

MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
OF THE  
ATLANTIC COAST SECTION OF THE NEW JERSEY SHELLFISHERIES COUNCIL

Nacote Creek Law Enforcement  
Port Republic, NJ  
October 21, 2013

Present were:

	Chairman:	Walter L. Johnson III	(Ocean County)
	Vice Chairman:	John Maxwell	(Atlantic County)
	Councilman:	Walter Hughes	(Monmouth County)
	Councilman:	Vacant	(Burlington County)
	Councilman:	Vacant	(Cape May County)

State Representatives: Jeffrey C. Normant, Bureau of Shellfisheries  
Kira Dacanay, Bureau of Shellfisheries

Mr. Johnson called the meeting to order. Mr. Normant read the State's compliance with Sunshine Law and announced that the meeting would be recorded.

1.	Total Revenue for August 2013:	\$627.56
	Shellfisheries Law Enforcement Fund:	\$330.00
	Total Revenue for September 2013:	\$1,609.40
	Shellfisheries Law Enforcement Fund:	\$430.00

2. Presentation of August 19, 2013 minutes for approval

The minutes of the August 19, 2013 meeting were approved on a motion by Mr. Hughes and a second by Mr. Maxwell.

3. Applications for Transfer

LESSEE	APPLICANT	LOT #	SECTION	ACRES	LOCATION	MAP #
Steve Baugh	Joseph Haelig	1303	B	1.88	L.E.H.B – Marsholders Is	13
Robert Mayer	John Schriever	2752.1	B	1.00	GB – Great Thorofare	25

Mr. Normant informed the Council that Mr. Mayer was transferring half of his lease 2752 to Mr. Schriever and that transferred portion would be numbered 2752.1. The lease transfers were approved on a motion by Mr. Maxwell and seconded by Mr. Hughes.

4. Applications for Consideration

LESSEE	LOT #	SECTION	ACRES	LOCATION	MAP#
Rellie Prickett	305	A	2.00	Stites Sound	
Michael Snyder	306	A	2.00	Stites Sound	
Gary E. Courtney	1408	B	1.73	Middle Island	6.1
Thomas D. Marks	18	D	2.00	Middle Island	6.1
Dale S. Parsons	19	D	2.00	Middle Island	6.1
Jeff Panella	2237.2	B	1.90	Middle Island	6.1
Brent N. Buzby	1090	A	2.00	Middle Island	6.1

Mr. Normant provided the Council with copies of the lease applications. Messrs. Courtney, Parsons, Panella and Buzby and Ms. Prickett were present. Messrs. Snyder and Marks were not present and must attend the next meeting. Pursuant to the leasing regulations at N.J.A.C.7:25-24.6, applicants must attend

one of two meetings at which the Council reviews their applications. A decision on the lease applications would be rendered at the next meeting.

5. Applications for Decision

LESSEE	LOT #	SECTION	ACRES	LOCATION	MAP#
Scott Lennox	6	D	2.00	Swan Point	1
John Godwin, Jr	9	D	2.00	Swan Point	1
Ralph Gates, Jr	17	D	2.00	Swan Point	1
Michael Alexander	18	D	2.00	Swan Point	1
Raymond Knott	19	D	2.00	Swan Point	1
Peter McCarthy	2237.2	B	1.21	Dry Bay	24.2
William Avery	1090	A	2.00	Great Sound	5

Messrs. Lennox and McCarthy were present at this meeting. Messrs. Godwin Jr., Gates Jr., Alexander, Knott and Avery were present at the prior meeting. The lease applications were unanimously approved on a motion by Mr. Maxwell and a second by Mr. Hughes. Mr. Normant stated the applicants had 30 days to sign their lease agreements.

6. Old Business:

Post Sandy Hard Clam/SAV Survey

Ms. Dacanay provided the Council with a brief summary of the post-Superstorm Sandy shellfish and submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) assessment of Little Egg Harbor and Barnegat bays. She explained that a subset (approximately 25 %) of all stations that were sampled in both Little Egg Harbor and Barnegat bays in 2011 and 2012, respectively, were chosen for this survey. Stations were comprehensively distributed throughout Little Egg Harbor and Barnegat bays and based on the presence of shellfish and/or SAV collected during the 2011 and 2012 inventories. She stated that the Bureau completed sampling in the beginning of October and was sorting through the information that was collected. Ms. Dacanay opined that except for a few areas where SAV may have been impacted by Sandy, the overall shellfish and SAV resources looked to be intact. Mr. Normant added that there also seemed to be an increase of sublegal clams. The Council would be provided a copy of the final report of the results when completed.

Mullica River Oyster Harvest Season

Mr. Bill Avery inquired if there was going to be a fall oyster harvest season on the Mullica River harvest beds. Mr. Normant stated that there would not be a season as the last several surveys indicated poor oyster bed conditions. He stated that the Bureau would be re-sampling the beds sometime in November.

7. New Business:

Surf Clam Advisory Committee Meeting/Quota for 2013-2014 Harvest Season

Mr. Normant stated that the Bureau had meet with the Surf Clam Advisory Committee to discuss the results of the 2013 inventory and harvest quota for the 2013-2014 season. The Bureau had sampled multiple select strata that have closely tracked total NJ coast-wide abundance during the recent low abundance time period (2003-2012). The stock estimates for these select strata were expanded to reflect coast-wide abundance using a simple linear regression equation. Two strata were located between Absecon Inlet to Barnegat Inlet and one stratum located from Barnegat Inlet to Shark River. Mr. Normant stated that only about seven individual surf clams were found along the strata that were sampled from Absecon Inlet to Barnegat Inlet. He stated that while surf clam stocks have declined significantly over the years, there was always some volume of surf clams present along this area. Mr. Normant opined that the almost complete absence of surf clams along this stretch may have been attributed to Superstorm Sandy.

Mr. Normant stated that the estimated coastwise abundance was between 211,000 to 580,000 bushels, the lowest reported abundance off New Jersey. The Committee recommended to further reduce the 2013-2014 surf clam harvest season quota to a bare minimum of 14,592 industry bushels, which equates to 256 bushels per license. The committee recommended a minimal quota rather than a zero quota to maintain a place hold in the fishery in the event the stocks recover in the future.

Mr. Hughes made a motion to approve the Committee's recommendation. Mr. Maxwell seconded the motion. The Council unanimously approved the motion.

#### Lease Renewals for 2013

Mr. Normant announced that the shellfish lease renewals for 2014 are due by December 31<sup>st</sup> of this year. He also stated that the shellfish lease utilization forms could be found on the NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife website at [www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw](http://www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw) or can be obtained at the Nacote Creek Shellfish Office.

#### Avalon Marsh

Mr. Avery stated that in Avalon, a roadway was being constructed through the marsh off Avalon Boulevard. Mr. Normant stated that he believed the roadway was a temporary access to an existing dredge spoil site that was being cleared for new spoils.

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Mr. Hughes and a second by Mr. Maxwell.

8. Date, time and place of next meeting:

DATE: November 18, 2013  
TIME: 7 PM  
LOCATION: Law Enforcement Office  
360 New York Rd. Rt. 9  
Port Republic, NJ 08241