

**Edgartown Shellfish Committee  
Tuesday, April 25, 2023, 4:30pm  
At the Edgartown Library**

Present: Christian Thornton, Nic Turner, Madeline Fisher, David Faber, Ryan Smith  
Shellfish Dept. Rob Morrison, Chuck Fisher  
Others: Arno Ewing, Liz Durkee, Juliet Mulinare (Recorder)

The meeting of the Edgartown Shellfish Committee was called to order at 4:30pm.

SHELLFISH PERMITS & AQUACULTURE LICENSES

The Committee discussed an inquiry from Arno Ewing about his application for a middle-flats aquaculture area lease for a proposed kelp farm. Mr. Ewing explained that the operation would be during the winter only and would involve running an underwater line between two or three buoys that the kelp would be grown on. The kelp is harvested in early spring so the equipment can be removed during the high boat traffic months and replaced the following fall. Mr. Ewing asked whether it would be possible to apply for two of the three currently available lease areas. Rob responded that town by-law states that only one lease area per person is allowed. Mr. Ewing stated that the kelp operation is experimental for now but he has been researching other successful operations and hopes to grow the industry on the island. The Committee was very supportive of the initiative to diversify the town's aquaculture program; they asked Mr. Ewing to get approval from the Harbormaster regarding any potential navigation issues and then signed Mr. Ewing's application.

MINUTES

The Committee reviewed the 3/21/23 draft minutes.

*Motion placed on the floor by Nic to approve the 3/21/23 draft minutes, seconded by Ryan. No further discussion, vote taken and approved (4-0-1). Christian abstains.*

DEPUTY/CONSTABLE REPORT & SCALLOP SEASON UPDATE

Chuck reported that scallop season has ended; it was an extremely strong season with around 8500 bushels harvested recreationally and commercially in Sengekontacket and Cape Pogue. The oyster farm is up and running, the upweller was launched with early season scallops and Senge was seeded today. The Department is also storing some scallop seeds for Tisbury.

Rob said it has been different with Warren not around but he is pleased to announce that Julie Pringle has been hired in his place. Ms. Pringle was previously the Scientific Program Director for the Great Pond Foundation. Ms. Pringle will start May 15<sup>th</sup>.

Rob reported that a few people are oystering in Senge and someone was out in the Great Pond today. Commercial oyster season will end this coming Friday but recreational oystering continues all year with restrictions put in place for vibrio season.

Rob informed the Committee that for Soft Shell Crab season he plans to use the same parameters as last year, starting the season at the end of June and ending 9/1/23.

UPDATE OF EDGARTOWN HARBOR PLAN

Ms. Durkee, Climate Planner for the Martha's Vineyard Commission, was present to discuss the update of the Edgartown Harbor Plan with the Committee. The update of the Harbor Plan will focus on balancing aquaculture with recreation as well as climate change adaptation based on rising sea levels and water quality. Ms. Durkee provided a list of questions to the Committee prior to the meeting and the Committee discussed those questions and how best to plan for the town's continued success with aquaculture.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

The next meeting will be on May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at the Edgartown Library.

At 5:35pm, a motion to adjourn was made and seconded. No further discussion, vote taken and passed unanimously, 5-0.

Minutes submitted by Juliet Mulinare.