

Harbor and Shellfish Advisory Board

Tuesday, Feb. 16, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.

Via Zoom

***HSAB meetings are recorded on Zoom and posted on the Nantucket Government TV YouTube channel**

Members present: Andy Lowell, Tom Szydlowski, Peter Brace, Dave Bossi, Ginger Andrews

Members Absent: Dave Fronzuto, Dan Pronk

Marine Dept: Sheila Lucey

Natural Resources Dept: Leah Hill

Others: Kona Hosier

CALL TO ORDER

5:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Unanimously approved 5-0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Draft minutes of Feb. 2, 2021

Approved 4-0 with Tom Szydlowski abstaining.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Eelgrass summit reminder

Mr. Lowell reminded the HSAB about this upcoming eelgrass event on March 21.

MARINE DEPARTMENT REPORT:

General Marine Department report – Sheila Lucey

Ms. Lucey reported that she is working on revising the Town's live-aboard regulations and the Airbnbing of boats in the harbor. She said she is working this issue with the U.S. Coast Guard on this issue. Ms.

Lucey reported that she did not get the permits needed in time to repair the floating pier. She added that construction of the new Marine Department building at the current location should begin in late April. Ms. Lucey reported that as with the 2020 season, the showers in public restrooms at the town pier will be closed this season for COVID safety reasons

Ms. Lucey reported that she is having a challenging time finding housing for lifeguards because COVID safety regulations allow one person per room.

Ms. Lucey reported that the Monomoy Association has issues with the dinghies on the racks and beaches in front of their houses including wanting to only see one level of racks from their properties. She said one idea is to restrict dinghy storage those with permitted moorings and then possibly relocating paddle boards, dinghies and kayaks, possibly building new racks at other locations. She added that she is working to build racks on land formerly owned by Walter Glowacki near the Marine Department building now owned by the Land Bank and also on the beach immediately south of the Great Harbor Yacht Club.

Ms. Lucey commented on the HSAB's ongoing discussion on abandoned boats, telling the board that it was "spinning its wheels" trying to get the abandoned sailboat off the beach at Quaise. She reminded the board that the boat is on private property and that the Town is not going to spend the money to remove this boat. She said she is working with the property owner, the boat's owner and a mooring company to remove this boat from the shore. Ms. Lucey said she has marked the submerged, abandoned boat near Hussey Shoal with an "isolated danger buoy". Ms. Lucey mentioned a third abandoned vessel, for which the owner has been taken to court by the Town and for which the owner is currently paying a fine. She added that this boat is too far gone to be removed from the harbor all at once.

Ms. Lucey reported that fishermen are reporting that the ferries are slowing down before their approach to the Horse Shed eelgrass beds.

Ms. Lowell asked why the Marine Department isn't allowed to use the old fire station to build lifeguard stands. Ms. Lucey did not have answer for Mr. Lowell.

Mr. Brace thanked Ms. Lucey for attending the meeting.
Ms. Lucey left the meeting at 5:22 p.m.

NATURAL RESOURCES REPORT

General Natural Resources Department report – NRD staff

Ms. Hill reported that 7-12 commercial scalloping boats were continuing to dredge for bay scallops in the harbors with some getting their limits and some not. She reported a total of eight fishing days lost to inclement weather.

Ms. Hill reported that the NRD has sent out scallop and oyster license renewal letters, and that there are two oyster lease permits up for renewal this year.

Ms. Hill reported that NRD director Jeff Carlson would be attending the March 2 HSAB meeting to update the board on the status of Ted Lambrecht's oyster lease. She added none of his oyster gear has been removed from the Head of the Harbor nor has his boat been launched yet.

Ms. Hill reported that NRD is gearing up to open Sesachacha and Hummock ponds to the ocean around the end of March/early April.

Ms. Hill reported that the application for the proposed pier at 46 Shimmo Pond Road has been withdrawn.

Ms. Hill said at the shellfish hatchery, they've brought in bay scallops with the first spawn to happen on March 1 with the first oyster spawn to be at the end of March. She added algae production is going really well. She reported they are advertising for three summer interns. Ms. Hill added that the NRD will also be advertising for a full-time endangered species monitor in the spring.

Ms. Hill said the NRD met with the state's Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF), and that the DMF is in support of the oyster reef proposed for in front of Medouie Creek. However, Ms. Hill reported that the DMF and the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) have said that any area with 20 or more moorings will be closed for the taking of shellfish when boats are on their moorings but that harvesting bay scallops are exempt from this prohibition.

Mr. Brace asked why the FDA was doing this and Ms. Hill said because the FDA is assuming that every boat has head that could potentially leak into the harbor. She added that the FDA will be periodically sampling Nantucket's harbors' water. Ms. Hill asked that the HSAB keep this item on its agenda going forward

Ms. Hill said that Town Shellfish Biologist Tara Riley has noticed that ferries are slowing down in front of the Horse Shed. She also said that she's attending an aquaculture bird deterrent webinar. Ms. Hill added that the NRD is working on getting permits for the proposed oyster reef at southwest corner of Sesachacha Pond.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON MARINE DEPARTMENT / NATURAL RESOURCES REPORT

OLD BUSINESS

Oyster lease permit review – Discussion

Mr. Lowell said that Ms. Hill's report covered this issue well.

Excessive sand in scallops/dredging plan - Discussion

No discussion.

Jan. 28 Coastal Resilience Advisory Committee open house - Report

No discussion

HEALTH OF THE HARBORS

Excessive lawn fertilizer use - Discussion

Mr. Lowell said he hoped Mr. Carlson would comment on this issue at the HSAB's March 2 meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Abandoned boats in the harbor - discussion

Mr. Lowell acknowledged that Ms. Lucey covered this issue thoroughly in her report.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENT

RECAP and ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

ADJOURN

Unanimously approved at 5:39 p.m.

YOUTUBE MEETING LINK

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zr_3TiKvCVs&list=PL49sKqpy7VAj6nJnAlrlKlxWm6VQTfuXg&index=1

Future Meetings:

March 2 and March 16

Respectfully Submitted,
Peter B. Brace, Secretary