

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

Virtual Meeting  
March 15, 2021

Present were: Chairman: John J. Maxwell (Atlantic County)  
Councilman: Paul T. Felder (Cape May County)  
Councilman: George Mathis Jr. (Burlington County)  
Councilman: Vacant (Monmouth County)

Absent was: Vice Chairman: Walter L. Johnson III (Ocean County)

DEP Representatives: Joe Cimino, Marine Fisheries Administration  
Russell Babb, Bureau of Shellfisheries  
Jeffrey Normant, Bureau of Shellfisheries  
Kira Dacanay, Bureau of Shellfisheries  
Jenny Tomko, Bureau of Shellfisheries  
Megan Kelly, Bureau of Shellfisheries  
Lloyd Lomelino, Bureau of Shellfisheries  
Scott Stueber, Bureau of Shellfisheries  
Elizabeth Lange, Bureau of Shellfisheries  
Amanda Wenczel, Department of Agriculture

Mr. Normant read the State's compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act and announced that the meeting would be recorded, and notice was filed with the Secretary of State Office.

1. Total Revenue for February 2021 \$ 3,420.00  
Shellfisheries Law Enforcement Fund \$ 370.00
2. Presentation of January 11, 2021 and February 8, 2021 minutes for approval.

The January 11, 2021 and February 8, 2021 minutes were approved on a motion from Mr. Mathis and seconded by Mr. Felder.

3. Applications for Transfer:

LESSEE	APPLICANT	LOT #	SECTION	ACRES/FT	LOCATION	MAP #
Blake Beskin	Jordan LoPinto	805	B	2.00	Rose Cove	7

The application for transfer was approved on a motion by Mr. Felder and seconded by Mr. Mathis.

4. Old Business:

New Lease Application Procedures

Mr. Lomelino provided an update on new lease application procedures. Because the office remains closed to the public due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Bureau developed an alternate application process when applying for a new lease. Interested applicants must reach out to Mr. Lomelino via email to initiate a discussion about acquiring a lease. Staff will schedule a day and time for a consultation through an electronic meeting platform with the applicant to discuss

availability, review lease maps, and answer general questions. During the call, the applicant would select the lot they were interested in. The Bureau would send the application to the applicant via email to be returned within seven business days. The application must also submit the required payments for the lease application fee and a commercial shellfish license if needed. If the application is not returned to the Bureau within seven days, the lease will be made available to the public.

Mr. Maxwell asked how the process would change if an applicant was proposing a lease in a new lease area. Mr. Lomelino stated that new lease area proposals would be added to a database to track new inquiries. The new lease inquiries would be presented to the Council quarterly. Mr. Maxwell asked how long it would take to process a lease application. Mr. Lomelino stated the Bureau would have the applications ready to be sent out to the applicant within a day or two of the consultation.

Mr. Gainé asked when application fees would have to be submitted by. Mr. Normant stated that all payments should be sent at the time the completed application was submitted to the Bureau.

#### Offshore Wind

Mr. Normant stated that the Bureau had provided Council information about the Boardwalk Wind Power Link Project. Mr. Maxwell confirmed that he received the information. Mr. Maxwell asked if there was additional information relating to the project. Ms. Lange stated that there was no additional information. She added that during the preliminary review by the DEP, the application was found deficient so there will be updated information and the notice would be redistributed.

#### Leasing Committee Update

Ms. Kelly provided an update from the February 8, 2021 Leasing Policy Committee Meeting. Council responded to the Committee recommendation, which addressed concerns regarding the need for new lease areas. The Council stated that the existing *Shellfish Aquaculture Leasing Policy of the Atlantic Coast Section of the NJ Shellfisheries Council* adequately defined the process for the creation of new lease opportunities. Ms. Kelly read the recommendation into the minutes.

Ms. Kelly added that the Committee charge was discussed at the last meeting. The charge of the Committee was stated within the Shellfish Aquaculture Leasing Policy and asked the Council if they wanted to make any changes. The Council had no additional changes and agreed with the charge of the Committee as written into the Policy. She stated the next Leasing Policy Meeting would be held on March 18, 2021.

Mr. Glenn asked if the discussions from the Leasing Policy Meeting was available for review. Ms. Kelly informed him the recommendations of the Committee would be discussed at the following Council meeting. Mr. Glenn asked about the process in which Council receives and reviews the recommendations from the Leasing Committees. Mr. Maxwell explained that the Committees would meet and present their recommendations to the Council at the subsequent Council Meeting. If the discussions or recommendations require Council action it would be presented to the Council as a motion and then opened to the public for comment.

#### Hard Clam Management Plan

Ms. Dacanay stated the Bureau was still compiling data for the hard clam management plan. She would provide an update on the Bureau's progress at each Council Meeting going forward.

## Shell Recycling Program

Mr. Stueber provided an update on the Bureau's Shell Recycling Program. He stated the 2020 Final Report was submitted to the Council. Most of the shell was donated by three participants: Hard Rock Hotel, Dock's Oyster House, and Knife & Fork Inn. The Bureau anticipates planting 2,000 bushels of recycled shell and purchasing 3,000 bushels of shell for a total of 5,000 bushels to be placed on the Mullica River seed beds this summer.

## Aquaculture Development Plan Discussion

Ms. Wenczel stated there was a meeting held with shellfish growers to discuss the Aquaculture Development Plan in December 2020. At that meeting, there was a request to discuss the comments and items about the plan further in depth with growers. That meeting will be held on March 29, 2021.

Mr. Maxwell asked what members of Council would be invited to the meeting. Mr. Normant added that only two members of Council should attend due to potential quorum issues.

### 5. New Business:

#### Mystic Island Beach Restoration Project

Mr. Worth and Ms. Naklicki of T & M Associates gave a presentation on the Mystic Beach Shoreline Restoration Project sponsored by Little Egg Harbor Township. The proposed project was a shoreline stabilization effort at Mystic Island/Graveling Point to expand a beach area. Mr. Maxwell opined that this project could have major ramifications on the shellfishermen and recreational fishermen who utilize the Graveling Point area. Mr. Mathis added there were a lot of unknown impacts this project could have on the habitats, marine resources, and the shellfishermen at Graveling Point. Mr. Parsons stated the project could have an impact on horseshoe crabs that utilize that beach habitat. He was also concerned with the type of fill that was being placed in the area since most of the habitat was comprised of small gravel mix. Mr. Maxwell agreed and opined that adding sand to the area could alter the sediment composition and ultimately impact both shellfish leases and potentially the Graveling Beds. He added that the Mullica River contained the last naturally occurring oyster bed in New Jersey. A motion was made by Mr. Maxwell and seconded by Mr. Mathis to draft a letter on behalf of the Council to express their concerns on the proposed project. Mr. Normant stated that the Bureau and MFA already submit comments independently when reviewing the project and asked if he wanted Council's comments included with the MFA's review. Mr. Maxwell said he would like to submit the comments separately. He requested that the proposed project be presented to the New Jersey Marine Fisheries Council for review and to support the Council's position.

Hearing no other new business, the meeting was adjourned on a motion by Mr. Mathis and seconded by Mr. Felder.

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

DATE:	April 19, 2021
TIME:	6:00 PM
LOCATION:	Virtual