

**Aquaculture Advisory Council
June 23, 2017
Rutgers Cooperative Extension,
Cape May Court House, Cape May County
Meeting Minutes**

Members Present: Sec. Douglas Fisher, Mr. Russ Babb (Commissioner Bob Martin), Ms. Virginia Wheatley (Comm. Cathleen D. Bennett), Dr. Dave Bushek, Mr. Mike DeLuca (Dr. Robert Goodman), Ms. Lisa Calvo (Dr. Larry Katz), Mr. Bill Avery (Mr. George Saridakis), Mr. Paul Waterman, Mr. Barney Hollinger (Mr. Richard Herb), Ms. Amanda Wenczel

Members Absent: Mr. Jeff Flatley (Lt. Gov. Kim Guadagno), Mr. Ned Gaine, Mr. John Maxwell, Mr. Dave Burke

Public in Attendance: Mr. Bill Riggin, Ms. Sarah Gentile (NJDEP), Ms. Jenny Tomko (NJDEP), Ms. Betsy Haskin, Mr. Christopher Kobik, Mr. Tony Ni, Mr. Fred Layton, Ms. Danielle Bytheway (NJDOH)

Secretary Fisher called the meeting to order. A quorum was present.

Motion to approve previous meeting minutes was made; all in favor, motion passed.

Sec. Fisher provided time for Council to review resolution for Steve Carnahan, as well as providing a few of his personal experiences with Steve. Mr. DeLuca added a few comments. The resolution was passed by the Council as written and will be sent to Steve's family and friends.

Mr. DeLuca updated the AAC on the red knot Stakeholder Committee. Meetings have been ongoing with one expected the week following the AAC meeting to discuss the Science Advisory Group. The Science Symposium, funded by the National Sea Grant Office is planned for September 27-28, 2017 at the JCNERR, Tuckerton, NJ. The idea is to bring together technical experts on aquaculture, red knots, migration, ecology and bring new and emerging information to the adaptive management process. Steering committee for Symposium consists of Joana Burger, Rick Lathrop, Dave Bushek, Lisa Calvo, Peter Rowe (NJ Sea Grant), Catherine Janasie (Sea Grant Law Center), and Mike DeLuca. Draft agenda and list of speakers in-process; need to send invites before providing the names of speakers to the AAC. Target audience includes shellfish growers, conservation community, state and federal agencies (Agency Workgroup). Ms. Calvo added that additional funding is still needed to support travel for experts outside of the area.

Sec. Fisher expressed support for the symposium goals of providing additional information for the adaptive management process and current practices. Mr. Babb noted that having a science symposium is assisting the State in reaching the adaptive management process goals.

Sec. Fisher reviewed the vacancies on the AAC and the need for well-rounded representation on the Council. Sec. Fisher noted the replacement for Gef Flimlin to retain the Atlantic Coast focus that Gef had brought to the Council, with expertise on hard clams, or even a freshwater finfish

focus from any other extension office. Oysters are well represented on the Council. Additional seats vacant include the President of the Senate appointment vacated by the passing of Steve Carnahan and the vacancy from the passing of Robert Munson several years ago- that seat is a Governor's appointee. Discussion ensued on how to change some of the Council representation, much of which is dictated by statute and cannot be changed by NJDA or AAC.

Ms. Wenczel highlighted two items from the rules subcommittee (Ms. Calvo, Dr. Bushek, Mr. Maxwell, Mr. Gaine) meeting in May: 1) the need to separate rule content and applications for shellfish versus every other species to reduce any confusion over which portions of the rules apply to which species; and 2) continue/implement processes to coordinate activities among Departments, such as Shellfish Aquaculture Work Group yearly meetings, a centralized means of data exchange for Departments, and an enhanced GIS/data set for growers to use when filling in applications.

Ms. Wenczel reminded the Council and attendees that if they are a grower they should be expecting a survey from the USDA in December (2017) or January of 2018. This is the survey Mr. Bruce Eklund presented at the last meeting. Sec. Fisher reiterated the need for this information to show the extent of the industry, which can result in different levels of federal funding (e.g. grants).

Dr. Bushek noted that the ICES (International Council for Exploration of the Seas) has a conference in Florida coming up- Ms. Calvo has an accepted abstract on red knots and Dr. Bushek (with co-authors) has an accepted abstract on improving efficiency of disease monitoring for transporting shellfish. As of September, Dr. Bushek's group has funding to produce a database to implement some of the items Dr. Bushek previously presented to the AAC regarding transport, potential disease regions, final grow-out location, etc.

[Mr. Bill Avery arrived.]

Mr. Tony Ni brought up a recent issue with the timing of permitting. He had all permits except for Tidelands, which took 8 months to obtain. According to Mr. Ni this led to delays in movement of seed that grew to larger than seed size in other than approved waters (resulted in tickets) as well as increasing the cost of installing gear because the labor costs are much higher in the summer. Sec. Fisher suggested to Mr. Ni and others that they call the Office of Aquaculture Coordination if they encounter delays like this to see if NJDA can work on behalf of the grower to facilitate the discussion or see what issues need to be resolved.

Mr. Hollinger noted that there are some other Tideland issues. He has a permit that expired in May, and started the process to ensure a new or renewed license back in March. Ms. Calvo stated that Tidelands is a consistent stumbling block within the permitting chain. Others in NJDEP have worked to streamline, but every time she and others have interacted with Tidelands, there is new or changing information. Ms. Calvo suggested that Tidelands authority be challenged once again by those in NJDEP as well as the AAC. Sec. Fisher requested that specifics such as the experience of Mr. Ni be provided to Ms. Wenczel so that if the Council proceeds with any formal items, there are tangible examples to use.

Mr. Ni requested additional information on exporting oysters to China. Sec. Fisher recommended that Mr. Ni contact Ms. Wenczel so that she can connect Mr. Ni with the NJDA food export expert within the Department.

Ms. Calvo provided an update to the Council on the Cape Shore-red knot season. During the spring, the *polydora* (spp.) came early with heavy mudding throughout the entire season. The conservation measures [required for red knot consultation] were not just a nuisance but led to significant economic losses and burden for some of the growers. She wants the Council to be aware of the impacts from the conservation measures that they are not just an annoyance but having a real impact.

Meeting adjourned by Sec. Fisher.