

Harbor and Shellfish Advisory Board
Tuesday, Oct. 7, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.
Via Zoom
***HSAB meeting are video-recorded**

Members present: Andy Lowell, Dave Bossi, Dave Fronzuto, Peter Brace, Bobby DeCosta

Members Absent: Scott Anderson, Jim Sjolund

Marine Dept:

Natural Resources Dept: Tara Riley

Others: Ken Brasfield

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Lowell called the meeting to order at 5:08 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Lowell called for a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. DeCosta made a motion to approve the agenda. Ms. Mayo seconded that motion. The HSAB voted 5-0 to approve the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Draft minutes of Sept. 23. 2025

Mr. Lowell called for a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Fronzuto made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. DeCosta seconded that motion. The HSAB voted 5-0 to approve the minutes.

CHAIRMAN'S 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 the hatchery did its last water quality reporting last week. Ms. Riley reported that the Natural Resources Department (NRD) would be opening Sesachacha and Hummock ponds to the ocean on Oct. 20. She reported that the revised Town Shellfish Regulations went into effect on Oct. 1. She added she will be sending out a letter to all commercial shellfish permit holders about the shellfish regulations being revised and reminding them about the ongoing research into the new dredges being used by commercial scallopers.

Ms. Riley reported that the Eelgrass Management Plan Implementation Committee has started to meet and that there will be projects within this plan that Ms. Riley will need the HSAB's help with. Ms. Riley reported that the early data from the recently completed fall harbor bottom surveys is telling her that the Town might not need to raise the bushel limit from five to six bushels due to there being fewer bay scallops in the harbor.

Mr. DeCosta asked about additional rings in the new dredges becoming an enforcement issue. Ms. Riley said scallopers can use whichever kind of dredge they want from the allowed options as long as they don't weigh more than the 35-pound dredge weight limit. Mr. DeCosta said he didn't think there would be weight issues with the older currently used dredges, but he suggested that commercial scallopers should have their "new dredges weighed by the shellfish warden before the season. Ms. Riley agreed. Mr. DeCosta said commercial scallopers should have their dredges weighed dry by the shellfish warden before the season begins so the warden can confirm that each scalloper's dredges are at or below the legal limit of 35 pounds.

Mr. DeCosta said he's concerned that there'll be a surplus of bay scallops in the harbor later in the harbor and that the need to increase the allowable bushel limit to six will come up again. He added that if the shellfish warden will be using a stick to level off

all bushel boxes, Mr. DeCosta, said going to six bushels would help scallopers get the poundage of scallops each day to make it financially worth it. Mr. Fronzuto agreed with. Mr. Lowell said bushels mounded really high is probably the reason why the shellfish warden started leveling bushel boxes during the 2024/2025 commercial bay scallop season. Mr. Lowell suggested seeing how the first week of the season goes before deciding whether to increase the bushel limit. Ms. Riley said that her numbers don't point a bushel limit increase prior to the upcoming season. She added that her current numbers from her recent surveys are more in line with the 2021/2022 season. The HSAB and Ms. Riley agreed this issue should remain on the HSAB's future agendas.

Mr. Lowell asked if any new apprentices for commercial bay scalloping were closed to getting their required fishing days. Ms. Riley said she wasn't aware of any.

Mr. Lowell asked when Ms. Riley would be completing the research on the new dredges. Ms. Riley replied that she needed commercial scallopers to work with her to test the dredge before she could complete her research.

Mr. Brasfield asked that scallop meat yield be given consideration in the process of deciding whether to increase the bushel limit. Ms. Riley added that she will have her definitive report on her fall dive surveys ready for the HSAB's Oct. 21. Mr. Lowell said he wanted to have a week of scalloping and Ms. Riley's report before deciding whether to boost the bushel limit to six boxes.

Mr. Brasfield said he knows someone who could open confiscated scallops if need be.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON MARINE DEPARTMENT / NATURAL RESOURCES REPORT

No comments.

OLD BUSINESS

Amendments to Town shellfish regulations – Discussion related to Sept. 10, 2025 Select Board meeting

The HSAB discussed how deal with bay scallops that are removed from mounded bushel boxes. Mr. Fronzuto said that in the past, it's been a challenge to find the time to open these scallops in order to donate them to Our Island Home or retired commercial scallopers. He added that the easiest way to deal with these scallops is to return them to the harbors. Mr. Lowell removed this item from future agendas, as he determined that it had been resolved.

Intertidal oyster farming – Discussion

Mr. Lowell reported that Mr. Fitzgibbon told him that he needs to take more time to research potential locations in the harbors and get all of his permits before return to the HSAB. Mr. Lowell said he would be removing this item from future agendas until Mr. Fitzgibbon is ready to return to the HSAB.

HEALTH OF THE HARBORS

NEW BUSINESS

Progress on creation of harbor temperature and daily scallop catch report app. – Discussion

Mr. Lowell asked for an update on the creation of this app. Ms. Riley said that the NRD has not been working on this app over the summer. Mr. Lowell said the HSAB would connect with NRD director Jeff Carlson to see what progress has been toward creating this app. Mr. Lowell said he will be removing this item from future agendas.

Commercial bay scallop bushel limit increase to six bushels from five starting Nov. 3, 2025 – Discussion

Mr. Brace said the seafood buyers should be alerted to this discussion that will be continued to the Oct. 21 HSAB meeting. Mr. DeCosta said that all seven members of the HSAB need to be

at the Oct. 21 meeting. He added that he and the rest of the board needed to put the word out about this upcoming meeting to ensure that everyone in the fishery is aware and can attend if they choose to. Mr. DeCosta said he's heard some scallopers asking why the limit doesn't mirror the state limit of 10 bushels per day per license holder.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENT

No questions or comments from the public.

RECAP and ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

Mr. DeCosta asked if the Horse Shed is open to the taking of quahogs and soft-shell clams. Ms. Riley said she would get an answer for the HSAB by the next meeting.

In light of the Nov. 4 Special Town Meeting, the HSAB agreed to pursue holding a HSAB meeting on Oct. 28 or on another date such as Nov. 4 at 3 p.m.

Mr. DeCosta said he would alert the Nantucket Current of the HSAB's Oct, 21 meeting and the discussion on bushel limits. Mr. Lowell said he would tell the local seafood store owners of this meeting.

Ms. Mayo handed out information on offshore wind to the HSAB.

ADJOURN

Mr. Lowell called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Brace made a motion to adjourn meeting. Mr. DeCosta seconded the motion. The HSAB voted 5-0 to adjourn the meeting at 5:59 p.m.

YOUTUBE LINK

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DRjk0khkAPg&list=PL49sKqpy7VAj6nJnAlrlKlxWm6VQTfuXg>

Future Meetings:

Oct. 21 and Nov. 4

Respectfully Submitted,
Peter B. Brace, Secretary