



Martin O'Malley, Governor
Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor
John R. Griffin, Secretary
Joseph P. Gill, Deputy Secretary

Meeting of the MD DNR Tidal Fisheries Advisory Commission
October 20, 2011
6:30-9 PM
Tawes State Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Summary of Motions and Actions

Commissioners Present: Chairman Billy Rice, Vice Chairman Larry Simms, Danny Webster, Robert "Moochie" Gilmer, Bill Sieling, Dale Dawson, Gail Sindorf, Robert T. Brown, Gibby Dean, Steve Gordon, Richard Young, Mike Benjamin, Bill Goldsborough

Commissioners not present:

Brian Keehn (due to extenuating circumstances related to family medical issues)

Synopsis: (for a full account of the meeting, please reference the verbatim transcript, available 11/3/11)

The apprenticeship item was postponed until the November meeting

The ASMFC update focused upon the November winter meeting, with striped bass and menhaden the dominant topics. The Commission discussed potential impacts to the bait fishery for menhaden in Maryland.

The commercial striped bass fishery update focused upon the complexities of implementing the proposed regulations designed to improve harvest accountability and enforcement. Full implementation of proposed changes would not likely come until the June, 2012 start of the hook and line and pound net fisheries.

A discussion of lifting the freeze on LCC licenses was added to the agenda. The Commission was briefed on the potential impacts of 80 LCC license holders reentry into the fishery. The TFAC supported reentry of all frozen LCCs into the fishery for 2012.

NRP announced eight newly graduated cadets. Commissioner Webster encouraged allocation of additional manpower, if possible, in Somerset County.

The Commission encouraged the Department to use a variety of methods, and adaptive discretion to make the commercial industry and public aware of items being considered in the regulatory scoping process.

A discussion requesting an extension of the female blue crab season in Chesapeake Bay was added to the agenda. Commissioner Seiling requested an extension based upon the impacts of Tropical Storms Irene and Lee. The Department indicated a response to this request would be issued by COB, October 21st.

Commissioner Webster led a discussion of concerns over the possibility of undersized oysters being illegally harvested and moved to leased bottoms, and the need for additional enforcement in Somerset County to address this issue. According to Commissioner Webster, it has happened in the past, and due to the prevalence of undersized oysters, he was concerned it might happen again.

The seafood marketing discussion focused on the activities of the past two months, including the Maryland State Fair; Maryland Seafood Festival; “From the Bay, For the Bay”, a week long celebration of Maryland seafood at restaurants in the region which gave a portion of the proceeds for oyster restoration; and advertising for seasonally available Maryland seafood products.

A representative from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service gave a presentation on a shallow water reef project in Hail Cove, Chester River. The TFAC supports the Hail Cove Reef project.

An update of the Simkins dam reef project was offered to the Commission. Concerns were raised regarding fair time of warning to crabbers in the area and regarding the affects on crabbers in the longer term.

Motions:

No motions were made

Action Items:

Add Chairman Rice to the Penalty Work Group

The Department will send clarification on regulations on bushels for oysters/shellfish to the Commission