,  
- mail all with copies as noted.
- Paul – call Jerry Moles of DMF re: Middle Flats survey (20 acres) timeframe.
- Donald – Chappaquiddick algae growth: Three 8 ft. sections & three 6 ft. sections of  
4” PVC and/or 8” dredge pipe.
- Warren/Rob – talk to Harbormaster re: Major’s Cove Oyster Farm floats
- Paul/Jack/Warren/Rob –borrow Jack’s second upweller?
- Paul – draft 3-4 year history of Edgartown Great Pond openings.

**Ongoing Actions**

- Paul/Jack – apply for CPA grant for Chappaquiddick Nursery in August/September.
- Paul/Warren/Rob – plant next Katama relay area closer to the boat ramp.
- Paul– attend Dredge Committee meetings as possible.

**Documents on file:**

- Agenda 2/4/14
- Illness Summary by State
- Blake letter to Schifter (2 p.) 2/21/14