

RHODE ISLAND MARINE FISHERIES COUNCIL

Shellfish Advisory Panel

January 21, 2015, 4:00 pm

Warwick Public Library, Room 101

600 Sandy Lane, Warwick, RI

Meeting Minutes

RIMFC Members Present: J. Grant (Chair)

SAP Members Present: M. McGiveney; D. Ghigliotty; R. Rheault

Public Present: B. Silkes; A. Silkes; A. Pinheiro; J Pinheiro; M. Behan; R. Krause

CRMC: D. Beutel

DEM: J. Mercer;

1. New Lease Proposal

- a. Proposed Aquaculture Lease: CRMC File # 2014-12-056, Pinheiro, Dutch Island Harbor, Jamestown.

J. Pinheiro gave a brief presentation of the proposed methods. Mercer presented a map of the location and noted that a field survey was not completed due to ice at the location but noted that previous DEM dredge survey assessments in the area had low densities. The applicant stated that he is a bullraker and has not observed many quahogs in the lease site. McGiveney asked about trap fishery usage in the area. The applicant stated that there is minimal trap usage to the north but none the specific area. Motion made by McGiveney to not object, Rheault seconded the motion. The board voted 2-0 to not object to the application.

2. Existing Lease Expansions

- a. Proposed Aquaculture Lease Expansion: CRMC File # 2015-01-043, Behan, Ninigret Pond, Charlestown.

Beutel gave a brief overview of the lease expansion and stated that there was an agreement with the Town of Charlestown not to expand to the west on the overwash fan. This expansion is to the north and east. Beutel stated that previous assessments on the overwash fan showed low density of quahogs. Motion made by McGiveney to not object, Rheault seconded the motion. The board voted 2-0 to not object to the application.

- b. Proposed Aquaculture Lease Expansion: CRMC File # 2015-01-051, Krause, Ninigret Pond, Charlestown.

Mercer gave a brief overview of the site. Beutel stated that the proposal from the PD meeting was modified based upon comments received and the lease is now more simplistic in shape and designed to avoid encroaching existing eelgrass beds to the northeast. Beutel stated that there assessments yielded 0.4 quahogs per square meter. Mercer stated that DEM assessments in the area last year yielded no clams. Motion made by McGiveney to not object, Rheault seconded the motion. The board voted 2-0 to not object to the application.

3. Existing Lease Operational Plan Modification

- a. Proposed Aquaculture Lease Modification: CRMC File # 2013-04-057, Silkes, West passage, Jamestown.

Mercer stated that the modification is to add eastern oysters to the allowable species. The current mussel farm suffered mortality from duck predation so the applicant would like to diversify the crop. Beutel stated that it was his opinion that this modification did not need to be voted upon by the SAP as the area is already dedicated to aquaculture. Motion made by McGiveney to not object, Rheault seconded the motion. The board voted 2-0 to not object to the application.

- b. Proposed Aquaculture Lease Modification: CRMC File # 2011-01-014, Salt Water Farms, LLC, Rhode Island Sound, Newport.

Mercer stated that the modification is to add eastern oysters to the allowable species. The current mussel farm suffered mortality from duck predation so the applicant would like to diversify the crop. There was some discussion about the probability of success of oyster restoration in the area. Beutel stated that it was his opinion that this modification did not need to be voted upon by the SAP as the area is already dedicated to aquaculture. Motion made by McGiveney to not object, Rheault seconded the motion. The board voted 2-0 to not object to the application.

- c. Proposed Aquaculture Lease Modification: CRMC File # 2011-02-049, Goerner, West passage, Jamestown.

Mercer gave a brief description of the current configuration of the lease and the proposed configuration to add floating OysterGro cages. Beutel stated that it is suspended culture now and he has 2 stings of lines now and his permit allows him to have six strings. Questions were raised about visual impact. Mercer stated that DEM enforcement has raised concerns about the gear at the surface being a navigational hazard. Mercer stated that he thinks modifications like this one that are significant that add a lot of gear to the water surface should be reviewed by the SAP as they can affect other uses that occur in the area. There was further discussion about the gear to be used and the number of lines and size of the lease. Jeff Grant reminded the board that only impacts to marine

fisheries are to be considered by the board. Motion made by Rheault to not object, McGiveney seconded the motion. The board voted 2-0-0 to not object to the application with Ghigliotty abstaining as he arrived late to the conversation.

Prepared by: Jeff Mercer