

Natural Resources advisory committee Minutes

Thursday January 9, 2025, at 5:30 pm

In Attendance: Tom Robinson, David Reed (via Zoom), Matt Hobart, Greg Martino, Roger Moffat, Noah Mayrand, Harbormaster Gary Kovack and Shellfish Constable Dannielle Ewart.

Also Present: Recording was Lynne Fraker and Messrs. Glen Pachico and Nelson Sigelman were in the audience.

1) Call to Order 5:30 pm: Tom Robinson called the meeting to order.

2) Public Comment:

Mr. Pachico had two points to address with the committee; first that it has been 5 years since the Tashmoo town dock has been rebuilt and he felt that it should be lengthened to gain more revenue for the town by making it available for commercial fishing vessels and lodge a formal complaint that in October, the Family buoy markers for quahoggers were moved by 30' reducing the area available for commercial fisherman in Lagoon Pond. The committee responded that the Shellfish Constable had the authority to make such decisions.

3) Shellfish Report and Harbormaster's Report:

Reports through November were reviewed by the committee. The committee noted that shellfish landings are down for the period and a general comment was made that these do not include family permit landings and that it would be nice to account for the full harvest. Ms. Ewart stated that the number of permit holders is pretty static. Mr. Kovack reported that a \$1 million grant has been awarded for the upgrade and rebuild of the Owen Park Pier. Also, the DOCKWA boat reservation website is up and fully functioning. Mr. Kovack also reported that the vessel Seeker had washed up on the rock but has been moved to the beach by the RM Packer dock.

4) Previous Meeting Minutes:

September 19, 2024, minutes – Noah Mayrand made a motion to approve, seconded by Matt Hobart and approved 4-0-0.

October 10, 2024, minutes – Already approved.

November 14, 2024, minutes – Could not be located and will be resent by David Reed.

5) Review of Shellfish regulations:

Ms. Ewart led the discussion and had many proposed comments and changes described below.

General – Mant typos concerning selectboard vs. selectmen and he/she vs. gender neutral language.

Section 8 – A need to remove invasive species collected to above the high tide mark but to release welk eggs back to the water.

Section 10 – A lengthy discussion on the best way to describe where the boundaries are for commercial vs. family areas and how to describe them. Greg Martino felt areas should be delineated by lat/lon and shown on a map that would apply to each year as opposed to physical markers on the shore. Ms. Ewart believes a land-based marker is very helpful. This will be a project this year to develop a map to facilitate the marking of open and closed areas to shellfishing.

Section 15 – Change the language for scallops harvested on behalf of an elderly or disabled person. The perceived problem is that commercial fisherman may harvest shellfish using more than one permit and sell them rather than give them to that other permit holder. Noah Mayrand commented that somehow the other permit holder should be required to inform the Shellfish Constable that they did in-fact receive the shellfish.

Section 20 – Change the temperature/time requirements for scalloping to mirror Oak Bluffs.

Add an apprentice commercial license for people under 16 years old. The committee wholeheartedly agreed to encourage young people to come into the trade.

Section 5 – Create a Family short-term permit for quahogs and steamers in the off-season to raise revenue.

Create a permit for veterans that is free. Mr. Sigelman suggested that this be expanded to active-duty military personnel as well.

Create an Educational permit category to facilitate interest among students and for science projects. Again, the committee thought this was a great idea.

Noah Mayrand commented that the large orange baskets should be allowed by commercial fisherman (like other island town) as the bushel baskets break and are harder to use. He will research this for the next meeting.

Ms. Lynne Fraker is going to compile a section-by-section

organization of the regulations and also note the other island town regulations to facilitate the committee for our next meeting.

Items not Anticipated by the Chair:

The committee agreed to allow meetings to be held by Zoom.

Motion to Adjourn: At 6:55 Tom Robinson made a motion to adjourn. Second, by Greg Martino.

Voted 5-0-0.