

Harbor and Shellfish Advisory Board
Tuesday, Oct. 3, 2023 at 5:00 p.m.
Via Zoom
***HSAB meeting are video-recorded**

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

Members Absent: Dave Fronzuto, Jim Sjolund

Marine Dept:

Natural Resources Dept: Tara Riley

Others: Kona Hosier, John Logan

CALL TO ORDER

5:02 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Unanimously approved, 5-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Draft minutes of Sept. 19, 2023

Unanimously approved, 4-0 with Ms. Andrews abstaining because she didn't attend the meeting. Mr. Brace reported that he couldn't complete the minutes of the Sept. 5, 2023 meeting because the video recording of that meeting was unavailable.

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 she and her hatchery staff along with around 50 volunteers, rescued an estimated 6.6 million bay scallop seed stranded on along Nantucket Harbor's south side beaches as a result of Hurricane Lee. She added that she'll continue to monitor the seed relocated to deeper water in the harbor. Ms. Riley reported that dive surveys at Quiase and Wauwinet prior to the storm and after revealed that densities of seed changed very little showing, Ms. Riley, continued, the massive volume of seed in the harbor. Ms. Riley reported for the past weeks, she and her staff have doing harbor bottom surveys at 40 sites of habitat, bay scallop density and whelk snail densities. She reported that in front of the Wauwinet Inn, the water is loaded with seed and added that she'll be monitoring that area for potential strandings and will be prepared to respond if need be. She added that she wasn't expecting to find high densities off of Bass Shoal in the Head of the Harbor where she found 500 seed per square meter. She added that she hopes to "thin out and move" seed from this area. Another area of high density seed that Ms. Riley want to move seed from is from the opening to Folgers Marsh to the outside of Polpis Harbor. Ms. Riley reported that she's relieved to see an abundance of scallop seed in the harbors and for the first time, have knowledge of where seed densities and adult densities are along with a plan for moving seed to safer parts of the harbor.

Ms. Riley reported less slime on eelgrass in the harbor.

Ms. Riley said she is working with the Nantucket Shellfish Association (NSA) to organize scallopers to move seed from the aforementioned areas and into safer, deeper water. She added that most of heavy seed density in Nantucket Harbor is from Second Bend up to the Head of the Harbor. Ms. Riley added that they'll likely be moving a lot of seed from the upper harbor back closer to town and also out to Madaket.

Ms. Riley added that her surveys also revealed the eelgrass looked "pretty good", that there was a lot of biodiversity in the harbors, a lot of blue crabs, not as many green crabs as expected and hardly

any of the black algae, Lyngbia, that has smothered a lot of the bottom in Nantucket Harbor over the past several years.

Ms. Riley said that it should be a good recreational scallop season this year based on what she's seen in the harbors.

Mr. Brace asked what she meant by "past Topper's". Ms. Riley said past the Haulover. Mr. Brace asked how much of the seed died as it was being rescued. Ms. Riley said that getting 50 percent of what strands back into deeper water is a good goal for her to shoot for. Mr. Brace said he worried that all the recreational scallopers now entering the shallows could potentially crush the seed close to shore. Ms. Riley indicated that this wouldn't be too much of a problem.

Ms. Andrews noted the amazing effort of Ms. Riley and her staff, and all the volunteers in getting the seed back into the harbor. Mr. Lowell agreed. He added how fortunate that the Natural Resources has the necessary equipment to make stranding rescues happen efficiently with the help of volunteers. Mr. Lowell said he was surprised to hear that was so much seed in the Head of the Harbor. Mr. Hosier asked if there were dives done in Madaket. Ms. Riley said currently there are no dive sites now but that she plans a harbor bottom dive survey of Madaket Harbor for the fall in 2024. Mr. Logan asked what size mesh is Ms. Riley using on dredgers to dredge up seed and also is there a plan for a two- or three-day seed move. Ms. Riley said that the NSA would coordinate commercial scallopers for moving seed. She added that she is using onion bag mesh for dredging up seed and this works really well.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON MARINE DEPARTMENT / NATURAL RESOURCES REPORT

No comments.

OLD BUSINESS

Harbor watershed public information outreach ideas – Discussion

Mr. Lowell explained how the HSAB is going to develop a presentation geared toward students based on its harbor watershed property owner forum held on Sept. 9, 2023. Mr. Brace suggested that HSAB hold a workshop meeting with this task being the only item on the agenda and then give assignments to each board member to get this done.

Mr. Lowell said the board members should start working on ideas for this presentation, acknowledging that the HSAB probably wouldn't have time to do such a workshop meeting until early January 2024.

Mr. Bossi agreed that a workshop is the best way to get this idea into a reality and that January 2024 is a more realistic time for the workshop to happen.

Green crabs – Discussion

Mr. Logan asked for an update on the Toscana Corp mixing green crabs caught in the harbor to mix into their compost that it sells. He also inquired about commercial scallopers collecting green crabs while they scallop so they could be taken out to Toscana. Mr. Lowell liked this idea and said Ms. Riley could give a better answer on this. He added that he didn't have access to an update for Mr. Logan on the green crab trapping and compost program.

Harbors Action Plan Committee HSAB recommendations – Discussion

Mr. Lowell read aloud some of his proposed recommendations on dredging within the harbors. Mr. Brace said he would speak with Sustainability Coordinator Vincent Murphy before the Oct. 17 meeting to see when he can update the HSAB.

Sediment Transport Study and dredge plan – Discussion

No discussion.

Dumpster sticker distribution – Discussion

Mr. Lowell said he still needed to firm up some volunteers to help apply the stickers to all the dumpsters around the island.

HEALTH OF THE HARBORS

NEW BUSINESS

Coastal Resilience Advisory Committee – Update

Mr. Brace displayed the downtown flood barrier recommendation on page 147 from the Coastal Resilience Plan to help clarify any confusion that arose at the Sept. 19 meeting over the CRP and the Nantucket Land Bank's sea level rise plan. He reminded the board that Select Board adopted the CRP in January 2022. He said the Land Bank's plan was just that at this point. Mr. Brace encouraged the HSAB to read the CRP to get up to speed on it.

Mr. Brace explained how the CRAC is working on public outreach. Mr. Brace explained the near-term coastal resilience projects that the Town is working on now.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENT

No comments

RECAP and ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

Mr. Lowell said he expected Nantucket's harbormaster Sheila Lucey to attend the next meeting and give a report.

ADJOURN

Unanimously approved, 5-0 at 6:09 p.m.

YOUTUBE LINK

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tDFUwBn0nTk&list=PL49sKqpy7VAj6nJnAlrlKlxWm6VQTfuXg&index=1>

Future Meetings:

Oct. 17 and Nov. 7

Respectfully Submitted,
Peter B. Brace, Secretary