

Harbor and Shellfish Advisory Board
Tuesday, Aug. 1, 2023 at 5:00 p.m.
Via Zoom
***HSAB meeting are video-recorded**

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

Members Absent: Ginger Andrews

Marine Dept:

Natural Resources Dept: Tara Riley

Others: Charles Douglas

CALL TO ORDER

5:32 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Unanimously approved, 5-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Draft minutes of June 6, 2023

Unanimously approved, 5-0.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

No report.

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 every Monday, she and her crew at the hatchery have been working with the campers from the Nantucket Boys & Girls Club teaching them how to snorkel in the community pool and in the harbor as part of their summer oyster discovery program.

Ms. Riley reported that the Great Harbor Yacht Club's Youth Foundation program with the hatchery wrapped up last week.

Ms. Riley reported that she and her hatchery staff were preparing to release 20 million bay scallop larvae into Madaket Harbor on Aug. 2. Ms. Riley also reported on the extraordinary amount of spat in bay scallop bags in Nantucket Harbor from Third Bend up into the Head of Harbor. By way of comparison, for the 2022 season, she logged 120,000 spat, but just one spat line this season had 30,000 spat on it. Ms. Riley added that there's so much spat that the eelgrass from Wauwinet west to Abrams Point is lying flat on the bottom due to the weight of the spat on it. She said the sizes is 10 to 20 mm. She added that because the spat is so close to shore, she said they'll definitely have to move this seed into deeper water this fall. Ms. Riley reported that Madaket Harbor is slightly lagging behind Nantucket Harbor in terms of spat and seed, but she said overall there's a lot of adult scallops in both harbors. Ms. Riley reported that she was also impressed with how many third-year scallops she's seeing in the harbor this season, saying she's never seen so many with three growth rings on them. She theorized that there were a lot of scallops left in Nantucket Harbor after the last commercial season due to not all of them being caught by fishermen.

Ms. Riley reported that she and her staff have been working with the Nantucket Land Council (NLC) on the eelgrass restoration project up in Fifth Bend at Bass Point, but that site isn't working out as planned possibly due to green crabs or water temperature fluctuations.

Ms. Riley reported that she and her students from the Nantucket Boys & Girls Club participating in the summer oyster program will putting out round 200 oyster spat on the Nantucket Conservation

Foundation's (NCF) oyster reef in front of Medouie Creek in Polpis Harbor in the third week of August.

Ms. Riley added that there's a harbor plan update survey for the public to fill out.

Mr. Lowell wondered aloud if wind could be a factor in the failure of transplanted eelgrass at Fifth Bend. Mr. Brace asked what Ms. Riley's theories were for the abundance of bay scallop spat/seed. Ms. Riley said she there were a lot of scallops left in the harbor after the last season, that the spike in water temperatures in June and that previous larval releases in Second Bend are all probable contributing factors along doing larval releases on the new and full moons. Mr. Lowell asked if there is enough food in the harbors and Ms. Riley indicated that there was plenty of food for bay scallops in the harbors. Mr. Anderson asked if Ms. Riley was concerned about rising water temperatures in Nantucket Harbor. Ms. Riley said she would be monitoring this issue during August.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON MARINE DEPARTMENT / NATURAL RESOURCES REPORT

OLD BUSINESS

Harbor watershed workshop agenda – Update/Discussion

Mr. Lowell comments on some of the catch phrases board members came up with for promoting the event. He praised Mr. Fronzuto for generating the agenda. Mr. Fronzuto said he would get Nathan Porter at the Town's GIS office to generate large maps as needed.

Mr. Lowell asked if there would be available laptops to display GIS maps. Mr. Brace suggested board members bring their own and use the one in the Community Room that's connected to the overhead projector.

Mr. Fronzuto recommended inviting David Gray of the Sewer Department to the workshop.

Green crabs – Discussion

Mr. Anderson said the NLC is pulling a lot of green crabs out of the traps set in Nantucket Harbor. Ms. Riley qualified this statement by saying that although the traps are producing around 300 crabs per trap, there aren't that many traps set in the harbor right now.

Harbors Action Plan Committee HSAB recommendations – Discussion

Mr. Fronzuto informed the board that the committee is setting up interviews of people in the island community to be interviewed by the staff of the Urban Harbors Institute (UHI), the Town's consultant on the harbor plan update. Mr. Lowell volunteered to be interviewed.

Sediment Transport Study and dredge plan – Discussion

Mr. Lowell asked Ms. Riley for an update on this process. Ms. Riley said she thought the surveys part of this project had been completed.

Filling empty seat on HSAB – Discussion – text Erika about this today

Mr. Brace reported that the second round of Select Board committee appointments is going to be at the Aug. 16, 2023 Select Board meeting. Mr. Lowell said that the only person to apply for the empty seat was commercial fisherman Jim Sjolund.

HEALTH OF THE HARBORS

State of the Harbor Forum – Discussion

Mr. Lowell reported on the forum to the HSAB. Mr. Anderson said it was obvious him after the forum that it was excess fertilizer being used on properties within the harbor watershed protection district that was causing a lot of algae blooms in the harbor. Mr.

Lowell this issue should be brought to light at its Sept. 9, 2023 workshop. He added that the board should consider speaking to this issue, stating these facts at the next public forum. Mr. Brace agreed and said the HSAB needs to be more vocal in public settings on this issue.

Ms. Riley said that property owners along the north shore of the harbor will have scallop seed washing up on their beaches this fall because the eelgrass is so thin due to excessive fertilizer use within the harbor watershed protection district. Mr. Fronzuto said if the seed does have to be moved, there will be newspaper articles written about this and that this would be an opportunity for the HSAB to make a statement on this issue.

NEW BUSINESS

Coastal Resilience Advisory Committee (CRAC) – Update

Mr. Brace reported that the chair of this committee, Mary Longacre, did not apply to be re-appointed to the committee. He reported that the committee elected him as chair, Sarah Bois as vice chair and Doug Rose as secretary.

Mr. Brace reported that the Select Board tasked CRAC with working on its idea of creating coastal resilience districts (CRD) for the purpose of generating area-specific funding to solve localized sea level rise impacts.

Aquaculture lease program review and update – Discussion

No discussion. The HSAB had previously agreed to start discussing this issue in the fall. Mr. Brace reported on this season's shell collection volume.

Second August meeting – discussion

The HSAB unanimously agreed to hold a meeting on Aug. 15, 2023 to discuss the logistics of its upcoming harbor watershed protection district workshop.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENT

RECAP and ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

ADJOURN

Unanimously approved, 5-0, at 6:29 p.m.

YOUTUBE LINK

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JZR91voSXeA&list=PL49sKqpy7VAj6nJnAlrlKlxWm6VQTfuXg&index=1>

Future Meetings:

Aug. 15 and Sept. 5

Respectfully Submitted,
Peter B. Brace, Secretary