

Edgartown Shellfish Committee
Tuesday, December 5, 2023, 4:30pm
At the Edgartown Library

Present: Nic Turner, Ryan Smith, Warren Gaines, David Faber
Shellfish Dept: Rob Morrison, Julie Pringle (recorder)

The meeting of the Edgartown Shellfish Committee was called to order at 4:32 pm.

SHELLFISH PERMITS AND AQUACULTURE LICENSES

None

MINUTES

The Committee reviewed the draft minutes from 11/14.

Motion placed on the floor by Nic to approve the 11/14/23 draft minutes. Warren seconds the motion, no further discussion, vote taken and passed unanimously, 4-0.

SHELLFISH DEPARTMENT REPORT

Rob reported that the Department has completed winter preparations in Sengekontacket. All buoys from oyster cages have been removed, mooring balls were replaced with bullet buoys and the floats have been hauled.

OLD BUSINESS

COMMERCIAL SCALLOP SEASON

Rob reported the commercial scallopers are landing 20-30 limits per day for a total of about 2000 bushels this season. Scallop meat yields are down about 30% from last year. The wholesale price is around \$22/lb. Warren reported he observed a small scallop wash-up in Katama, which consisted of mostly large adults. The Committee discussed how the large seed set in Cape Poge may be limiting scallop food resources, which may have contributed to the reduced growth observed in the adults. A large seed set with reduced quality adults was also observed in Sengekontacket. Despite this, Sengekontacket scallopers are still getting limits dip netting.

FY25 BUDGET

Rob outlined the annual town meeting warrant articles, which include a new pickup truck and the shellfish programs article. The shellfish programs article is submitted annually, however it will increase from \$44,000 to \$50,000 to account for inflation. This article funds the oyster farm, quahog relay, and propagation program. The Committee discussed increasing the expense budget 2.5% to account for inflation.

A Sengekontacket quahog relay was discussed, and it was decided to delay a decision on the matter until 2024.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

Rob reported that Don Wells, a local film producer, reached out about making a short film highlighting shellfishing on MV. Rob suggested that Don work with the MV Shellfish Group so that shellfishing in all towns would be included. The committee was supportive of this outreach

project. David suggested that the Department also partner with the Edgartown Library to do an educational program during the winter season.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

The Committee will meet again on December 19 , 2023. This will be a joint meeting with the Town of Oak Bluffs and their Shellfish Committee held at the Selectboard meeting room in Town Hall.

At 5:02pm, a motion to adjourn was made and seconded. No further discussion, vote taken and passed unanimously, 4-0.

Minutes submitted by Julie Pringle.