

Town of Chebeague Island  
Shellfish Conservation Commission Meeting

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MEETING MINUTES

March 28, 2015 @ 9:00AM

at the Public Safety Building/Town Office (back conference room)

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1. Call meeting to order. Present: commission members Cecil Doughty, Gary Ross, Chip Corson, Bob Earnest; alternate member Mac Passano; nominee Ernie Burgess; Town Clerk Michelle Jackson; Shellfish Warden Genaro Balzano.
2. To have the Commission review and then send to the Selectboard the ordinance changes required by the State, as per discussions regarding licensing in December / January
  - a. We reviewed the issues that Denis-Marc Nault presented as errors in our 2013 ordinance; Denis had told us that his office did not see the 2013 version when it was approved by the Town.
  - b. We reviewed the changes in a draft revision prepared by Bob, in consultation with Denis.
  - c. See attached document "Shellfish Conservation ordinance 2013 rev 3 28 2015.docx"
  - d. Gary made a motion to send this proposed ordinance to the Selectboard; Cecil seconded; unanimous approval. We request that the Selectboard place this version on the Warrant for the upcoming Town Meeting, and, that the Town Clerk send this version to Denis-Marc Nault at the DMR, and that the Town Clerk take steps to confirm that Denis receives and approves this ordinance.
3. To have the Commission discuss and possibly act on recommendations for possible committee members (to replace Jessie Russo, given her recent resignation from the SCC)
  - a. Ernie Burgess was nominated by Cecil Doughty; seconded by Gary Ross; unanimous. The SCC recommends that the Selectboard name Ernie as our 5<sup>th</sup> commission member.
  - b. Note that we revised the Ordinance from "5 members" to "5-7 members"; we would like to have the opportunity to ask the Selectboard for more members, should this become beneficial based on the amount of conservation work we envision in the months ahead.
4. To have the Commission discuss and possibly schedule annual shellfish survey work.
  - a. The survey will take place on April 8 at 8am, starting at the Hook, and surveying the closure area between the Hook and Belesca's wharf. The second day of the survey will commence April 9 at the end of Fenderson Road; after surveying there, we will proceed to the shore north of the Stone Pier on the back shore. Friday April 10 is our backup day in the event of inclement weather.
5. Non-agenda items to be presented by the Commission.
  - a. Bob shared what he learned in conversation with the DMR's conservation specialist Pete Thayer. Pete tells us that primary activities to date aimed at restoration are:

- i. Brushing: the practice of placing coniferous branches in the tidal exit route to help maintain seed on a given flat
    - ii. Nets: the practice of placing nets over a given section of clam flat to prevent predator species from consuming the clams in that area.
  - b. Pete told us that the data is still emerging, and not yet conclusive, but that it appears that the netting approach appears to be providing positive results. Per Pete, there does not appear to be conclusive evidence in support of the brushing practice.
  - c. Pete also shared that the State is moving towards, or has now, allowed Towns to issue leases for the intertidal area, so that (for example) a clammer who maintains nets over a period of time to protect the clams in a given area, is not 'robbed' of those clams after his investment in time and resources.
    - i. Chebeague's SCC prefers to focus our work on conservation towards experimenting with nets in areas that are already closed:
      - 1. To avoid the complexities of leasing, and
      - 2. To take advantage of the 'controlled' aspects of such an experiment in a currently closed area.
    - ii. Bob was assigned to followup with our new Town Administrator to learn how license fees and other funds are available for equipment purchase for such work.
    - iii. Pete suggested that there are folks in the state conservation and in the educational / extension communities who would be willing to help us get started.
- 6. Meeting adjourned.