

# MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

## Town of Bar Harbor

### Regular Meeting

### Wednesday, May 20, 2020

CALL TO ORDER – 4:04 p.m. Virtual meeting through zoom link available to the public  
Present: Chris Petersen, Natalie Springuel, Fiona de Koning, Matt Gerald, Joanna Fogg  
Guests: Heidi Leighton (MEDMR), Alex de Koning, Charlie Phippen (harbormaster, host of the zoom meeting).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES –February minutes were reviewed and approved 5-0.

With the chair absent, by mutual consent Fiona de Koning took minutes and Chris Petersen led the discussion. Chris asked to change the order of the items, leading with the change in license timing, then moving to the change in ordinance and allocation.

Business:

A. Covid-19 and clam licenses for 2020-21. Proposal for extending current year to September 1.  
Our commercial licenses currently require interactive conservation time from harvesters, and with the current pandemic that has not been possible. After consulting with Maine Department of Marine Resources, they recommended either of two options that other towns have used: remove the requirement for conservation hours or extend the current license year for several months. We also noted that individuals under 17 are not required to do conservation hours per the Maine Department of Labor. The committee approved a motion to extend the current license year from June 30, 2020 to August 31, 2020. The new license year will begin September 1, 2020 and continue to June 30, 2021. The motion was passed 5-0.

B. Ordinance change and allocation for 2020-2021. In February the committee voted to change the ordinance to (a) create the new categories of Junior Commercial (Resident and Nonresident) and (b) add an unlimited license class to the type of commercial license that could be allocated by the committee. The draft language from February went through two rounds of edits with Maine Department of Marine Resources, and the committee discussed the revised and DMR approved language, as well as the potential ramifications. In addition, the committee looked at our proposed allocation for 2020-21, where we are using the unlimited class for resident commercial licenses (both regular and junior). Under this scenario, if we sell six commercial licenses in one of those categories, a nonresident license will be made available in that category. This is part of the DMR 10% rule, whereas a minimum of 10% of licenses have to be made available to non-residents in a commercial class, starting when you get to six resident commercial licenses. Currently we only have one commercial clammer that has met the conservation hour requirement. Heidi also clarified several additional details for our discussion:

- If a nonresident completed conservation hours and was not offered a license then the conservation hours rolled over one year. The interested party would have to contact the committee to say that they were still interested (opt in) in applying for a license the following year or else the conservation time expires.
- Heidi explained that for the unlimited license sales option, that license must be available throughout the whole year, but since all commercial licenses are required to complete conservation time before the beginning of the current license year, that we would know before the time begins if anyone is eligible for a regular commercial license.

- Heidi further explained that for license sales allocations there was a 30-day submission period and Chris asked if we could do unlimited licenses this year as the usual pre-covid deadline was June 1<sup>st</sup> and our new ordinance will not be approved by this date. As the license period is extended Heidi affirmed that we could apply the changes this year.

We also noted that we can move between our current limited to our proposed unlimited class of licenses on an annual basis through the allocation request, so our changes give us flexibility to use either model in future years. In the allocation request, we had a slight increase in the cost of the commercial license, and based the newly created junior commercial licenses at half the price of the normal commercial license. We also slightly increased the cost of a recreational license.

The committee liked the idea that this change could encourage younger individuals to try commercial clamming. After discussion the committee voted 5-0 for all of the changes, and are forwarding those changes to the town council for approval.

C. Initiation of Maine Restoration and Resilience Project Grant. Chris outlined the work done to date on the MRRP Clam Restoration grant. We have received permits from both the Maine Department of Marine Resources to carry out the work as part of the College of the Atlantic's Research and Education permit (SL2019-34-04) and Acadia National Park for the work in Otter Cove (Permit-ACAD-2019-SCI-0046), and our work in the intertidal is also covered by our continuing Army Corps of Engineers Grant (NAE-2008-1654 with modifications in 2017 & 2019).

We have put out 23 recruitment boxes to date at three sites, 10 at Hadley Point, 10 at Windaway, and 3 at Otter Cove. We will be adding 10 to Thomas Island next week and in June will add the same number again to all sites for a total of 66 boxes but the end of June. The committee discussed who could help us build more boxes, and we agreed to ask Teagan White if they had time to build them, and get compensated from the grant (this is included as a line item on the grant).

Chris also showed slides of the current density of small clams at Hadley Point, the numbers are the highest recorded currently in the state, with densities up to 800 per square foot in May. We discussed why this might be true, and wondered if the mild winter could have increased survivorship. It was suggested that we could look at past years and see if in previously mild winters we also had high densities of recruits in the following year. We believe that these clams are survivors from recruitment in 2019, it is highly unlikely that any reproduction has occurred so early in 2020.

Given our large population of seed at Hadley Point, and that in the past densities this high appeared to lead to slower growth, if it might be good to either thin some areas and move them to an aquaculture site or net this or other areas to protect them from predators. We asked Heidi if it would be possible to obtain a DMR permit to move seed to an aquaculture site and she affirmed that we could apply for a permit. Over the next month we will be considering the logistics and in June will consider this idea more fully.

Items for next meeting:

The committee would like to have a summary from Emma Ober on her work on clam recruitment that was part of her senior project at College of the Atlantic. We will also review and consider options for moving or protecting clams this summer.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00pm

Respectfully submitted by Fiona de Koning and Chris Petersen