

**Edgartown Shellfish Committee**  
**Tuesday, September 16, 2014, 4:30PM**  
**Edgartown Town Barn**

Present: Chair - Ryan Smith, Donald Benefit, Les Baynes,  
Christian Thornton,  
Shellfish Dept. Paul Bagnall, Warren Gaines, Rob Morrison  
Others: Jess and Linda Shapiro  
Marni Lipke - Recorder

The meeting was called to order at 4:42PM.

DEPUTIES' & CONSTABLE'S REPORT

- There were live scallops in Eel Pond and seed was growing fast on the Major's Cove oyster cages. Last year's Sengekontacket scallops lasted much longer than expected.
- The quahog rafts were about halfway empty.
- The Major's Cove oysters were doing extremely well including some very large ones—it was amazing to remember seed the size of beach sand arriving one year ago in June 2013—whereas other shellfish took two to three years to mature. Twenty more totes would be dumped in the family area after it had been fished out a little. Here and later in the meeting the Committee noted the remarkable success and thanked the Shellfish Deputies for their hard work. Stress was put on getting the word to residents and the press on this impressive return on the Town's investment (see below: Actions).
- The Department used to link with schools on educational projects, but standardized tests (MCAS, etc.) added a layer of daunting regulation that restricted collaboration.
- Shellfish Constable and Biologist Paul Bagnall reported that Katama Bay farms re-opened Wednesday, September 10th (see 9/3/14 Minutes p. 2), after some damage to the market. There had been no new vibrio cases reported and the previous case was identified as coming from Harvester before it was closed down. The State took two samples.
- Paul Bagnall sent two dozen oysters for testing to University of New Hampshire (UNH) labs (about \$2,000) and was hoping for a protocol to manage proactive voluntary closings when needed. (Ryan Smith described his hesitations from lack of knowledge on vibrio cycle and remedies.) For example oysters should purge themselves of all bacteria in two to three days while it was felt that the released bacteria was small compared with size of the farm and the Katama Bay current
- Paul Bagnall proposed getting a per unit testing price from UNH and drafting a Town Meeting warrant article to study vibrio relation to commercial air drying, water column testing, possible quahog involvement, etc.
- The subject raised a lot of public emotion, compared for example with the primary Island health risk of tick borne diseases but the State Forest was not closed down.

**Edgartown Shellfish Committee**  
**September 16, 2014**

2

- Last Monday's (9/8/14) Edgartown Great Pond cut lasted less than 24 hours. The next try was waiting on more rain.
- The Dredge Committee had not yet decided on any projects.

OLD BUSINESS

Leland/Shifter Agreement

After an entire summer of negotiations with the Selectmen, Leland/Schifter chose to hire the Woods Hole Group at \$29,000 per round of tests. The Department felt it would be fruitless to start testing in September and suggested it start next year and run for three years. The Leland/Shifter party was unwilling to test for three years and suggested a sample review (at \$3-4,000) instead (see below: Actions).

Chappaquiddick Nursery

The Nursery had a successful season and was now shut down and cleaned out. About 100 million fertilized scallops were released into Cape Pogue with one tote to Sengekontacket. The Martha's Vineyard Shellfish Group essentially left all the Chappaquiddick raised quahogs (a better year than usual) to Edgartown. The staff washed them each day which made a big difference.

Middle Flats Aquaculture Area

As previously reported, the Mass. Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) inspected the two Scheffer plots (two divers, a boat Captain, First Mate and Mate making three transects and digging the bottom) and found no significant shellfish—only surf clams which were illegal to harvest and a few scallops. Town Hall should receive DMF written approval soon and DMF would return to survey the next set of plots. The Edgartown Conservation Commission approved six more plots.

NEW BUSINESS

5:00PM - 2014-2015 Bay Scallop Season Hearing

Chair Ryan Smith opened the Public Hearing which had been posted as required. On Shellfish Constable Paul Bagnall's recommendation:

- **RYAN SMITH MOVED THAT:**
- **THE FAMILY SCALLOP SEASON OPEN WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2014 WITH A WEEKLY LIMIT OF ONE (1) LEVEL TEN (10) GALLON WASHBASKET INCLUDING SHELLS AND THAT IT IS ILLEGAL TO SELL A FAMILY MESS (HARVEST);**
- **THE COMMERCIAL SCALLOP SEASON OPEN MONDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2014 FIVE DAYS A WEEK, MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY WITH A DAILY LIMIT OF THREE (3) LEVEL TEN (10) GALLON WASHBASKETS INCLUDING SHELLS;**

**Edgartown Shellfish Committee**  
**September 16, 2014**

3

- **THERE BE NO DRAGGING IN CAPE POGUE BEFORE OCTOBER 24, 2014;**
- **DRAGGING IS FORBIDDEN IN SENGEKONTACKET POND;**
- **ALL SHELLFISH REGULATIONS APPLY;**
- LES BAYNES SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.**
  - The Chappaquiddick Nursery would be the primary check-in station, although one staffer should be in town.
  - Jess and Linda Shapiro attended the Public Hearing to learn and to talk about discovering family shellfishing—as well as changes in education (see above p. 1). There was some speculation on the size of this year's harvest.
  - The Public Hearing was closed.

Meetings/Events

- Edg. Shellfish - 4:30 PM, Tuesdays, October 7 and 21, 2014 - location TBD

ADJOURNMENT

- **RYAN SMITH MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 5:29PM; LES BAYNES SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Actions To Be Done:**

- All - talk up and contact press (MV Times) re: Majors Cove oyster harvest.
- Paul/Ryan - invite Leland/Shifter to Edgartown Shellfish Committee meeting.
- (*Invite Edgartown Marine Advisory Board Chair to attend.*)
- Paul - research and publish location of fall/winter meetings.

**October Agenda**

- Minutes: 9/2/14, 9/16/14
- Budget/salary discussion on Major's Cove Oyster Project position
- Vibrio Update

**Ongoing Actions**

- Ryan/Paul - ask Selectmen and Ed Handy to ask State (Jack Shephard) re: rebuilding Katama public access ramp, and moving 2 big rock obstacles.
- Paul- attend Dredge Committee meetings as possible.

**Documents on file:**

- Agenda 9/16/14