

Edgartown Shellfish Committee
Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 7:00PM
Edgartown Town Hall

Present: Chair - Cooper Gilkes, Donald Benefit, Jack Blake, Ralph Case,
Ryan Smith,
Shellfish Dept. Paul Bagnall, Warren Gaines, Rob Morrison,
Others: Doug Benefit, Tom Wallace
Marni Lipke - Recorder

The meeting was called to order 7:15PM.

• MINUTES

• **DONALD BENEFIT MOVED TO APPROVE THE APRIL 17, 2012 MINUTES:
RYAN SMITH SECONDED: MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0
NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.**

• OLD BUSINESS

- Edgartown Great Pond Soft-Shell Clam Harvest
 - Rob Morrison reported that further survey of Edgartown Great Pond showed areas of 75% or better legal sized clams. The Committee discussed:
 - various closure areas,
 - warm water at the shallow southern end that could increase shellfish bacteria,
 - need for buoys with signs rather than posts to increase boat and windsurfing safety,
 - incomplete or patchy surveying,
 - later advent of algae or slime,
 - legal requirement for 48 hours of posting.
 - It would be difficult to implement and enforce the suggested closure of any area after it was fished as it could lead to fishermen staking out territory and over-marking the Pond with buoys/posts.
 - **DONALD BENEFIT MOVED TO OPEN EDGARTOWN GREAT POND TO CLAMMING AS POSTED ON THE MAP AND DISCUSSED:**
 - **I.E. CLOSED FROM KING POINT TO SWAN NECK AND THE SOUTH END;**
 - **FOR TWO (2) LEVEL (UNDER THE HANDLES) WASHBASKETS;**
 - **MAY 17-31, 2012 TWO (2) DAYS PER WEEK - WEDNESDAY AND FRIDAY,**
 - **JUNE 1-30, 2012 THREE (3) DAYS PER WEEK - MONDAY, WEDNESDAY FRIDAY**
 - **JULY1, - SEPTEMBER 30, 2012 FIVE (5) DAYS PER WEEK;**
- RALPH CASE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS. (See below: Actions.)**

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- The Pond was scheduled to be cut next week (see below: Actions).

- PUBLIC COMMENT

- Tom Wallace of the Ponds Advisory Committee and the Great Pond Foundation broached the subject of possible Committee support for a \$50,000 Town subsidy of yearly dredging costs. The Foundation having purchased the dredge, had applied for a grant for another \$50,000. The Committee discussed:

- the high cost of permitting (dollar for dollar of dredging cost),
- existing permits, bundling of permits and fast tracking certain projects,
- future Town dredge projects and scheduling.

The Committee was generally favorable but would take the matter under advisement.

- DEPUTIES/CONSTABLE'S REPORT

- The Department planted 361 bushels of quahogs in Katama with a good mix of cherries. The ability to plant from the truck ramp to the barge was a great help. The area was well signed so parameters would be clearly understood.

- Exclusion cages for piping plover were now in place so State Beach work would be restricted.

- OLD BUSINESS

- Sengekontacket Closure Update

The Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) opened Sengekontacket Pond to shellfishing during the season under a complex configuration of areas, time periods and rainfall parameters. Maps delineated closed areas which shifted for each period (left of the Boulevard and the other side of Haystack were closed year round) as follows;

- May/June - 4 inches,
- July - 0.2 inches closure for five days,
- August - 1 inch closure for five days,
- September - 1 inch closure for five days,
- October - under 1 inch.

- The opening was also dependent on a Memorandum of Understanding which had to be signed by the Selectmen.

- **RYAN SMITH MOVED TO RECOMMEND THE SELECTMEN SIGN THE MASSACHUSETTS DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES' MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT ON SENGEKONTACKET POND; DONALD BENEFIT SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.**

- What looked like a commercial fishing violation in the family area of Sengekontacket was in fact a large family cookout.

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- Brett Stearns reported that the cormorant program was in limbo and he would contact the Committee when there was anything to report.

- NEW BUSINESS

- Enforcement of aquaculture plot perimeters was again emphasized because of complaints, increased boat/recreational water activities, and stricter DMF regulations.
 - Fishermen would have a week to have all equipment and animals within their markers.
 - The landside of the operation would also have to be within the delineated area and could not be expanded, even with the permission of a relevant landowner.
 - The Committee noted that:
 - = plots were of uneven size probably due to rough surveying by the leaseholders themselves but now fixed by Satellite technology.
 - lack of cooperation by any of the farmers was likely to endanger the entire lease/ aquaculture agreement.
 - a lease clause denying renewal to consistently dormant plots,
 - cages versus bags
 - bottom growth or die-off under plots (eel grass, clams, horseshoe crabs, etc.)
- It was agreed that all aquaculture fishermen would be notified and invited to the June 5, 2012 meeting (see below: Actions).

- Financial Update

- After the \$10,000 quahog relay, the Committee had about \$7,000 left for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2012. The Department budget was depleted/encumbered.
 - It was the general consensus of the Committee that Boo Bassett continue to work at the Chappaquiddick Nursery - with someone to assist and learn the process. Rick Karney of the Martha's Vineyard Shellfish Group (MVSG) had 10 million quahogs and would be moving some into the Nursery shortly.
 - Derelict boats on Edgartown Great Pond were the responsibility of the Harbormaster.

Meetings

• Edg. Shellfish - 7:00PM Tuesdays, June 5, July 3, August 7, 2012 at Town Barn

- ADJOURNMENT

- **RALPH CASE MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 8:29PM; DONALD BENEFIT SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

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Actions To Be Done:

- All – aquaculture farmers have one week to be within borders.
- Paul/Rob/Warren/Coop – call all aquaculture fishermen re: plot boundaries.
- Paul/Rob/Warren – copy Edg. Great Pond maps and post.
- Ryan/Jack – bring in any documentation on Middle Ground plots.
- Paul– request only one channel for Edg. Great Pond cut.
- Paul– helper for Boo Bassett to learn procedures.
- Paul– copy and send Sengekontacket Sanitary Survey to Selectmen.
- Paul– submit DMF Sengekontacket MOU to Selectmen.

6/5/12 Agenda

- Aquaculture Plot Discussion

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 5/15/12
- Mass. DMF Memorandum of Understanding & Management Plan
(8 p.) 5/1/12
- Name...Size of Lot... *aquaculture plot chart*
- Edgartown Year to Date Budget Report - Waterways Annual Articles
(2 p.) 5/3/12
- May/June Classification map