

FINAL MINUTES

Recreational Fishing Advisory Board Meeting

May 8, 2006

Members Present

George Hudgins - Chairman
Edward Rhodes - Vice-chair
Carlisle Bannister
John Barr
Carolyn Brown

Jim Deibler
Jesse "Jimmie" Duell
Charles Randolph
Charles Southall

The RFAB Work Session was held from 5:30 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. During the Work Session, the RFAB was given an update on the status of the Commercial Marine Improvement Fund. The projected balance of funds, available for new projects, is \$250,000. Mr. Travelstead described some of the project proposals submitted for the Commercial Fishing Advisory Board (CFAB) review.

These minutes are from the Final Meeting of this project cycle.

At 7:05 p.m., Chairman Hudgins called the meeting to order and asked if staff had any announcements

Ms. Jane McCroskey informed everyone that the current balance of the Recreational Fund is \$368,000, and the current list of project proposals exceeds that amount. She also announced that \$2.2 million is the estimated amount of revenue for the end of September 2006. As has been done in the past for research projects, they may begin June 1. However, expenditures may not be reimbursed until the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries transfers the money to VMRC. The children's educational events may request funding prior to the event.

Mr. Hudgins asked for a review of the draft March 13, 2006 RFAB meeting minutes. Mr. Rhodes made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Barr seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous to accept the draft minutes as final.

Multi-Year Projects for Renewal.

- A) 2006 CCA Tidewater Youth Fishing Day (Year 9). Tom Johnson, CCA Tidewater Chapter. **\$6,000**. Mr. Rhodes made a motion to approve the funding and was seconded by Mr. Randolph. The vote passed 9-0.

Mr. Barr requested that language be added to the contracts, with the fishing clubs, putting on these types of events, to make the children aware of the Virginia Saltwater Fishing Tournament Junior Angler Awards. The RFAB voted unanimously to support the additions to the contracts, and also to add contact information for Claude Bain's office.

Mr. Rhodes made a motion to take Items B and C together. Mr. Deibler seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous to do so.

- B) 2006 Saxis Fishing Pier Youth Fishing Tournament (Year 5). Allen Evans, Eastern Shore of Virginia Angler's Club. \$1,500 (-\$250) **\$1,250.**
- C) 2006 Morley's Wharf Youth Fishing Tournament (Year 5). Allen Evans, Eastern Shore of Virginia Angler's Club. \$1,500 (-\$250) **\$1,250.**

Mr. Rhodes made the motion to approve \$1,250, for each item. Mr. Southall seconded the motion. The vote passed 9-0 to approve the amended amounts.

D) WITHDRAWN

E) Estimating Relative Abundance of Young-of-Year American Eel, *Anguilla rostrata*, in the Virginia Tributaries of Chesapeake Bay (Year 6). Marcel Montane, VIMS. **\$31,683.** Mr. Rhodes made a motion to fund \$15,841 and the remainder be funded by the Commercial Board. Mr. Barr seconded the motion. The vote passed 9-0 to approve the amended amount.

F) Impact on Mycobacteriosis on the Striped Bass Recreational Fishery in Chesapeake Bay, Year 2: What is the Fate of Infected Fish? J. Hoenig, W. Vogelbein, D. Gauthier, VIMS. **\$88,500.** Mr. Bannister made a motion to table this project, while other funding sources are being sought from the National Science Foundation (NSF)/National Institute of Health (NIH). Ms. Brown seconded the motion. Dr. Hoenig explained the difficulties with the NSF/NIH grant process. The Board did ask if the project would continue without the requested funding. Dr. Hoenig explained that the project would continue, but at a reduced rate. Dr. Hoenig also mentioned that a request has been submitted to the Commercial Board, as requested by the RFAB, as well as a request for funding to Sea Grant. If funding were provided by other sources, they would adjust this request accordingly. Board members and Dr. Hoenig discussed the detrimental press coverage on Mycobacteriosis. Dr. Hoenig said that they believed that during the colder months the disease is inactive. When the water warms up and the fish are stressed, the disease goes rampant. The tag returns appear to support this belief. The researchers hope tag returns this fall will show what happens over the summer months. Dr. Hoenig sympathized with the Board's frustrations over the expense and the slowness of the research. The vote passed 8-1 to table this item.

New Projects.

G) Visual Function in Chesapeake Bay Sport and Prey Fishes: Summer Flounder, Bluefish, Cobia, and Atlantic Menhaden. A. Horodysky, R. Brill, R. Latour VIMS. **\$44,279.** Mr. Southall made a motion to approve the funding and was seconded by Mr. Randolph. The vote passed 8-1. Mr. Randolph commended the effort Mr. Horodysky has done with the presentations to the angling clubs. Mr. Randolph also said that he felt the information was well received and useful to the anglers.

H) 2006 Sunshine Children's Fishing Program. Denny Dobbins, Portsmouth Angler's Club. **\$6,954.** Ms. Brown made a motion to approve the funding and was seconded by Mr. Randolph. The vote passed 8-1.

I) WITHDRAWN

- J) 2006 Early Summer Children's Fishing Program. Charlie Johnson, Northampton County Angler's Club. **\$1,100**. Mr. Randolph made a motion to approve the funding and was seconded by Mr. Deibler. The vote passed 8-0 with Mr. Barr abstaining.
- K) Using Virginia's Recreational Fishers in a Sea Turtle Tagging Study. Christina Trapani, Virginia Aquarium Stranding Response Team. **\$4,600**. Mr. Deibler made a motion to deny funding. Mr. Barr seconded the motion. Mr. Barr commented that this project does not meet the guidelines listed in the State Code for issuing grants. The vote passed 9-0 to deny funding.
- L) Understanding Localized Movements and Habitat Associations of Summer Flounder in Chesapeake Bay Using Passive Acoustic Arrays. M. Fabrizio, J. Lucy, VIMS. \$134,306 (+\$15,600) **\$149,906**. Mr. Deibler asked Mr. Lucy to comment on the criteria for site selection. Mr. Lucy explained that they chose sites where various sizes of flounder were caught by anglers, and, to keep travel costs down, sites close to VIMS. Also considered were locations where loss of the hydrophone equipment could be minimized. Loss of these expensive pieces of equipment also means loss of stored data. The equipment will be marked with permitted mooring buoys above and below the surface. Mr. Duell mentioned that the flounder caught at these locations would be smaller sizes because none of the sites were in deep water, like sites off the Eastern Shore. Mr. Lucy agreed that these were not the best sites possible, but, balancing cost with site selection, he felt they would get enough samples of large and small fish and could apply the results to other similar areas. The Game Fish Tagging Studies have given information for some of the preferred deep water sites. Mr. Barr asked if some of the equipment could be reused. Mr. Lucy indicated that the newer equipment purchased could be used in future studies, but older equipment could not be modified to match the fish tags currently being used. Mr. Randolph asked Dr. Fabrizio to give details on the anchoring system to be used with this study. Dr. Fabrizio described the array of hardware (buoys/ropes/anchors) that would hold the equipment in place. Dr. Fabrizio was also asked to explain the sampling process and how moving one or two sites across the Bay would affect the budget. Dr. Fabrizio explained the sampling process, as well as how the time and the vessel costs would make the project much more expensive. Mr. Duell made a motion to fund \$149,906 and was seconded by Mr. Randolph. The vote passed 7-2 to approve the amended amount.
- M) Towards Validation of Juvenile Indices of Abundance for Several Fish Species in Chesapeake Bay. R. Latour, C. Bonzek, M. Fabrizio, VIMS. **\$60,916**. Mr. Randolph made a motion to approve funding. Mr. Rhodes made an amended motion to approve \$30,458 and the remainder be funded by the Commercial Board. Mr. Randolph agreed to the amendment and the amended motion was seconded by Mr. Southall. The vote passed 8-1 to approve the amended amount

The next RFAB meeting date is July 10, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. This will be the first meeting of the second review cycle. Proposal applications are due June 15, 2006.

Chairman Hudgins adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m.