



MEETING MINUTES

Scituate Shellfish Advisory Committee

Thursday January 16, 2020 6:30pm

Large Conference Room

Scituate Town Library

Committee Members in Attendance: Mike DiMeo, Susan Harrison, and Craig Rosenquist.

Committee Members not in Attendance: Jeff Palmer

Committee Liaisons in Attendance: None

Also, in Attendance: Mike Cotter, Jamie Davenport, Adam Bisol, Beth McGrath, Andrew Slater, Paula Lind, Erica Whiteside, Dave Friedman, Bob Wigmore.

Agenda/Scheduled items:

Susan Harrison called the meeting to order at 6:34pm.

Discussion and Reapproval of November 19, 2019 meeting minutes. Susan Harrison noticed that some background information regarding a correspondence was inadvertently left out of the November 19, 2020 minutes and asked for the committee to approve the added information. Mike made a motion to approve and Craig seconded. All in favor (3-0) Approved.

Update and Discussion on Next Steps Regarding the Implementation of Commercial Aquaculture. Susan Harrison briefly recapped from the last meeting and reviewed the guidance given by the Board of Selectmen (BOS) regarding the scope of the aquaculture pilot. The BOS directed the Shellfish Advisory Committee to draft an application for shellfish aquaculture; selection criteria for grading the application submissions; a map 5-7 one-acre plots on the Briggs Harbor Map; and draft process and outcome measures to evaluate the pilot program.

5-7 One Acre Plots. Susan Harrison recapped from the last meeting and reviewed the map with the people who were not at the last meeting. The committee looked at options for

mapping out 5-7 one-acre plots using advice from the BOS to keep the acres as tight as possible but also allow for diversity of location. The Committee used post-it notes matching the to-scale size of an acre on the large map of Briggs Harbor. This allowed for better visualization and the flexibility to move the acre plots. The committee encouraged participation regarding recreational usage from people who attended the meeting. Beth McGrath suggested the acres parallel the land on the Glades/Minot side so that the buoys could also serve as an aid to navigation for paddleboarders and kayakers. The Committee thought that it was a really good idea and placed the sticky notes such that the acres paralleled the land.

Erica Whiteside, a summer resident at the Glades gave input on the placement of buoys as well as wildlife in the area. She gave some helpful context regarding the beaches and dunes on the Glades/ Minot side of the plot.

Questions were asked about the corner posts. Beth McGrath asked if the posts could be driven into the ground as much as possible and not be 18 inches high. Erica Whiteside agreed with the suggestion. The Committee thought that they would be able to make the posts as flush as possible to the ground to minimize impact.

Application. Again, the Committee discussed the draft application which includes:

Validation that the applicant is 18 years or older.

Validation that the applicant is a **domiciled** resident of the Town of Scituate (see rules and regulations for definition). Requesting a copy of a document proving residence (Town tax bill, Utility bill, Driver's license). Adding a section to inquire if the applicant is a domiciled resident of Cohasset.

Validating that the applicant holds a valid Massachusetts Commercial Fisherman permit endorsed for shellfishing and requesting a copy of it. The Committee reminded people in attendance that the permit is easy to obtain and not expensive.

Requesting that the applicant describe their experience with shellfish, aquaculture, business or other water dependent activities, and any relevant educational or volunteer experience.

And, requesting that the applicant attach a detailed business plan with a description of proposed activities. The Committee discussed adding a requirement for a Risk Analysis and a Market Analysis to the business plan. In addition, they discussed making the Funding criteria separate from the business plan. So, the business plan would include the following:

Site Plan: Provide a map and site plan. Include how you intend to access the site? (if by land, provide a description of the point of access including intended parking. If by water, provide a description of the type of vessel you intend to use and where it will be launched or moored, if private land please include written confirmation that the applicant has the right to access the land.)

Description of gear and approach: The proposed quantity and or culture devices to be deployed (include the dimensions of all proposed gear including, cages, bags, anchors, and

lines, and a schematic of how they will be deployed on the site.) The proposed species, quantities, densities, and sources of shellfish seed to be planted, and a proposed farming plan (e.g., frequency of seeding, harvesting, etc.).

Risk Analysis: Review the risks associated with an aquaculture business over time. The applicant should be able to show that they have identified and evaluated risks as well as thought of plan to address known risks.

Market Analysis: Review the Aquaculture market in Massachusetts and show an understanding of opportunities and pitfalls. The analysis should show an understanding of costs, growth rate and profitability.

Funding: Include a description of funding.

References: In addition, the Committee revisited a discussion requiring letters of reference. Ultimately, letters of reference are important to determine if the individual or team would be able to work with abutters and the community. The Committee thinks it is important for the individuals selected to work with the community and to be like ambassadors to the community and the fisheries industry. The committee unanimously decided to advise the BOS to include three (3) letters of reference from non-family members and non-business partners. Bob Wigmore suggested that letters of reference would not show anything and not be valuable in evaluating an application. The committee strongly disagreed with that and tailored the reference questions to prompt direct responses regarding motivation; quality and completeness of work; innovative and creative approaches to implementation and business challenges; and responsiveness and overall quality of working relationships with relevant individuals. If a reference could speak directly to those criteria, then references would be able to help to determine qualified applicants.

Review Criteria: The Committee discussed and drafted proposed application review criteria including the applicant's and/or Partner's and/or Employee's Knowledge, Experience and Commitment with aquaculture and/or fisheries. The Committee suggested the following language be included in a description of the criteria: Provide explicit summaries of relevant projects completed by the applicant, partners and/or employees. Include related knowledge, experience and commitment: A) Knowledge, Experience and Commitment in shellfish aquaculture and/or fisheries and/or business, with preference given to local or regional knowledge. B) Knowledge and Experience with use and maintenance of fisheries and/or aquaculture gear. C) Knowledge and Experience working with residential abutters. D) Demonstrate understanding of regulatory requirements for running an aquaculture operation.

In addition to a detailed summary of knowledge and experience provided, the experience cited shall include examples of specific aspects that are especially relevant or can be applied to commercial aquaculture in Briggs Harbor/ Bassings Beach. Applicants can include relevant paid and volunteer experience. Full resumes of the individual applicant, partners, and employees shall be included as attachments to the submission.

The Committee unanimously thought that the criteria should be up to 5 points.

The Business Plan criteria were discussed. The business plan should demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of implementation (including at least a site plan, description of gear and approach, risk analysis and market analysis). The applicant should provide a summary of the business plan. In addition, outline the approach the applicant would take in implementing an aquaculture program including a detailed site plan, a description of gear and approach, risk analysis and market analysis. It was determined that Funding should be a separate criterion outside the business plan.

The Committee thought that the business plan was the “meat” of the application and that the maximum points should reflect 20 points. The funding could be another 5 points.

References were discussed as part of the application. Letters of support would have to be from non-family members or business partners. It was suggested that a maximum of three (3) references with attestation of performance in relevant similar projects including business, fisheries and aquaculture as well as other relevant fields be required. It was suggested that references be 5 points.

An interview or presentation was also discussed. Possibly 10 minutes with questions. Possibly, those individuals meeting the minimum qualifications and scoring well on items above (review criteria) will be asked to make an oral presentation to the selection committee and the BOS. This could be another 5 points.

It was determined that all the points would be voted on at the next meeting when the new Advisory Committee members can attend.

Review of Pilot Program. The Committee discussed possible criteria for reviewing the pilot program. The science of if the oysters grow with possible testing for disease or other factors. We would also have to measure loss of gear or gear displacement. Other things to consider would be the growers experiences and the community and recreational boaters experiences. Access would also have to be evaluated. Susan Harrison did not get a chance to talk with the Cohasset Center for Student Coastal Research to see if they would be willing to assist with the pilot review, but she would before the next meeting.

Mike DiMeo made a motion to adjourn. Craig Rosenquist seconded. All in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 8:44pm

Respectfully submitted by Susan Harrison