



Mr. Normant stated that Mr. McCarthy's lease was up for consideration at the previous Council meeting and that he had cancelled his lease application prior to this meeting.

6. Vacated Relay Lease – By Lessee

LESSEE	LOT #	SECTION	ACRES	LOCATION	MAP #
Richard W. Mathews	2400.18	B	1.5	Great Bay	

Mr. Normant stated that Mr. Mathews vacated his relay lease.

7. Vacated Leases – Non Payment

Regular Leases

LESSEE	CO-LESSEE	LOT #	SECTION	ACRES/FT	LOCATION	MAP #
William D Bartle		1048	A	2.02	Great Sound	5D
Robert D Fricke		411	B	2.37	Great Bay-Cape Horn	10
Robert D Fricke		394	B	3.00	Great Bay-Cape Horn	10
Brian P Hancock		1404	B	2.00	Middle Island	6.1
Brian P Hancock		631	B	3.07	LEHB	6/12
Brian P Hancock		501	B	1.57	LEHB	6/12
Brian P Hancock		502	B	2.00	LEHB	6/12
Ronald B Kurtz		930	B	4.20	LEHB	6/12
Robert G Lee		2525	B	1.96	Scull Bay	27
Robert G Lee		2569	B	2.00	Scull Bay	27
Robert G Lee		2523	B	2.01	Scull Bay	27
Robert G Lee		2570	B	2.00	Scull Bay	27
Russell B Mathis		619.1	B	5.00	LEHB	6/12
Russell B Mathis		618.1	B	5.00	LEHB	6/12
Thomas Pacula		2117	B	2.88	Steelmans Bay	29
John E Pepitone		2564	B	2.00	Scull Bay	27
James J Pharo		401.1	B	2.85	GB-Big Creek	10D
Tim Pharo		399	B	2.86	GB-Big Creek	10D
Jeff Pritchard		1403	B	2.00	Middle Island	6.1
Jeff Pritchard		2213.1	B	3.00	Dry Bay	24.2
Justin Sokol		14	D	2.00	Swan Point	1
George Mathis Sr.	Ronald Voorhis	2211.1	B	2.06	Dry Bay	24.2
Ronald Voorhis		2223	B	1.90	Dry Bay	24.2
Ronald Voorhis		53	B	1.87	GB-Graveling Pt.	1D
Ronald Voorhis		54	B	2.55	GB-Graveling Pt.	1D

Relay Leases

LESSEE	LOT #	SECTION	ACRES/FT	LOCATION	MAP #
Thomas Pacula	2400.21	B	1.50	Great Bay Relay	24.1

Messrs. Bartle, Fricke, Hancock, Mathis, Pacula, Pepitone, Pritchard and Voorhis were present at the meeting and requested a 30-day extension in order to execute their respective lease agreements. Messrs. Kurtz, Lee, James Pharo, Tim Pharo, and Sokol were not present.

Mr. Normant reminded the Council that as per the leasing regulations, NJAC 7:25-24.8, shellfish leases must be renewed annually by December 31<sup>st</sup> for the proceeding year. If illness or extenuating circumstances had prevented a lessee from renewing their lease(s) by December 31st, the Council may extend the payment deadline by one month. On a motion by Mr. Maxwell (seconded by Mr. Hughes), the Council granted a 30-day extension to the above lessees that were present at the February meeting. Mr. Normant stated that the lessees whom attended the February 10, 2014 meeting would have 30 days as of February 11, 2014 to renew their lease. If after 30 days the leases were not renewed, they would become vacant.

8. Old Business:

No old business was discussed.

9. New Business

2013 Mullica River Oyster Seed Bed Sampling

Mr. Normant stated that annual sampling on the Mullica River oyster seed beds was completed in December. Mr. Normant stated that oyster seedbed conditions at French's Point and Moss Point, were 91% oyster and 45% oyster, respectively. Mr. Normant stated that total mortality was approximately 7% at French's Point and approximately 20% at Moss Point. Spat set was low on both beds with 71 spat per 37-quart bushel at French's Point and 33 spat per 37-quart bushel at Moss Point. Average length of the oysters was approximately 50 mm (or 2 inches). The Bureau of Shellfisheries will continue to monitor the oyster seed beds on an annual basis.

Hurricane Sandy DOI Grant Proposal

Mr. Normant provided the Council with an update on the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) Hurricane Sandy Coastal Resiliency Competitive Grant Program. The Bureau of Shellfisheries submitted two grant proposals to the NFWF for oyster enhancement and restoration efforts in Mullica River/Great Bay and for hard clam and oyster enhancement efforts in Barnegat Bay. Both programs would include an outreach/education component with the Division's Marine Aquatic Education Program, Barnegat Bay Shellfish Restoration Program and the ReClam the Bay group. Richard Stockton College would also be providing an oyster habitat monitoring program to complement the enhancement efforts in the Mullica River. The Council had written a letter of support for both proposals. The grants are in the process of being evaluated.

Council Letter – Dedicated Accounts

Mr. Normant stated that the NJ Shellfisheries Council had written a letter to the New Jersey State Treasurer regarding \$500,000 that the Department of Treasury removed from the Bureau of Shellfisheries dedicated account (known as the "Exelon Account) and placed into a reserved status. Monies from the Exelon account were to be used for long-term shellfish enhancement and restoration efforts (envisioned as a 7-10 year program) in Barnegat Bay as a mitigation effort to offset anticipated negative impacts associated with the permit renewal of the Oyster Creek Nuclear Power Generating Station. Mr. Babb stated that once money is moved to "reserve" status, it typically does not get re-appropriated. Mr. Babb stated that he was recently notified that the funds had been returned to the Exelon account and released from 'reserved status.'

Leasing Committee – 2014

Mr. Babb suggested reconvening the Council's Leasing Committee to update the Atlantic Coast shellfish leasing regulations and would be requesting the same of the Delaware Bay Council to create leasing regulations for Delaware Bay. Mr. Babb stated that the Bureau has a request in to the Department for a 2015 rulemaking for shellfish leasing regulatory updates. Mr. Babb recommended that the Leasing Committee meet on a bimonthly or quarterly basis. Mr. Maxwell inquired how the change in Councilmen from 5 to 3 members would impact the committee in terms of the number of members that could sit at the meetings without running into "quorum" issues. Mr. Babb stated that he would investigate further into this matter. Mr. Johnson stated that he was supportive of reconvening the Leasing Committee.

Mr. Babb stated that the quorum issue also affected the Delaware Bay Section and provided some examples of how it affects their activities. He added that this could present an issue with violating the Sunshine Law intent since this section only had three members. Mr. Babb stated that he would try to have some answers by the next meeting. Mr. Babb was unsure of who was on the Council's leasing committee but added that staff would try to find those names.

Shellfish Enhancement Advisory Committee

Mr. Babb requested that the Council provide recommendations of industry representatives to serve on the Shellfish Enhancement Advisory Committee. Mr. Babb reminded the Council that the Shellfish Enhancement Advisory Committee would be comprised of 8 or 9 seats. Mr. Johnson suggested contacting

the individuals who expressed interest or participated on an advisory committee for Barnegat Bay Hard Clam Enhancement Committee a few years back. Mr. Babb was not sure of those names off the top of his head.

#### Bureau of Shellfisheries Spending Plan 2014

Mr. Babb stated that the Bureau of Shellfisheries developed a spending plan for 2014. When finalized, Mr. Babb would provide the Council with more information on Atlantic Coastal projects. The 2014 spending plan would include funding for several shellfish enhancement efforts, including a Maurice River oyster tongs bed enhancement project, a Delaware Bay oyster seed bed shell planting, a hard clam stock assessment in Raritan and Sandy Hook bays in 2014 and a smaller version of the DOI Mullica River Project, in which the Bureau would also collaborate with Stockton College to conduct a recruitment survey.

#### Vibrio Plan

Mr. Maxwell requested that the Bureau provide information regarding the Vibrio plan for 2014. Mr. Babb stated that there was a recent Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference in January 2014. He added that the Shellfish Resource Recovery Steering Committee typically meets in March to discuss the Vibrio Control Plan for the coming year. Mr. Babb informed the Council that there was a number of *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* illnesses reported from oysters harvested from Delaware Bay in 2013. Mr. Babb stated that the 2014 Vibrio plan should be developed in March. Mr. Johnson requested that a representative from the DEP Marine Water Monitoring Division attend the next Council meeting to discuss the 2014 Vibrio plan. Mr. Peter McCarthy stated that he had talked to Ms. Cali Alexander from the NJ Department of Health & Senior Services and said that she planned on attending the March 17, 2014 Council meeting. Staff indicated that they would reach out to both Marine Water Monitoring and the Department of Health to find out when they planned on attending to discuss 2014 Vp Plan.

Mr. Maxwell inquired if the position vacated by Joe Myers with the New Jersey Department of Agriculture (NJDA) would be filled. Mr. Babb had heard that the NJDA was trying to navigate the normal backfilling process. Mr. Maxwell inquired when the next Aquaculture Advisory Council meeting would take place. Mr. Normant stated that he had not heard anything about when the next meeting would be.

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

#### 10. Date, time and place of next meeting:

DATE: March 17, 2014  
TIME: 7 PM  
LOCATION: Law Enforcement Office  
360 New York Rd. Rte. 9  
Port Republic, NJ 08241