

Harbor and Shellfish Advisory Board
Tuesday, Aug. 6, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.
Via Zoom
***HSAB meeting are video-recorded**

Members present: Andy Lowell, Dave Fronzuto, Dave Bossi, Scott Anderson, Bobby DeCosta

Members Absent: Jim Sjolund

Marine Dept:

Natural Resources Dept: Tara Riley

Others: Sean Fitzgibbon, Veronica Bonnet(sp?), Matt Herr, Kona Hosier, Dan Pronk

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Lowell called the meeting to order at 5:09 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Lowell called for a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Anderson made a motion to approve the agenda and Mr. Bossi seconded that motion. The HSAB voted 6-0 to approve the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Draft minutes of July 16, 2024, June 4, 2024 and June 18, 2024

Mr. Lowell called for a motion to approve the June 4, 2024 and the June 18, 2024 minutes. Mr. Bossi made a motion to approve both sets of minutes. Mr. Anderson seconded that motion. The HSAB voted 6-0 to approve the June 4, 2024 and the June 18, 2024 minutes.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

No report.

MARINE DEPARTMENT REPORT:

No report.

General Marine Department report – Sheila Lucey

No report.

NATURAL RESOURCES REPORT

General Natural Resources Department report – NRD staff

Ms. Riley reported that her hatchery staff released 25 million scallop larvae into Madaket Harbor last week and that Aug. 7, 2024 will be their last scallop spawn of this season. Ms. Riley added that she and her staff are preparing to do their fall harbor bottom surveys in Nantucket and Madaket harbors and that they are continuing to pull in their spat bags. Ms. Riley reported that the hatchery staff are testing their upweller system with shellfish seed. She added that their quahog seed is two to four millimeters and that they will be grown out in the falls. Mr. Riley reported on student projects happening at the hatchery including students from the Nantucket Boys & Girls Club and the Great Harbor Yacht Club. She added that coming week with a rainy forecast could be the catalyst for a rust tide algae bloom. Ms. Riley said she and her staff would be monitoring this situations.

Ms. Riley reported that the state's Division of Marine Fisheries' (DMF) results of the regular water quality sampling near shellfish beds within the harbor will soon be posted on the Natural Resources Department's (NRD) Water Quality page on the Town's Website.

Mr. Carlson reminded the HSAB of the Downtown Resilience projects open house at the Whaling Museum on Aug. 7. He added that the Nantucket & Madaket Harbor Action Plan Update Committee have produced its first draft of goals and objects, and that on Aug. 19, a public forum was planned for the Community Room at 4 Fairgrounds Road. He added that a draft of Sediment Transport Study and Dredging Plan is ready and that there will be several public forums in the fall. Mr. DeCosta suggested that the Madaket Ditch be dredged to help improved this waterway as a herring run. He added that there is state grant funds available from

herring run improvements and that Nantucket has never applied for this money. Mr. Fronzuto confirmed this. Mr. Brace asked how the Madaket Ditch and its opening at the end of Hither Creek got so shallow. Mr. DeCosta theorized that the sand might be flowing out of Long Pond. Mr. DeCosta also asked if the Town will fix the bank on North Head of Long Pond so people can launch their boats right there. Mr. Brace asked if Long Pond has ever been opened to the ocean. Mr. Fronzuto said no. The HSAB discussed the possibility of dredging the opening to the Madaket Ditch to increase water flow in and out of the ditch.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON MARINE DEPARTMENT / NATURAL RESOURCES REPORT

No public comment.

OLD BUSINESS

Continued review and update of shellfish regulations - Tara Riley

Ms. Riley reported on her first draft of the shellfish regulations as revised by herself and the HSAB. She asked the HSAB which items in the revised regulations needed to be put on a fast-track approval process in time for the upcoming recreational and commercial scallop seasons. One of these giving the Select Board the power to raise or lower the commercial bushel limit as needed throughout the season. Mr. Lowell said he didn't think the HSAB needed to review document during the meeting. Mr. Bossi made a motion to approve the shellfish regulations as revised by the HSAB and Ms. Riley, and send them to the Select Board for its review and action. Mr. Anderson seconded that motion. During the discussion on this motion, the HSAB discussed possible methods of collecting catch data from recreational scallopers that could be put in place before this coming season. Ms. Riley told the board that she would need the HSAB's fast-track items within two to three weeks to get them enacted in time for the scallop seasons.

The HSAB voted 6-0 to approve this motion. Ms. Riley asked that the HSAB review potential items for fast-tracking and the whole revised regulations document, and then get back to her ASAP. Mr. Lowell thanks Ms. Riley for her efforts to get the shellfish regulations revised.

Revised HSAB letter to Nantucket Land Bank on commercial use of Petrel Landing – Dave Bossi

Mr. Lowell asked if there is any discussion on this item. Mr. Brace this issue should be put aside until the Nantucket Land Bank puts it back into play. Mr. Lowell thanked Mr. Bossi for writing and then revising this letter.

HEALTH OF THE HARBORS

Pollutants and microplastics – Scott Anderson

Mr. Anderson reported that he needs to do more research on this issue. He added that he would work to identify more key impact areas affected by microplastics. He added that he would have another report in September.

NEW BUSINESS

Nantucket Health Department report on Nantucket oyster-caused illnesses in June 2024. Sean Reid, Nantucket Public Health Inspector

Mr. Lowell said this item should be held until Mr. Reid can attend the meeting. Mr. Brace clarified that Mr. Reid wanted to attend this meeting to report on this issue to the HSAB and read his reports into the record.

Mr. Brace asked if the two oyster farmers in attendance had comments and questions to share with the HSAB. There were no comments.

Vineyard Wind – Discussion

Mr. Lowell reported that the Select Board asked the NRD to do water quality sampling in the harbors with wind turbine debris in mind. Mr. Anderson recommended that the public be empowered to help the Town clean up this debris.

Ms. Riley reported that she's consulted with industry experts who deal with microplastics in relation to water quality with shellfish populations considered. She cited a three-year UMass Boston microplastic study done in Nantucket waters. She said the study found there is more microplastics in the harbor than in the ocean off the south shore.

Mr. Carlson reported that the NRD is searching for experts to help the Town understand the impacts of wind turbine debris on the marine environment.

Mr. DeCosta reported that he recently fished the area where the turbines are and said he didn't see any signs of cleanup happening at the affect wind turbine. He added that there is still plenty of debris hanging from the tower in question.

Mr. Brace what the purpose of this discussion was and what the HSAB is trying to do in relation to the wind turbine blade breaking off and scattering debris into Nantucket's waters and along its shores. Mr. Lowell said because issue is in the HSAB's purview, he felt that the goal for the board was an eventual informed recommendation to the Select Board. Mr. DeCosta said this discussion should be continued to the HSAB's Sept. 3 meeting.

Ms. Riley reported that her crew is in its second round of water samples. Mr. Lowell asked for an update from Mr. Carlson on this issue. Mr. Carlson said that the Town has contracted with Arcadis to discern the impacts on Nantucket's waters and its shores. Mr. Lowell stressed that the NRD's water quality testing results should be compared with the results from Arcadis.

Mr. Lowell asked for public comments. Ms. Bonnet(sp?) representing the group ACK For Whales shared her thoughts and concerns with the HSAB. She said she's found debris around the island shores including a "white, ribbony" substance. Mr. Lowell said he's seen this as well. Ms. Bonnet added that water quality

testing needs to be ongoing. She said that Vineyard Wind needs to remove the remaining piece of the blade from the ocean. She said she shared the HSAB's concerns about Arcadis. Ms. Bonnet said she fears that the federal government is well down the road past all the approvals and permits for Vineyard Wind that it likely won't halt this project.

Ms. Riley said she felt more fiberglass debris will be found Madaket Marine than in Nantucket Harbor. She agreed that the NRD needs to continue to do its own testing.

Mr. Carlson said its vital to build a network of independent reviewers.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENT

Mr. Lowell asked if there were any questions or comments from the public on this meetings agenda items.

Mr. Fitzgibbon asked if he could use the overwintering acres in the Head of the Harbor for year-round growout of oysters. He added that he wanted to be added to the Sept. 3 HSAB agenda. Mr.

Fronzuto said this issue needs to be on the next meeting's agenda.

Mr. Carlson agreed. Mr. DeCosta said he wanted Mr. Carlson to explain what the aquaculture lease holders are permitted to do and not have the lease holders do that.

RECAP and ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

Mr. Lowell asked if anyone on the HSAB felt that there was a reason to have a second meeting in August. No one spoke up.

Mr. DeCosta reported the discovery of bay scallops near Tuckernuck Shoal.

Mr. Fronzuto left the meeting at approximately 6:45 p.m.

Mr. Lowell asked if Mr. Fitzgibbon had any other requests for the board. Mr. Fitzgibbon requested that he be awarded the remaining four acres of his 10-acre lease in the Head of the Harbor.

ADJOURN

Mr. DeCosta made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Anderson seconded that motion. The HSAB voted 5-0 to adjourn the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

YOUTUBE LINK

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zhas137yyP8&list=PL49sKqpy7VAj6nJnAlrlKlxWm6VQTfuXg&index=1>

Future Meetings:

Sept. 3 and Sept. 17

Respectfully Submitted,
Peter B. Brace, Secretary