

**Harbor and Shellfish Advisory Board
Tuesday, April 4, 2023 at 5:00 p.m.
Meeting trailer, 131 Pleasant St., Nantucket, MA 02554
*HSAB meeting are video-recorded and
available at Nantucket Government TV on YouTube**

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

Members Absent:

Marine Dept: Sheila Lucey

Natural Resources Dept: Tara Riley, Jeff Carlson,

Others: Ted Lambrecht, Kona Hosier

CALL TO ORDER

5:03 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Unanimously approved, 6-0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Draft minutes of March 21, 2023

Unanimously approved 5-0 with Ms. Andrews abstaining.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

No report.

MARINE DEPARTMENT REPORT:

General Marine Department report – Sheila Lucey

Ms. Lucey reported that the Town Pier renovations should be completed by May 15, 2023. She added that the pier gained five slips and a new ramp for the dinghy dock. Ms. Riley reported that the Town has purchased the concrete floating dock floats to replace

the existing floating pier system. She added that the installation should begin in October or November of this year.

Ms. Lucey reported that the Nantucket Boat Basin is going well.

Ms. Lucey reported that she needs to mark a channel going into the Great Harbor Yacht Club (GHYC) docks because too many moorings are blocking an auxiliary emergency boat hauling area that must remain open.

Ms. Lucey reported that she's been working with the new Nantucket Fire Chief, Michael Cranson, to ensure all of Nantucket's waterfront infrastructure is as defensible as possible in case of a fire. This included Tuckernuck's waterfront and checking out all of the Tuckernuck Fire Department's equipment.

Ms. Lucey reported that last summer, the dinghy docks off of the Town Pier became clogged with inflatable outboard boats under 13 feet. She added that these boats are too small to qualify for slips at the pier and that none of their owners had boats moored in the harbor that they needed these dinghies for. Ms. Lucey explained that these 21 boat owners were using the dinghy dock as a slip for their outboards and that these owners were crowding out moored boat owners trying to get from their boats in the harbor to the dock, sometimes having to climb over up to eight dinghies tied up at the Town Pier. She added that this summer, she'll be working on a solution to this situation including one the transient slips on the pier.

Ms. Lucey reported that she hasn't had a problem hiring lifeguards.

Ms. Lucey reported that the plans for the new Marine Department are still pending with the current cost at \$1.2 million over the original estimate. She added that completion of this project is four to five years from now.

Ms. Lucey reported that the Marine Department's maintenance building out on Bunker Road should be done by the winter.

Mr. Lowell suggested requiring dinghies being connected to a moored boat only. Ms. Lucey said there should also be a permit required for all dinghies as there is for dinghies stored on harbor

beaches. Ms. Lucey said she needs to work up a fee for dinghies that tie up at the Town Pier.

Mr. Lowell asked about the partially submerged boat in the Horse Shed. Ms. Lucey said she's still working on removing this boat from the harbor.

Mr. Fronzuto asked Ms. Lucey what the new Marine Department office building will have in it. Ms. Lucey said the new building is planned to be offices for the Marine Department and bathrooms for the boating public.

Mr. Fronzuto said Ms. Lucey can create whatever permit fee she needs to for the under-13-foot dinghies. He added that dinghy docks might also be located in Easy Street Boat Basin and possibly at Petrol Landing. Mr. Brace reported that the Land Bank had settled all the legal challenges to the Land Bank's proposed dinghy dock at Petrol Landing but that there is one more appeal still pending.

Mr. Bossi said that dinghy permits must be tied to a boat or a mooring.

Mr. Anderson said there could be a fee paid to the Town by dinghy or kayak owners who store these boats on dinghy racks or Town or private beaches when the Marine Department has to remove these boats.

Mr. Brace told Ms. Lucey to come back to the HSAB for any help creating solutions for this dinghy situation. Ms. Lucey said she would.

Ms. Andrews suggested some sort of lock of the dinghies to the pier applied by the Marine Department for noncompliance by Dinghy owners or bright orange tickets left on derelict dinghies.

Ms. Lucey said she would keep the HSAB in the loop as she worked on possible solutions.

NATURAL RESOURCES REPORT

General Natural Resources Department report – NRD staff

Ms. Riley reported on her recent attendance at the National Shellfish Association conference.

Ms. Riley reported that the Natural Resources Department (NRD) opened Sesachacha and Hummock ponds to the ocean in early April with Sesachacha staying open for three days and Hummock about a week.

Ms. Riley reported that NRD just hired Griffin Harkins as the Town's new assistant biologist and Emma Morgan as the Town's water quality specialist. She added that she is also interviewing summer shellfish hatchery interns and that two interns from last summer would be returning for the 2023 season.

Ms. Riley reported that the NRD's oyster shell recovery program would be operating again this season and added that oyster shells to be used as a shellfish growth medium in the harbor is a very limited resource on the mainland, so Nantucket is fortunate to have such a good supply with the help of participating island restaurants.

Ms. Riley reported that at the hatchery right now, she has four oyster spawns ready in three weeks and three scallop spawns ready in five weeks. She reported that the algae bioreactor has been running for five weeks with hardly any issues producing 12 million cells per milliliter.

Ms. Riley reported that the final bay scallop bushel total for the season should come in at around 7,400 bushels.

Mr. Brace asked Ms. Riley asked what adult scallops might still be left in the harbors. Ms. Riley agreed that there could be, but she said she was more concerned about the bay scallop fishery culture and whether or not there would still be continued interest in scalloping. Mr. Lowell indicated that the HSAB may need to consider extending the bay scalloping season when scallopers are reporting more scallops still to be caught near the end of each season. Mr. Lowell suggested polling commercial scallopers to see if they'd prefer a longer season or higher per-license limits. He added that a fishermen's coop might help this situation out.

Mr. Carlson said that because the NRD has amassed and continues to collect so much data on the harbors and bay scallops, the bay scallop industry is getting to the point where proactive measures can be taken prior to each scallop season. He added that this might include opening the commercial season in mid-October and or increasing daily bushel limits.

Mr. Fronzuto suggested maybe boosting the bushel limit on Dec. 1 while taking into consideration when bay scallops harvested by Martha's Vineyard enter the market.

Ms. Carlson suggested setting a bushel limit every year just prior to each commercial season.

Ms. Andrews reported that she recently got some scallops from Bruce Cowan that were high quality, beautiful scallops and that this can be traced back to the openers. She mentioned that quality control is hugely important to the marketing and selling of Nantucket's bay scallops.

Peter Morrison suggested asking scallopers at the end of the season what they saw in the harbor each season.

Mr. Carlson said the NRD is working toward doing a study on groundwater flow into the harbor and revising the Nantucket Harbor Watershed Map. He added that they would be remapping the watershed including surface water flow and nutrient flow within the groundwater.

Mr. Carlson reported that the NRD is being reorganized into three divisions; sustainability and resiliency, regulatory and shellfish and aquatic resources.

Mr. Carlson reported that for the sediment transport study and dredge plan, he was able to hire Arcadis for this contract. He said he would be reaching out to all of the relevant stakeholders to participate in this process. Mr. Lowell said he hoped that the HSAB's idea of doing a pilot project of dredging sand out of overloaded eelgrass beds could happen as part of this process. Mr. Carlson explained how the results of the sediment study could benefit Nantucket's harbors.

Mr. Lowell noted that some commercial fishing vessels can't tie up at the Town Pier at low tide because the water there is too shallow. Mr. Fronzuto noted that shallower harbor depths and keeping the main channel into the harbor 15 feet at low tide keeps mega yachts and cruise ships from entering the harbor. He added that the filling in of the Easy Street Boat Basin is caused by ferry boat maneuvering.

Mr. Carlson reported that the Nantucket Harbors Action Plan Update Committee (NHAPUC) has held three organizational meetings to date and that actual work on the plan can begin once the state issues its notice for the committee to proceed.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON MARINE DEPARTMENT / NATURAL RESOURCES REPORT

OLD BUSINESS

Harbor watershed insert – Update/Discussion

Mr. Brace reported that Town Manager Libby Gibson said that the HSAB needs Select Board approval to do this.

Mr. Carlson recommended using as many different avenues for public education.

Mr. Morrison said he would help the HSAB reach out to the 25 area associations by informing the presidents of each association and zero in on those within the watersheds. He added that the Nantucket Civic League is creating statements of neighborhood quality of life priorities for each of its associations and that the HSAB's efforts to inform property owners of their potential contribution of pollutants to the harbors should be included in this process. Mr. Morrison asked the HSAB to keep him in the loop on its progress in organizing the workshop so the Nantucket Civic League could include the event details in its early summer newsletter.

Mr. Fronzuto said the HSAB would send the buckslip to Mr. Morrison.

Mr. Lowell thanked Mr. Morrison for his help.

Mr. Anderson said he's been in contact with David Gray of the Nantucket Sewer Department who said he'd be willing to attend a HSAB meeting to answer sewer collection system questions.

Mr. Bossi suggested the HSAB pick a date for the workshop in early September so the board can move forward with planning the workshop.

Mr. Brace suggested that the board needs the Select Board to sign off on the workshop and insert before the HSAB can pick date.

Mr. Morrison suggested working with the police department to schedule use of the community room and working with NCTV to film the event.

The HSAB voted 6-0 to submit the final version of the buckslip to Town Administration.

Vineyard Wind and South Coast Wind – Discussion

No discussion.

Green crabs – Discussion

Mr. Anderson reported that the Toscana Corp. would be receiving green crabs caught in the harbors as part of an effort to lower their populations and mixing them into their compost pile.

Harbors Action Plan Committee HSAB recommendations - Discussion

Previously discussed under Natural Resources Department report.

Sediment Transport Study and dredge plan – Discussion

Previously discussed in Natural Resources Department report.

HEALTH OF THE HARBORS

NEW BUSINESS

Ted Lambrecht Town aquaculture lease request – Discussion

Mr. Lambrecht informed the HSAB that his boat is operational and that he hoped to secure an aquaculture lease of harbor bottom from the Town to grow oysters on.

Mr. Fronzuto asked Mr. Carlson if there is currently a waiting list for available harbor bottom for aquaculture leases. Mr. Carlson informed the HSAB that the Town currently doesn't have any harbor bottom acreage available for leases for commercial aquaculture operations.

Mr. Lambrecht requested permission to temporarily lease four of the original 10 acres he transferred to Sean Fitzgibbons while the Town determines if Mr. Fitzgibbons is working the first six acres in accordance to the parameters of his lease. Mr. Carlson said that these four acres would most likely be transferred to Mr.

Fitzgibbons.

Mr. Brace asked if all of the aquaculture leases are being actively worked. Mr. Carlson said all but one in Coskata Pond. Mr. Lowell asked if each lease holder was using all of their 10-acre plots. Mr. Carlson said that all lease holders with the exception of the fisherman using Coskata Pond, is working the majority of their respective 10 acres.

Ms. Riley said that 10 acres is actually fairly small amount of space given that oyster cages need space to swing in the waves and currents. Mr. Carlson said the Town holds eight acres for its own needs to overwinter hatchery-spawned shellfish over 25 millimeters in size.

Mr. Lambrecht asked what the process was for the state's Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) to approve new acreage in the harbors for aquaculture leases. Mr. Carlson explained that the DMF would need to dive the proposed sites along with NRD staff to confirm harbor bottom devoid of marine life. He added that the HSAB would also need to review the proposed sites and the Town would have to determine whether the harbor could handle the addition of more aquaculture leases. Mr. Carlson added that the HSAB would also have to consider how new lease space would work with the Shellfish Management Plan and Nantucket Harbors Action Plan.

Mr. Fronzuto said the competing uses within the harbor would also have to be considered. He added that it's a three- to four-year process to qualify more acreage in the harbor. Ms. Riley said the aquaculture lease program needs to be reviewed and updated. Mr. Fronzuto strongly agreed. Mr. Carlson said this would be a great topic for the updating of the harbors action plan currently happening now.

Mr. Lambrecht said he's good with working a smaller plot in the harbor with far less gear. Mr. Lowell asked if there's any way Mr. Lambrecht could sublet from another lease holder. Mr. Carlson said Mr. Lambrecht could possibly work with another lease holder on their acreage.

Mr. Lowell asked Mr. Lambrecht what he needed from the HSAB at this meeting and noted that Mr. Lambrecht is also proposing growing kelp. He suggested that Mr. Lambrecht should speak with the other oystermen to see if they have any room on their leases for him to grow oysters. Mr. Lambrecht said he would certainly speak with Ms. Riley to get her thoughts on growing kelp in the harbors.

Coastal Resilience Advisory Board – Update

No update.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENT

RECAP and ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

Mr. Lowell reported that Stephen Payer has formally resigned from the HSAB. He added that he reached out to former HSAB member Dan Pronk to see if might be interested in the open seat. Mr. Brace suggested Jim Sjolund. Mr. Fronzuto agreed with both potential replacements. Mr. Fronzuto recalled that he was appointed by the Select Board to replace Bill Blount and said this would most likely be the protocol for filling the empty seat on the HSAB

ADJOURN

Unanimously approved, 6-0, at 7:42 p.m.

YOUTUBE MEETING LINK

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-zxD5KDyPPE&list=PL49sKqpy7VAj6nJnAlrlKlxWm6VQTfuXg&index=2>

Future Meetings:

April 18 and May 1

Respectfully Submitted,
Peter B. Brace, Secretary