

Harbor and Shellfish Advisory Board
Tuesday, April 19, 2022 at 5:00 p.m.
Via Zoom
***HSAB meeting are video-recorded**

Members present: Andy Lowell, Dave Bossi, Peter Brace, Dave Fronzuto, Tom Szydlowski, Dan Pronk, Ginger Andrews

Members Absent:

Marine Dept:

Natural Resources Dept: Tara Riley

Others: Kona Hosier, Samantha Denette

CALL TO ORDER

5:02 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Unanimously approved, 7-0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Draft minutes of April 5, 2022

Unanimously approved, 5-0, with Mr. Szydlowski and Mr. Fronzuto abstaining.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Reminders: April 25 NP&EDC meeting & April 30 Meet the Candidates Forum

Mr. Lowell reminded the board of these two events.

MARINE DEPARTMENT REPORT:

General Marine Department report – Sheila Lucey

No report.

NATURAL RESOURCES REPORT

General Natural Resources Department report – NRD staff

Ms. Riley asked if she could give a short presentation on the Peconic Bay bay scallop situation. The HSAB agreed that she could do during her report at this meeting.

Ms. Riley reported that Hummock Pond, after being opened, stayed open for eight day and Sesachacha stayed open for five days after being opened, and both ponds dropped an average of two to four feet. For Sesachacha Pond, the town is installing a “bio-swale” to help with flooding of Polpis Road, Ms. Riley added. Ms. Riley reported that town water quality specialist Thais Fournier had started the Natural Resources Department (NRD) water quality sampling program with the pond openings this spring. Ms. Riley reported that Ms. Fournier, Vincent Murphy and Leah Cabral are applying for three different grants for Sesachacha Pond’s living shoreline project. The application deadline is May 5.

Ms. Riley reported that she has around five million quahog seed, post-spawn, that are 1.5 millimeters in size. She added she has around 9 million bay scallop seed. Also, Ms. Riley and her staff did a bay scallop spawn today, which generated an estimated 122 million larvae.

Ms. Riley reported that commercial scallopers working with the NRD and the Nantucket Shellfish Association (NSA) dredged and moved approximately 878 bushels of bay scallop seed from the large seed deposit in Madaket Harbor to safer locations in that harbor. She reported that this seed deposit is large and dense. She added that she’ll be diving the site, marking it using GPS and developing a monitoring protocol for the summer.

Ms. Riley reported that she serves on the Peconic Bay Technical Committee, meeting once every three months. Ms. Riley reported that bay scallops in Peconic Bay, which is at the northeast end of Long Island, NY., are enduring unsuccessful fall spawns because of a scallop die-off prior to the fall. She continued that the seed does well, but when they reach their second year of adulthood,

these scallops are dying before they can be harvested. For this area, Ms. Riley said the nub scallop, the fall-spawn scallop, is vital the survival of this fishery. Ms. Riley said members of this committee are tracking water temperatures that have increased a lot over the last five years, anything above 77 degrees and dissolved oxygen below 4 milligrams per liter. Ms. Riley said the group is also looking at the shells to see what is causing the scallops to die off. This group has also found a parasite in the scallop's liver called "BSB" and they're finding that lab-spawned scallops are doing worse than wild scallops. The group believes the high temperatures are the main problem.

In answer to Mr. Lowell's question about temperature affecting strength of the shells of the seed in Madaket Harbor, Ms. Denette reported that the scallop seed dredged up in Madaket Harbor looks really healthy. She reported that there's still a lot of scallops in this location. She reported that the scallopers were finding a kelp in their dredges they hadn't seen before.

Mr. Brace asked if there is a danger of leaving the rest of the seed where it is now. Ms. Riley said this area is the most vulnerable and she and her staff will be monitoring the area over the next several months.

The HSAB and Ms. Denette discussed the funding of the commercial scallopers working on this dredging effort. The NSA granted \$10,000 to pay the scallopers and Ms. Denette said the Nantucket Land Council (NLC) might be contributing funds as well.

Mr. Fronzuto asked the size of this seed and Ms. Riley said around 50 millimeters at the beginning of March.

Mr. Brace asked if the distribution of the seed is only in Madaket Harbor. Ms. Denette said just in Madaket. Mr. Fronzuto asked how long could this seed rescue effort last and Ms. Riley said the limiting factor is increasing water temperature with October and November being the best time to move. She added that she didn't want to be moving seed after the temperature goes above 50 degrees Fahrenheit.

Mr. Brace said it would be better to spread the seed around all the harbors instead of having the seed all mature in Madaket Harbor and then all the scallopers would be out in that harbor and its eelgrass would get torn up.

Mr. Brace suggested that the seed be driven back to town and loaded onto boats for distribution in Nantucket Harbor. Ms. Riley agreed and said larger boats could be used as well as trailers.

Mr. Fronzuto said he's moved seed with larger boats and it's worked well.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON MARINE DEPARTMENT / NATURAL RESOURCES REPORT

OLD BUSINESS

Liveaboard application – Discussion

Mr. Brace said he did email Erika Mooney to find out why the HSAB wasn't sent the updated liveaboard registration form, but he hadn't heard back from her before today's meeting.

Excessive sand in scallops/Dredging plan – Discussion

Mr. Lowell asked for any updates from Ms. Riley. Ms. Riley said she didn't have an update on this issue.

Fertilizer-ban articles – Discussion

Mr. Brace said the HSAB would have a lot more to talk about after the Nantucket Planning & Economic Development Commission's (NP&EDC) fertilizer discussion planned for its meeting on April 25, 2022.

Mr. Brace reported to the board that a few days ago he'd seen someone fertilizing the lawn of the new park at the head of the Creeks. The HSAB directed Mr. Brace to email the Nantucket Islands Land Bank (NLB) to learn what's going on here.

HEALTH OF THE HARBORS

Stormwater runoff and harbor impacts

Mr. Lowell said he wanted to be able to create or find a map of all the outfall pipes going into Nantucket Harbor and where they collect from. Ms. Andrews reported that the NLB is doing this documentation for its Lily Pond property.

Mr. Brace reminded the board of the long-term cleaning project of Consue Springs on Union Street. He asked Mr. Fronzuto to follow up on this project. Mr. Fronzuto said he would do this. Mr. Fronzuto said the outfall pipes are mapped out, but the contribution areas are not. Mr. Fronzuto said he would research the locations of the outfall pipes and the zones of contribution. Mr. Brace suggested that Mr. Fronzuto check in with Mark Willett at Wannacomet Water Company. Mr. Fronzuto suggested that the zone of contribution should be published in the newspaper.

Excessive lawn fertilizer use: Update – Discussion – New information

No discussion/update.

FDA shellfish taking prohibition in mooring fields

Ms. Riley did not have an update for the HSAB. She said all shellfish beds are open until May 1, 2022.

Mr. Brace asked Ms. Riley if the ban is re-imposed on May 1 and if the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) would re-open the closed areas this season if her recent letter to the DMF and the Federal food & Drug Administration (FDA) was convincing enough. Ms. Riley said she was hopeful that the closed areas could be re-opened sometime this season.

Water quality testing

Ms. Riley said that Ms. Fournier has the results of her 2021 water quality testing and she recommended that the HSAB invite Ms. Fournier to present her results to the HSAB.

NEW BUSINESS

Land Council eelgrass restoration project

No discussion/update.

Coastal Resilience Advisory Board – Update

Mr. Brace reported on the April 14, 2022 Coastal Resilience Advisory Board (CRAC) meeting to the HSAB. Mr. Brace detailed for the HSAB the sea level rise resiliency report done by the Woods Hole Group for the Trustees of Reservations (TTOR) and the Nantucket Conservation Foundation (NCF) for four weak sections of the shoreline of the Cuskata-Coatue Wildlife Refuge. Mr. Brace explained each area and their vulnerabilities including Haulover Pond, Cuskata Pond, the north end of the Galls on Great Point and in between First and Second Point on Coatue.

Mr. Fronzuto said that the NCF and TTOR looking to protect these weak areas a good thing.

Ms. Andrews said salt marshes tend to be more resistant to erosion, meaning that the salt marshes in this area could help these weak areas. She added that she's skeptical of coastal engineers and their plans. Mr. Brace said the Woods Hole Group seemed to over emphasize protecting public access to these properties instead of focusing on their primary mission of protecting their natural resources.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENT

Ms. Denette said the NSA submitted a brief statement to the Select Board that they support all efforts to ban fertilizer. She added that the NSA is also putting its name on longer letter going into the Inky as a letter to the editor written and submitted by the NLC.

Mr. Lowell said someone should be prepared to do an amendment to Article 79, the the fertilizer ban article at Town Meeting putting a five-year sunset date on the article to make it more of a pilot project to try out this idea.

Ms. Denette said she would meet the article's sponsor, Joe Minella, to gauge how he feels about such an amendment. Mr.

Brace suggested that the HSAB should put its name on this letter as well.

Mr. Fronzuto said he still thinks we should let the existing fertilizer use regulations work. Mr. Lowell thanked Ms. Denette for all her efforts.

The board discussed the upcoming Town election candidates for the HSAB and how to get the word out on the two write-in, incumbent candidates and the two challengers. The HSAB voted 7-0 to have Mr. Brace write a letter to the editor explaining the write-in protocol to the voters.

RECAP and ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

ADJOURN

Unanimously approved, 7-0, at 6:38 p.m.

YOUTUBE LINK

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uM1sd3hp84c&list=PL49sKqpy7VAj6nJnAlrlKlxWm6VQTfuXg&index=1&t=4264s>

Future Meetings

May 3 and May 17

Respectfully Submitted,
Peter B. Brace, Secretary