

FINAL MINUTES

Recreational Fishing Advisory Board Meeting

March 13, 2006

Members Present

Edward Rhodes - Vice-chair
Carlisle Bannister
John Barr
Carolyn Brown

Jim Deibler
Jesse "Jimmie" Duell
Charles Randolph
Charles Southall

Members Not Present

George Hudgins - Chairman

At 7:00 p.m., Vice-chairman Rhodes called the meeting to order and asked if staff had any announcements

Ms. Jane McCroskey informed everyone that the revenue available for projects, generated by the license fee increases, is estimated as \$2.3 million, as of September 30, 2006.

Mr. Rhodes asked for a review of the draft January 9, 2006 RFAB meeting minutes. Mr. Deibler made a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Brown seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous to accept the draft minutes as final.

Mr. Rhodes asked to approve a \$10,000 increase for the RFAB staff budget, to cover increases in cost for salary, fringe benefits, travel and so forth. Mr. Barr made a motion to approve the increase. Mr. Randolph seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous to approve the \$10,000 increase.

Mr. Rhodes asked to take one item out of order and asked Dr. Orth (see Item D) to come forward.

Multi-Year Projects for Renewal.

- A) 2006 CCA Tidewater Youth Fishing Day (Year 9). Tom Johnson, CCA Tidewater Chapter. **\$6,000**. Larry Snider (CCA of VA): CCA generally supports these types of events.
- B) 2006 Saxis Fishing Pier Youth Fishing Tournament (Year 5). Allen Evans, Eastern Shore of Virginia Angler's Club. **\$1,500**. Matt Abell, president ESAC, asked to reduce the requested amount to **\$1,250**. The club had leftover equipment from the 2005 tournament that could be used this year. The event would run like last year with each child receiving fishing gear, T-shirt, and lunch.

Larry Snider (CCA of VA): CCA generally supports these types of events.

- C) 2006 Morley's Wharf Youth Fishing Tournament (Year 5). Allen Evans, Eastern Shore of Virginia Angler's Club. **\$1,500**. Matt Abell, president ESAC, asked to reduce the requested amount to **\$1,250**. The club had leftover equipment from the 2005 tournament that could be used this year. The event would be run like last year with each child receiving fishing gear, T-shirt, and lunch.

Larry Snider (CCA of VA): CCA generally supports these types of events.

Mr. Deibler informed Mr. Abell about the VSFT, Jr. Angler Awards. Mr. Deibler encouraged him to speak with Claude Bain, Director VSFT, as to how to include it into their Youth Fishing Tournaments.

- D) Enhancing Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV) Habitat: Research and Education for Restoration (Year 12). Robert Orth, VIMS. **\$81,350**. Dr. Orth thanked the Board for their continued support of this project. He was pleased to announce that the federal funding (Army Corps) was approved, so he would withdraw this request for funding. He will continue to provide the Board with updates. Mr. Bannister moved to accept the request to withdraw and was seconded by Ms. Brown. The vote was unanimous.

- 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**. Larry Snider (CCA of VA): CCA feels this project benefits the commercial more than the recreational sector and, therefore, does not support any funding of this project.

- 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**. Larry Snider (CCA of VA): CCA does support partial (50/50 split with commercial) funding of this project.

Mr. Barr mentioned that this project was recommended to seek some funding from the commercial fund at the last RFAB meeting. Dr. Vogelbein explained to the RFAB that they were making a concerted effort to finding other funding sources, especially federal funds. They were not aware of the mechanism on how to apply for funding from the commercial funds. If commercial funds become available, they would apply for funding assistance. Mr. Bannister asked if previously funded Mycobacteriosis research has provided any new information. Dr. Vogelbein responded that they have discovered a tremendous amount of information on Mycobacteria. Now, with this study, they were trying to determine the impact of this disease on the Chesapeake Bay stock. There has been an increase in natural mortality over the last 5 to 10 years, but the cause is unknown. The hypothesis is that this disease is playing a role in the increase in natural mortality, but the extent is unknown. Mr. Deibler asked for information on the currently funded study and Dr. Vogelbein gave an overview of the findings so far. Mr. Bannister asked whether, or not, the fish populations in Delaware Bay and Long Island Sound had the 70% infection rate, as reported for the Chesapeake Bay populations. Dr. Vogelbein

explained that the information and samples received from those areas did not indicate as high a prevalence of infection.

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.** Larry Snider (CCA of VA) - Though the CCA did not initially support this type of research, they feel this project will be a benefit to the recreational anglers and fully support funding for this project. Mr. Snider also requested that the information from this research be made available through the Angler's Guide in the future.

Mr. Horodysky informed the Board that he will continue to provide information to angler groups and provide a PDF file for posting on the website. He did not believe that the information would be part of this year's revision of the Angler's Guide. In a future revision of the Angler's Guide, the information could be included. He was happy to report that the feedback has been very positive to this point, and hoped it would continue to be.

- H) 2006 Sunshine Children's Fishing Program. Denny Dobbins, Portsmouth Angler's Club. **\$6,954.** Mr. Dobbins mentioned that this was a program that they have been doing for 17 or 18 years. They have expanded the program with the use of head boats and will do 4 Friday trips in July. They will do a pier trip on a Thursday for those children that are physically unable to go on the boats or that choose not to go. This year they have added a "little school" to educate the children before going out to fish.

Larry Snider (CCA of VA): CCA generally supports these types of events.

- I) Ocean View Bay Savers Fishing Pier. Lauren Campsen, Principal, Ocean View Elementary Maritime School. **\$108,614.** Mr. Charles Hughes, Ms. Jane Bolling (Norfolk Public Schools) and Mr. Wayne Webster (City of Norfolk) provided the RFAB with information (requested at the last meeting) from the Norfolk School Board and the City of Norfolk confirming support for this project. Mr. Hughes asked direction from the RFAB, as to how to proceed to get the pier built for the children and the community. Mr. Hughes did research the cost of using the private Ocean View Pier and he calculated the cost would be around \$11 per student for a one day outing. The private facility is on the unprotected Bay side and the pier is high above the water. This facility is not really conducive for teaching beginners (small kids) to fish. Mr. Webster indicated that two sites at the Recreational Center were being assessed but wanted direction from the Board, as to what its requirements were for the pier. Mr. Rhodes directed Mr. Hughes to contact Phil Lownes of DGIF. The applicants were asked the anticipated number of people that would use the pier. Ms. Bolling approximated the number to be around 5000 children and adults. Mr. Southall asked who would control the construction and contracting of the pier. Mr. Webster replied that Norfolk would take responsibility for all the engineering, construction, permitting and maintenance of the pier. Mr. Barr explained that the RFAB has guidelines in Code that they need to follow, for funding allocations, and portions of this project (as presented) do not meet the guidelines.

Larry Snider (CCA of VA): As presented, the CCA does not support this project. They do support access projects, like piers, if the piers are available to the general public for fishing. Also, they support fishing education, but cannot support funding for educational programs that do not meet the guidelines. Mr. Snider indicated that the CCA has some of the same concerns as expressed by the RFAB. The CCA has nothing against the School and the educational programs, but traditionally this type of project would be proposed by a locality (like Norfolk). Norfolk could benefit from a public fishing pier.

Ms. Brown and Mr. Randolph did commend the School for bringing this need of a public pier to the attention of Norfolk. The RFAB directed the City and School representatives, to work with Sonya Davis, to either redesign the proposal or possibly submit a new proposal for the next review cycle.

- J) 2006 Early Summer Children's Fishing Program. Charlie Johnson, Northampton County Angler's Club. **\$1,100**. Larry Snider (CCA of VA): CCA generally supports these types of events.
- K) Using Virginia's Recreational Fishers in a Sea Turtle Tagging Study. Christina Trapani, Virginia Aquarium Stranding Response Team. **\$4,600**. Larry Snider (CCA of VA): The CCA does not dislike research, but they do not see how this particular research project would be of benefit to recreational anglers.

Ms. Trapani felt this project would help anglers gain more knowledge about sea turtles and become more aware and observant of sea turtles in the area.

- L) Understanding Localized Movements and Habitat Associations of Summer Flounder in Chesapeake Bay Using Passive Acoustic Arrays. M. Fabrizio, J. Lucy, VIMS. **\$134,306**. Larry Snider (CCA of VA): CCA supports this research project because the recreational anglers want more information on this very important summer angling fish. This does benefit the academic community and fisheries managers, but it will also benefit the recreational angler. One budget item, the CCA has some issues with, is the funding of Fringe Benefits for this project and others.
- M) Towards Validation of Juvenile Indices of Abundance for Several Fish Species in Chesapeake Bay. R. Latour, C. Bonzek, M. Fabrizio, VIMS. **\$60,916**. Larry Snider (CCA of VA): CCA does support partial (50/50 split with commercial) funding of this project.

Mr. Randolph asked if anyone could give the RFAB an update on the status of the available commercial funds. Ms. McCroskey informed the Board that they are still processing Commercial Registration applications. At this time, she does not have an estimated amount. They need to make sure the same number of people register this year, as last, before estimating the funds. She will provide more information in a couple of weeks.

Mr. Barr asked if any of the researchers that were directed at the last meeting, to seek commercial funds, had done so. Mr. Travelstead answered that the only project received, thus far, was the American eel project. The eel project has traditionally been split 50/50 with the commercial funds, and is an ASMFC mandated project. We have also received some project

proposals from the commercial sector. The status of the commercial funds is needed before moving forward with the proposals. Mr. Travelstead informed everyone that Sonya Davis would also handle the processing of commercial project proposals.

Sonya Davis presented the request from York County for the Smith Landing project. The total amount originally approved for the project was \$701,000. Last November, the County thought all the expenditures were covered and reduced the total project request to \$619,108. A few items were added to the project cost, since November. Two of the items resulted from recommendations by anglers using the site: the cutting of the pilings next to the metal handicapped ramps and also adding bumper boards along the pilings. These additions will improve the facility, and York County would like to make the adjustments to the project budget. The only new item not completed, at this time, is the bumper boards. The County is near completion of this project and would like to increase the total budget to \$630,948. The total would be split 75% from VSRFDF and 25% from the County. Mr. Southall informed the group that this was only an increase of \$11,840. Mr. Barr reiterated that some of these items were requested from recreational fishermen, this request would improve the facility, and the total cost will still be \$70,000 less than the original budget. Mr. Barr made a motion to approve the amendments to the grant, and was seconded by Mr. Southall. Mr. Southall mentioned that he had visited the site, and the bumper boards would keep the boats from drifting between the pilings. The boards would improve the handling of boats, when using the ramps. The vote was unanimous to approve the increase.

The next RFAB meeting date is May 8, with the work session at 5:30 p.m., and final meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Vice-chairman Rhodes adjourned the meeting at 8:12 p.m.