

**Edgartown Shellfish Committee**  
**Tuesday, October 1, 2013 7:00PM**  
**Edgartown Town Hall**

Present: Chair – Jack Blake, Les Baynes, Donald Benefit, Ryan Smith,  
Shellfish Dept. Paul Bagnall, Rob Morrison,  
Others: Tricia Bergeron, Roy Scheffer,  
Sara Brown – Vineyard Gazette  
Recorder – Marni Lipke

The meeting was called to order at 7:00PM.

MINUTES

• **DONALD BENEFIT MOVED TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 17, 2013 MINUTES: RYAN SMITH SECONDED: MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 2 AYES, 0 NAYS, 2 ABSTENTIONS—LES BAYNES, DONALD BENEFIT** due to absence.

COMMERCIAL, FAMILY, AQUACULTURE LICENSE APPLICATIONS

The application for a two acre aquaculture plot outside the Katama Bay involved the process of a public hearing, as well as a survey by Mass. Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) to insure that the area was appropriate for aquaculture. There would be plenty of space for other plots depending on the parameters DMF set for the Sound.

Despite currents and sea action that tumbled cages, it was possible that other lease holders might move from Katama to avoid higher water temperatures (see 9/17/13 Minutes p. 1). Some fishermen trapping conch and culling sparse shellfish might have future objections to multiple or denser aquaculture plots.

• **WITH THE CONSENSUS OF THE EDGARTOWN SHELLFISH COMMITTEE CHAIR JACK BLAKE SIGNED AN EEL POND AQUACULTURE LEASE APPLICATION FOR ROY SCHEFFER.**

DEPUTIES/CONSTABLE'S REPORT

Majors' Cove Oyster Project

• Deputy Rob Morrison brought some Major's Cove grown oysters for show and tell. The Committee was impressed and discussed sizing, age, and timing. Almost all had been split and were in cages with the first split already growing so they might be split again come spring. People were catching some keeper sized oysters in the family area and glad to get them during this thin scallop season.

• The Committee noted that there was probably Dermo in most Vineyard Great Ponds including Sengekontacket as oysters had at least a 50% die off at the age of about 3 years (see below; Actions).

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- The Friends of Sengekontacket funded quahogs were over-wintering (and somewhat crowded) in gravel boxes in Sengekontacket with good survival and growth.

### Scallop Season Update

- About a dozen groups and individuals were out scalloping on this first day of the season, however as projected the harvest was spare.
- Later in the meeting Shellfish Biologist and Warden Paul Bagnall reported that the Selectmen approved the 2013-14 Scallop Season regulations as recommended (see 9/3/13 Minutes p. 4 and 9/17/13 Minutes p. 3).

### Katama Bay Closure

The Department sent in samples on September 23<sup>rd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> but results were not yet available. Rumors predicted a wait until the water temperature dropped below 60°F. Water temperature was currently between 59°-63°F depending on time and location.

- Similarly testing results were not available for Duxbury (which was also closed).
- Vibrio was a major problem in the southern states, particularly around the Gulf of Mexico. However there was some confusion over which was the more virulent form, vibrio vulnificus (VV) or vibrio parahaemolyticus (VP) and which was present in Katama.
- As a new disease there was not a lot of scientific information on prevention so the results would be useful for continuing study. Advocacy by State Senator Dan Wolfe and State Representative Tim Madden helped to instigate prompt testing.
- The East Coast Shellfish Association membership was raised again as was a possible growers association.

## OLD BUSINESS

### Leland Schifter Agreement

There was still no response to the letter (see below: Actions).

### Chappaquiddick Nursery/Hatchery

There was no quorum at the Martha's Vineyard Shellfish Group (MVSG) meeting so Paul Bagnall was unable to present Patrick Parker's proposal on rubber flooring (see 9/17/13 Minutes p.2). The Committee discussed the future and direction of the building (owned by the Martha's Vineyard Land Bank and rented to the MVSG for \$1).

- Due to substantial building repairs and maintenance costs it could not be justified for use as a simple nursery, as the same effects could be realized with three or four upwellers.
- On the other hand as a hatchery/nursery producing fertilized seed and algae as well as growth it was likely to be a valuable tool, especially as climate change progressed. This summer's decent fertilization rate (about 20 million) would hopefully have a survival rate of at least 500,000, and should have a direct correlation with recreational fishing and profit.
- The building also took overflow from the MVSG Vineyard Haven Hatchery. Optimally there would be three hatchery/nurseries on the Island: Vineyard Haven, the Lobster Hatchery and Chappaquiddick.

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- Various funding sources were discussed, including committing a portion of the flooring outlay, re-applying for Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds (see below: Actions), or submitting a separate warrant article.

- Sengekontacket Relay area test results allowed the DMF to open the area today.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Commercial Oyster Season**

- There were consistent reports that Edgartown Great Pond was growing a good crop of oysters for the first time in five years, and that another year of rest was needed for to consolidate the gains and the health of the Pond.

- **IT WAS THE CONSENSUS OF THE EDGARTOWN SHELLFISH COMMITTEE THAT EDGARTOWN GREAT POND BE CLOSED TO **COMMERCIAL** OYSTER SHELLFISHING FOR THE 2013-2014 SEASON.**

- There was a brief discussion on dredge issues:
  - cost savings of having a dredge on Island,
  - the status and repair of the Edgartown dredge,
  - sale and use of material from various dredges,
  - Army Corp of Engineers permitting and dredging practices.

- Edg. Shellfish – 7:00PM Tuesdays, October 15 and November 5, 2013 at Town Hall

**ADJOURNMENT**

- **RYAN SMITH MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 8:03PM; LES BAYNES SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Actions To Be Done :**

- Paul/Warren/Rob – ask Emma Green-Beach to test Jack’s oysters for Dermo.
- Paul – ask presenter at Vibrio/MVC meeting for results of tests and type of vibrio.
- Paul – invite Paul Foley or Sheri Caseau to next meeting to discuss Leland/Schifter.
- Paul – check CPC deadline re: Chappaquiddick application.
- Paul – return microscope in Chappaquiddick Nursery to Jack Blake.
- Paul – bring letter for background records.

**Ongoing Actions**

- Paul/Warren/Rob – plant next Katama relay area closer to the boat ramp.
- Paul– attend Dredge Committee meetings as possible.

**Documents on file:**

- Agenda 10/1/13