

Meeting of the Tidal Fisheries Advisory Commission

October 12, 2023

Department of Natural Resources

Summary of Actions and Motions

Commissioners in Attendance: Robert T. Brown, Scott Budden, Rachel Dean, Russell Dize, Rachel Fazenbaker, Chair Steve Lay, Brandon Malec, Brian Nessor, Jeff Pharis, Bobby Whaples (Proxy for Bubby Powley), Bill Rice, Bill Scerbo, and Bill Sieling.

Commissioners Absent and Not Represented: Sonny Gwin, David M. Sutherland and Troy Wilkins.

Participants: Lynn Fegley, Paul Genovese, Cpt. Matthew Corbin, Carrie Kennedy, Jacob Holtz, Tamara O'Connell, Amanda Small, Michael Luisi and Angela Giuliano.

Public Comment: Allison Colden, Chesapeake Bay Foundation

Action Items:

- A moment of silence for Russ Spangler who recently passed away. Russ, from Baltimore County, was very active with the Maryland Watermen's Association and also assisted the department in many ways.
- New commission members welcomed to the meeting - Rachel Dean, Rachel Fazenbaker, Jeff Pharis and Bill Rice.
- The department is tentatively planning to schedule an educational meeting for all commission members this December, the meeting will discuss who we are, how we are structured, and what we do.
- Commercial Fisheries Reporting
 - The department reminds the industry on the importance of commercial reporting, the department continues to encourage commissioners to remind their constituents to report and the importance of it.
 - Carrots to incentivize reporting? Brainstorming is encouraged, please submit ideas to carrie.kennedy@maryland.gov.
 - Reminder, the reporting data is for the resource, it's not used against the industry. The resource is needed for the industry to continue. The department not having the reporting data is a risk (to all involved).
 - What can the department do to increase the industry's comfort level (with the data)? Let's continue the conversation.
 - Reminder - you need a shrimp permit if you wish to harvest shrimp with your existing Chesapeake Bay gear or if you are a participant in the Atlantic Coast Shrimp Pilot. It's free, and you can get it any time.
 - Be aware that a new system is being developed to replace COMPASS, the new license/permit system is currently planned to roll out Dec. 2024.
 - Commission requests hard/plastic license/permit cards issued (to replace paper versions currently distributed).
- Fishery Management Plans (FMP)
 - Anticipated Actions in 2024
 - Progress update to commission on FMP legislative reports and timeline

- Commission feedback on the 2022 Legislative Report
- Commission feedback on FMP Development and its Review Process
- The FMP website is being updated, email tamaral.oconnell@maryland.gov or amanda.small@maryland.gov your suggestions for website improvements
- Amendment to the Oyster Fishery Management Plan - update requested by Commissioner Brown - when will it be adopted and possibly become a regulation? *DNR Response -The item will be scoped during the commission's January meeting. Then go through the remainder of the regulatory process with full regulatory adoption 6-8 months from that time. The department can follow the plan once adopted but regulations cannot be made on the plan.*
- Scoping Item - Container Definition and Limits - Comments and Questions for Department
 - Can lugs (male) and baskets (females) be used on a boat at the same time? (Voiced by two commissioners.)
 - If an individual runs out of one container, can that individual use the other container that day?
 - If we are on a 15 bushel limit again, can it be modified to 12 lugs (not to exceed 600 lbs).
 - *Response, the department recognises the issue with the current conversion factor and there is interest in getting a more accurate conversion factor.*
- The department will continue to accept comments from the commission on fisheries-related items it is currently proposing and scoping. Please review your handouts and send your comments to Sarah Widman (sarah.widman@maryland.gov) or Jacob Holtz (jacob.holtz@maryland.gov). Additionally, the items reviewed during the meeting will be posted on the department website, beginning a 15 day public comment period on these items at that time, please share with your constituents. *Commissioners were notified via email on Oct. 16, once the 15 day comment period began. regarding items discussed at this meeting.*
- Commissioners should anticipate a winter meeting of the Eel Workgroup to discuss possible management measures coming down from ASMFC
- Striped Bass
 - Addendum II ASMFC Public Process Timeline (for commission awareness)
 - May-Sept 2023: Development of Draft Addendum II
 - October 2023: Board reviews and approves Draft Addendum II for public comment
 - Nov-Dec 2023: Public Hearings / Comment Period
 - January 2024: ASMFC Board Meeting; Board reviews public comment, selects management measures, final approval of Addendum II
 - Rec. Measures 2024 / Commercial Quota Possibly 2025
 - October 2024: Stock assessment update, reevaluate progress towards rebuilding, consider additional changes to management, recreational discards - Possibly 2026
- Commissioner Rice volunteered to participate on the blue catfish work group.
- Additional Commissioner Business
 - Commissioner Nessor requested an update on commissioner appointments and whether or not they are required to be sworn in for the additional two years (they were sworn in for two, they were supposed to be sworn in for four years). Response: *Waiting on the appointment office for guidance.*
 - Commissioner Sieling requested a future action item from this commission to possibly address the blue crab meat issue involving the importation of meat from Venezuela. Additionally, a request to government representatives at any level to review and develop an action plan to address the issue. Response: *Waiting on formal response from Secretary Kurtz to previously submitted request from Bill.*
 - Commissioner Dean requested a follow up on food labeling, to develop transparency for the seafood industry, from Seafood Marketing, once the secretary formally replies to Bill Sieling's inquiry.

Motions:

- *Robert T. Brown as commission's Vice-Chairperson until the July 2024 commission meeting.* Motion by Bill Sieling, seconded by Bill Rice. Vote: No objections. Approved.
- *Commission approves July 20, 2023 meeting summary.* Motion by Bill Sieling, seconded by Brian Nesspor. Vote: No objections. Approved.

Next Meeting Date:

- TBD.