

Harbor and Shellfish Advisory Board
Tuesday, May 17, 2022 at 5:00 p.m.
Via Zoom
***HSAB meeting are video-recorded**

Members present: Andy Lowell, Dave Bossi, Peter Brace, Dave Fronzuto, Scott Anderson, Ginger Andrews

Members Absent: Stephen Payor

Marine Dept:

Natural Resources Dept: Tara Riley, Thais Fournier

Others: Kona Hosier

CALL TO ORDER

5:02 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Unanimously approved, 6-0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Draft minutes of April 5, 2022

Continued to the next meeting.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Election of officers

Mr. Brace recommended that the HSAB wait until there's a full board in attendance before voting on officers. Mr. Lowell agreed.

MARINE DEPARTMENT REPORT:

General Marine Department report – Sheila Lucey

No report.

NATURAL RESOURCES REPORT

General Natural Resources Department report – NRD staff

Ms. Riley reported that she plans to start spawning next week because her interns will be arriving then. She said the incoming water temperature to the hatchery is currently 59 degrees Fahrenheit.

Ms. Riley reported that at the end of the week, she and her staff are going out to Madaket to monitor the scallop seed cache by GPSing the area, determining water temperature, measuring scallop size, observing how much empty shell is mixed in with the live scallop seed. She added that she is also starting to monitor eelgrass in Nantucket Harbor in preparation for an eelgrass harvesting and transplanting effort with the Nantucket Land Council (NLC).

Ms. Riley reported that she's received a response from the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) to her letter she sent requesting that harbor shellfish beds not be closed this season. She reported that the Federal Food & Drug Administration (FDA) will visit Nantucket to see what Ms. Riley referenced in her letter first-hand. She added that she is trying to discern which DMF staff will join the FDA on this visit. Ms. Riley said that the DMF did respond to her request to remove the hatchery pier and surrounding waters from the closure map by redrawing the map by running the line from Brant Point to First Pier in Monomoy, instead of to Second Pier, pending clean water quality samples. She reported that the Horse Shed is closed this season to the taking of all shellfish except for bay scallops.

Ms. Riley said she and her staff will be conducting hatchery tours Mondays and Thursdays in June, July and August.

Ms. Riley reported that the hatchery will be doing some community outreach to students at the Nantucket Boys & Girls Club as well with older students through the Great Harbor Yacht Club (GHYC).

Ms. Riley plans to continue eelgrass surveys in Nantucket Harbor only this year but that finding the funding is challenging this season.

Ms. Riley reported that there will be an oyster festival sponsored by the Nantucket Shellfish Association (NCA) and the NLC on June 12, 12-4 p.m. at Cisco Brewers.

Ms. Riley reported that Morgan Sayle, the Natural Resources Department's (NRD) endangered species monitor who is currently taking drone pilot training, reports that there are nesting piping plovers at Jetties Beach, 40th Pole, Smith's Point and the tip of Quaise Point.

Ms. Riley that the Select Board discussed herring at a recent meeting and that there is no need to dredge the Madaket Ditch because the herring aren't having trouble moving through it between Long Pond and the ocean.

Mr. Fronzuto asked when the FDA is coming down to the island.

Ms. Riley didn't have an answer for him.

Mr. Bossi asked about the money for stormwater runoff approved at Town Meeting this year. Ms. Fournier said the NRD is working on a few projects designed to mitigate runoff into the harbors and ponds. Mr. Fronzuto said that David Gray of the Sewer

Department would be creating a map of stormwater drains emptying into the harbors. Mr. Brace asked if the FDA and the DMF will be somehow guided by NRD staff when they visit the island. Ms. Riley responded that she's hoping that she'll get notified when they're coming down to the island. Ms. Riley said if she doesn't get a good response from the FDA and the DMF to her letter, her next step would be to reach out to Nantucket's state senator and representative in the state legislature.

Mr. Anderson also asked if there was a way to know when the DMF and FDA people would be coming over to the island.

Ms. Andrews suggested using a drone for eelgrass monitoring. She also confirmed that herring are being caught by osprey in Long Pond that there is still good tidal flow also into North Head of Long Pond.

Mr. Lowell suggested that Ms. Riley seek funding for eelgrass monitoring in Madaket Harbor from the Madaket Admiralty Club and the NSA.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON MARINE DEPARTMENT / NATURAL RESOURCES REPORT

No public comment.

OLD BUSINESS

Liveaboard application - Discussion

Mr. Brace reported that he followed up with Erika Mooney in the Select Board's office. He learned that the liveaboard registration form sent to the HSAB by Ms. Riley was the old form. Mr. Brace said a member of the HSAB should go down to the Marine Department office and get a copy of the new form. Mr. Fronzuto said he would track down the new form.

Excessive sand in scallops/Dredging plan – Discussion

Mr. Fronzuto said the HSAB should request that Jeff Carlson, NRD director, attend the next meeting to update the board on the dredging plan and updating of the harbor plan. He suggested that Mr. Carlson attend HSAB meetings once a quarter.

Mr. Anderson asked how he could get access to aerial photos of Nantucket and Madaket harbors. Ms. Riley said she could send a Conservation Commission link to where the photos are to the board.

HEALTH OF THE HARBORS

Stormwater runoff and harbor impacts

Mr. Lowell said that a recent storm caused storm surge, which washed bark mulch into the streets, clogging storm drains. Mr. Lowell asked the HSAB to make note of such situations as they arise during storms.

Excessive lawn fertilizer use: Update – Discussion – New information

Mr. Lowell acknowledged the success of the Town Meeting article in early May. Mr. Brace stated his lack of confidence in the Town's ability to enforce a fertilizer ban and revised Town fertilizer regulations. Mr. Bossi recommended increasing fees, enforcement and training related to the Town's fertilizer regulations. Ms. Andrews said nitrogen is nitrogen and that source doesn't matter. She added that she was encouraged that so many landscapers support banning fertilizers and tightening up the Town's fertilizer regulations. Mr. Fronzuto asked that Mr. Carlson attend the next meeting to speak on this topic.

FDA shellfish taking prohibition in mooring fields

Previously addressed earlier in the meeting in Ms. Riley's Natural Resources Department report.

Water quality testing - Water quality report – Thais Fournier

Ms. Fournier, the Town's water resource specialist, presented her 2021 Water Resource Report to the HSAB. Ms. Fournier reported that Nantucket and Madaket harbors showed the highest water quality of all the bodies of water she tested in 2021 with the caveat that eelgrass is still declining and there are still annual algae blooms. She reported that Polpis Harbor West remains an impaired water body.

Ms. Fournier reported for Madaket Harbor, despite high water quality, Hither Creek continues to have poor water quality. Ms. Fournier added that both harbors are "approaching" their target TMDLs (total maximum daily load), the maximum amount of pollution a body of water can absorb and remain healthy.

Ms. Fournier said between 1995 and 2020, eelgrass has decreased by 32 percent in Nantucket's harbors. She said she is seeing a lot of lyngbia algae covering eelgrass. Ms. Fournier said sea level is impacting eelgrass in that as the water deepens, eelgrass gets less sunlight. Also, as the water warms, algae blooms increase in size and frequency.

Ms. Fournier highlighted some of the upcoming water quality projects for the island including sediment and dredging plans, Nantucket Harbor Watershed Groundwater study with the Great Harbor Yacht Club, biovention (bioswales). Installation of a Flow Cam to identify harmful algal blooms (HABs) and updates to the Town's fertilizer regulations.

Mr. Lowell thanked Ms. Fournier for her report and said she would have the full support of the HSAB to execute a stormwater management plan.

NEW BUSINESS

Land Council eelgrass restoration project

No update.

Coastal Resilience Advisory Board - Update

Mr. Brace reported that the Select Board approved two new members for the Coastal Resilience Advisory Committee (CRAC); one from the Land Islands Land Bank and another from either the Capital Programs Committee or the Finance Committee, as well as several at-large members, all to be appointed by the end of the current fiscal year, which ends June 30, 2022. Mr. Brace added that the NRD is applying for grants to build an artificial reef at the narrow corner of Polpis Road to prevent this part of the road from washing out and also to restore tidal flow to the marsh on the west side of Polpis Road. Ms. Riley said this grant did not get submitted to the state's Municipal Vulnerability Program (MVP) because 2022 Town Meeting voters didn't approve the Town's matching funds for this project.

Mr. Brace reported that the CRAC is starting to apply for grants for several short-term projects including the Downtown Flood Barrier Feasibility Study for a protective, onshore berm. Mr. Brace said the CRAC needs a letter of support from the HSAB.

Mr. Brace reported that the CRAC working with the Town is getting going with three short-term coastal resilience projects to

both address highly vulnerable parts of the island and to show the public that Town is committed to projects in the CRP. The three projects are raising Madaket Road at First and Second bridges, and installing bridges, raising Polpis Road between the north and south sides of Folger's Marsh with the possible installation of a bridge, and raising the section of Polpis Road running closest to Sesachacha Pond.

Mr. Brace cited the survey done ReMain Nantucket, which surveyed 679 people a large majority of whom said they were alarmed by Nantucket sea level rise data and that they support the Town's efforts through the CRP to adapt Nantucket to sea level rise.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENT

No comments

RECAP and ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

Mr. Lowell encouraged Mr. Anderson to reach out to him with agenda item suggestions and to take on a harbor- or shellfish-related project to work on during his time on the board. Mr. Lowell explained the HSAB's one meeting a month schedule for the summer to Mr. Anderson.

Mr. Fronzuto asked if there's been any progress on the transfer of Ted Lambrecht's oyster lease/license to another fishers. Ms. Riley recalled previously reporting to the HSAB that Sean Fitzgibbon had come into the NRD office recently. She added that this process is active and moving forward.

Mr. Lowell updated the HSAB on the May 10, 2022 Nantucket Shellfish Association meeting.

ADJOURN

Unanimously approved, 6-0, at 6:30 p.m.

YOUTUBE LINK

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QleT6Utjdnc&list=PL49sKqpy7VAj6nJnAlrlKlxWm6VQTfuXg&index=1>

Future Meetings:

June 7 and June 21

Respectfully Submitted,
Peter B. Brace, Secretary