



Rhode Island Marine Fisheries Council

3 Fort Wetherill Road Jamestown, Rhode Island 02835

(401) 423-1920 Fax: (401) 423-1925

MEETING MINUTES

December 1, 2014

URI Narragansett Bay Campus, Corless Auditorium
South Ferry Road, Narragansett, RI

Chairperson: *B. Ballou*

RIMFC Members Present: *K. Booth, R. Hittinger, D. Monti, J. Grant, C. Rein, W. Mackintosh, M. Rice, R. Bellavance*

DEM: *L. Mouradjian, G. Powers, J. McNamee, J. Mercer, P. Duhamel, Sgt. Dan White*

Public: *Approximately 14 individuals were present*

1. **Approval of the Agenda:** *B. Ballou* inquired as to recommended modifications to the agenda; hearing none, the agenda was approved. He offered an additional item under new business as item 4e. for the approval of a Shellfish advisory panel meeting. Hearing no additional comments, the agenda was approved as amended.
2. **Approval of RIMFC meeting minutes from September 3, 2014 (as amended) and October 6, 2014:** *B. Ballou* inquired as to any proposed changes to the minutes or any objections to approving the minutes. Hearing none, the minutes of these two meetings were approved.
3. **Public comments regarding other matters not on agenda:** *Sarah Shuman* addressed the Council regarding a proposal for a project she was planning regarding the impacts of climate change and ocean acidification on commercial fisheries. She explained that an application to the Fisheries Innovation Fund would be made by the 19th, and any other funding opportunities that she can find. The goal of the project would be to develop a steering committee that would be industry focused to develop and adaptation blueprint to address possible future needs of industry and the market. She is looking for assistance with finding individuals for the steering committee, and also in determining priorities and outcomes useful to industry. She will be sending the proposal to *B. Ballou* who will then forward to the Council for feedback prior to her submittal. *R. Hittinger* inquired if recreational fisheries would be included, to which Ms. Shuman offered that it would be possible and should be discussed.
4. **New business:**
 - a. **Winter Harvest schedule in Greenwich Bay Shellfish Management Area:**

J. Mercer provided a brief presentation. He offered that the Division and SAP were in agreement with status quo from last year's schedule. He offered that data is inclusive at this time but may be showing decreasing abundance (hard clam), and that additional survey's and data are needed which could result in a recommendation to decrease effort in the following year. ***M. Rice* offered a motion to recommend approval of the proposal as provided in the ePacket; 2nd by *D. Monti*. The motion passed 8 - 0.**

b. **Public hearing (11/20) items:**

• **Commercial Summer flounder (3 options presented at the hearing):**

J. McNamee offered that the Division's recommendation was to maintain at status quo (option 1). He offered brief explanations regarding the other two options, and that the Division was not in favor of supporting option 2. Regarding option 3, he offered that he looked at data and concluded that approximately 14 – 16 vessels are constrained by the Exemption Certificate requirement but that this option would result in increased landing. He offered that the Division wasn't necessarily opposed to the option but that it would most likely result in reduced possession limits and/or closures. A great deal of discussion took place regarding the pros and cons of option 3. ***K. Booth* offered a motion to recommend option 1 – status quo; 2nd by *R. Hittinger*. *J. Grant* then offered a substitute motion to recommend adoption of option 3; 2nd by *R. Bellavance*. This motion failed 5 – 1 (*W. Macintosh* and *R. Bellavance* abstaining; *J. Grant* in favor). A vote was then taken on the original motion, adoption of option 1 - status quo, which passed 8 - 0.**

• **Commercial Scup (1 option – status quo, presented at the hearing):**

Discussion took place regarding the stock status. ***R. Bellavance* offered a motion to recommend adoption of option 1 – status quo; 2nd by *D. Monti*. The motion passed 8 – 0.**

• **Commercial Black sea bass (1 option – status quo, presented at the hearing):**

J. McNamee offered Division support of option 1. He offered that the Division could not support option 3 due to the low quota and resulting increased catch rated and closures that would result with this option in place. ***R. Hittinger* offered a motion to recommend adoption of option 1 – status quo; 2nd by *J. Grant*. The motion passed 8 – 0.**

• **Commercial Monkfish (4 options presented at the hearing):**

J. McNamee offered that the Division was not in favor of option 3 due to excessive possession limit and additional administrative requirements needed to manage a new program. He offered that the Division provided a subsequent counter proposal with a smaller possession limit with no additional programmatic requirements. He offered that the Division was supportive of public hearing option 1 – status quo, and could support public comments option 1 but this could not be implemented until the start of the season in 2016 (May 1, 2016). *W. Macintosh* offered that he could not understand any benefit in

an aggregate possession limit; that only very few boats are involved; to which *R. Bellavance* offered that it appeared to be only 2-3 % of the Monkfish fishers. *R. Bellavance* offered a motion to recommend adoption of option 1 – status quo; 2nd by *M. Rice*. The motion passed 8 – 0.

c. (Note: No item c. – inadvertently omitted)

d. **Shellfish Advisory Panel membership application – J. Vivari to replace P. Kennedy as primary recreational representative:** *R. Hittinger* offered a motion to recommend endorsement of Mr. Vivari to serve on the panel; 2nd by *M. Rice*. The motion passed 8 – 0.

e. **Approval of Shellfish Advisory meeting:** *B. Ballou* explained that a SAP meeting may be needed to discuss *Vibrio* regulations that may be brought to the February public hearing. He inquired as to any objections or comments to holding a meeting – date and agenda specifics to be determined at a later date by Division staff and the SAP Chair. Hearing no objections, the meeting was approved.

5. **FYI Items:** FYI items were briefly discussed.

6. **Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:55.

Prepared by *P. Duhamel*