



**Edgartown Shellfish Committee**  
**Tuesday, April 17, 2012, 7:00PM**  
**Edgartown Town Hall**

Present: Chair - Cooper Gilkes, Donald Benefit, Jack Blake, Ralph Case,  
Ryan Smith,  
Shellfish Dept. Rob Morrison,  
Others: Doug Benefit, Steve Kuehne,  
Marni Lipke - Recorder

The meeting was called to order 7:12PM.

• DEPUTIES/CONSTABLE'S REPORT

- Rob Morrison, Doug Benefit and Steve Kuehne, surveyed only about an eighth of Edgartown Great Pond for clams (the wind was blowing too hard) and found good size adults except at Nashamoi Point where they were 50% legal and 50% sub-legal. The Committee was happy to see good clamming after four dormant years and speculated on the effect of the long cut/opening (see 1/17/12 Minutes p. 2) and cold seawater.
- The Deputies painted the Chappaquiddick Nursery.

• PUBLIC COMMENT

- Doug Benefit proposed a number of measures.
  - To allow fisherman to spread out and not over-fish a limited area, the entire Pond should be opened with the following exceptions:
    - o Nashamoi and any areas with a lot of seed should remain should be closed all year,
    - o Lyle Bay and Oyster Point should not open until July 1st to allow for growth,
    - o the two sanctuaries would be honored as previously.
  - As soon as an area had been fished the Wardens should close it to prevent repeat or over-fishing. The Committee noted this would be difficult to enforce and it was agreed the Constable and Wardens would work on a more specific process.
  - Limits were proposed as follows:
    - o two level washbaskets per day per person,
    - o May 15-31 - two days/wk (possibly Wednesday/Friday for the weekend market),
    - June - three days per wk,
    - July - September - five days per wk.
- The Committee asked that the Pond survey be finished, in time for the next meeting.

**Edgartown Shellfish Committee**  
**April 17, 2012**

2

• OLD BUSINESS – Cormorant Control

Sarsons Island was privately owned by the Felix Neck Trust, and was located in Oak Bluffs. The flags on the raft were considered a form of harassment, and there was some confusion as to whether a program had to be in place to get a permit or a permit was needed to put a program in place (see below: Actions).

• OLD BUSINESS – Estuaries Program

Due to strong Committee and Department advocacy, the Massachusetts Estuaries Project (MEP) studies article passed at both Town Meeting and at the ballot box.

• NEW BUSINESS

- The cages on the beach at Shearpin Pond were Shellfish Dept. spawning cages.
- Following a number of complaints, Chair Coop Gilkes adamantly stressed the enforcement of plot location for all aquaculture farmers as required by the Mass. Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF). Any farmer found operating outside a plot would be cited in writing by the Shellfish Constable and/or Committee and would have to appear before the Selectmen for possible license revocation (see below: Actions). Farmers could also be cited by the Harbormaster for obstructing navigable waterways.
- **IT WAS THE CONSENSUS OF THE COMMITTEE TO ALLOW ONE WEEK FOR ALL EDGARTOWN AQUACULTURE FARMERS TO INSURE ALL FARMING, CAGES, BAGS, EQUIPMENT AND OPERATIONS WERE WITHIN THEIR ASSIGNED PLOT BOUNDARIES.**

• NEW BUSINESS: Committee Appointment

The Selectmen would vote the annual appointments in May and all letters of interest were due April 30th (see below: Actions).

- **DOUG BENEFIT MOVED TO REQUEST RALPH CASE AND COOPER GILKES BE REAPPOINTED TO THE SHELLFISH COMMITTEE; JACK BLAKE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.**

• OLD BUSINESS – Chappy Nursery/Roof Shingles Update

The \$4,391.95 bill for the Chappaquiddick Nursery roof was charged to the Martha's Vineyard Shellfish Group (MVSG). The Nursery needed a new air compressor which was estimated to cost \$900-\$1,000.

**Edgartown Shellfish Committee**  
**April 17, 2012**

3

- As of April 2nd the Committee had a budget residual of \$20,720. which could cover the annual quahog relay costs and still leave \$5-6,000 for unforeseen contingencies.

- If the Lobster Hatchery starts operations soon it would take steamers, leaving Oak Bluffs and Vineyard Haven more room to spat scallops.

• **DONALD BENEFIT MOVED TO**

- **REIMBURSE THE MARTHA'S VINEYARD SHELLFISH GROUP \$2,200 FOR HALF THE COST OF THE CHAPPAQUIDDICK NURSERY ROOF, AND TO PURCHASE DIRECTLY A NEW AIR COMPRESSOR FOR THE NURSERY;**

**COOPER GILKES SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.**

• MINUTES

• **DONALD BENEFIT MOVED TO APPROVE THE APRIL 3, 2012 MINUTES: RYAN SMITH SECONDED: MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 1 ABSTENTION- JACK BLAKE** due to absence.

Meetings

- MVSG Benefit - 6:00-9:00PM, Saturday, April 28, 2012 Johnny Hoy and the Bluefish at Chilmark Community Center
- Edg. Shellfish - 7:00PM Tuesdays, May 1 & 15, 2012 at Town Hall
- Edg. Shellfish - 7:00PM Tuesdays, June 5, July 3, August 7, 2012 at Town Barn

• ADJOURNMENT

• **JACK BLAKE MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 8:00PM; DONALD BENEFIT SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Actions To Be Done:**

- All - aquaculture farmers have one week to be within borders.
- Paul/Rob/Warren/Coop - document aquaculture violations after 4/24/12.
- Rob/Doug/Steve. - complete Edg. Great Pond & Cracktuxet clam survey.
- Paul/Rob/Warren - work w/ fishermen on fished area closures.
- Ryan/Jack - bring in any documentation on Middle Ground plots.
- Coop - contact Ron Domrant (volunteer coordinator scallop stranding network)
- Coop - contact Brett Sterns.
- Coop/Don/Ralph - submit appointment request letters to Selectmen.

continued >

**Edgartown Shellfish Committee**  
**April 17, 2012**

4

**5/1/12 Agenda**

- Edg. Great Pond Clamming Season Report and Vote

**Unfinished Projects / Ongoing Actions**

- Gate/fencing of Fishermen's Depot
- Photographs for Shellfish Dept. Office
- Paul - submit written deputy reports and hours folder at each meeting.
- Warren/Rob - Report log at each Committee Meeting
- Public Hearing when /if there is an oyster season.

**Documents on file:**

- Agenda 4/17/12