

Mr. Normant stated Messrs. Fricke and Camp were present at the last meeting. The above lease applications were unanimously approved on a motion by Mr. Johnson and a second by Mr. Hughes. Mr. Normant stated the applicants have 30 days to sign their lease agreements.

6. Old Business:

Sandy Hook Bay National Marine Sanctuary (NMS) Proposal

Mr. Normant discussed that there was no new information regarding the proposal to create a NMS Sanctuary in the Sandy Hook Bay, including the Navesink and Shrewsbury rivers. Mr. Muffley commented that the NJDEP Administration was aware of the proposal and the opposition from the commercial and recreational fishing communities.

Aquaculture Advisory Council (AAC) Meeting

Mr. Avery provided an overview of the AAC meeting that took place on April 8, 2016. Topics that were presented and discussed at the meeting included: Brooke Maslo's presentation on the "*Preliminary results from the first year of research aimed at identifying potential impacts of intertidal oyster aquaculture on foraging red knots*"; representatives from the Bureau of Shellfisheries, US Fish and Wildlife and from the Department of Agriculture were in attendance and answered questions regarding the Programmatic Biological Opinion; Mike De Luca, from Rutgers University discussed the status of the NJDEP Bureau of Marine Water Monitoring's Shellfish Growing Water Classification Rules (N.J.A.C. 7:12) proposal in regards to concerns raised during the comment period.

7. New Business:

New Leases and Lease Areas

Mr. John Daffin expressed interest in establishing a new block of leases in Great Egg Harbor Bay. Mr. Normant stated that any new lease blocks in Great Egg Harbor Bay would need to be discussed before the Leasing Committee. Mr. Normant suggested that Mr. Daffin discuss his proposal with him before presenting it to the Council to make sure there were no conflicts. The Committee would also need to decide whether or not to wait until the leasing regulations at N.J.A.C. 7:25-24 were revised before establishing a new lease area.

Mr. Dale Parsons discussed a friend's interest in applying for a new lease in a creek adjacent to the existing Middle Island Channel leases. Mr. Normant informed Mr. Parsons that the Leasing Policy stated that any new leases in Middle Island Channel need a Leasing Committee recommendation.

Mr. Theo Gerike stated that he had applied for a Big Creek lease in Great Bay (Lot 403.1) and was inquiring when the lease would be up for consideration. Mr. Normant stated that Mr. Gerike needed to stake his lease first and notify the Nacote Creek Shellfish Office when the staking was completed. Mr. Normant stated that a biological investigation was not required for the Big Creek leases, as per the leasing regulations.

Messrs. Matt Hender and Scott Hender expressed interest in applying for new leases in the Little Egg Harbor Bay in the Rose Cove area. Mr. Normant stated that in the Leasing Policy, expansion of leasing in Little Egg Harbor Bay should be developed as a block and that a new lease block needs to be presented to the Leasing Committee for consideration and to accept applications.

Mr. Maxwell stated that these new lease proposals would be discussed the next Leasing Committee meeting.

Executive Session

Mr. Maxwell announced that the Council was going into executive session to discuss the Marine Fisheries Administration budget.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned on a motion by Mr. Johnson and seconded by Mr. Hughes.

8. Date, time and place of next meeting:

DATE: May 16, 2016
TIME: 7 PM
LOCATION: Law Enforcement Office
360 New York Rd. Rte. Port Republic, NJ 08241