

**Virginia Marine Resources Commission**  
**Crab Management Advisory Committee (CMAC) Minutes**  
2600 Washington Avenue, Newport News, VA  
VMRC Commission Room, 4<sup>TH</sup> Floor  
Monday, September 21, 2015 – 5:00 P.M.

**ATTENDANCE**

Members Present

Honorable Ed Tankard  
Ernest George  
Chris Moore  
Bernard Wayne Morris  
Mark Sanford  
Viola West

Members Absent

Hon. Lynn Haynie  
Marshall Cox  
Kenneth Diggs  
Daniel Dise  
Johnny Graham  
Peter Nixon  
Donald Porter, Sr.  
Tom Powers  
Ken Smith  
Kevin Wade

VMRC Staff Present

Katie May Laumann  
Joe Cimino  
Jill Ramsey

Others Present

Rom Lipcius  
Ida Hall  
Tim Wivell  
Lynn Squires  
Michelle Squires

Minutes were recorded by Jill Ramsey.

**I. Introductions, announcements & approval of minutes from the May 18, 2015 meeting**

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 pm and 6 members were in attendance. A brief introduction of the committee was done and staff was introduced by Joe Cimino. A recording of the minutes can be found on the agency's website. A quorum was not met, therefore the Committee could not vote on any decisions or vote to approve the minutes of the June 25, 2015 meeting.

**II. Discussion**  
**Modifications to the blue crab sanctuary areas**

Joe Cimino discussed the history of the blue crab sanctuary that was established in 1942. A map of the sanctuaries from 2011 followed by the map from June 1, 2015

was shown and boundaries were discussed. The committee started a discussion focusing on an oceanside area of sanctuary in Virginia Beach. Mark Sanford feels a small portion of this area should be opened up to help combat the crowding in Lynnhaven inlet. There was discussion that perhaps some committee members can address the possibility of this with the city of Virginia Beach before it can be brought back to the Committee and voted on.

The Committee discussed the rolling closure dates for the current crab sanctuaries. The Committee also discussed sending an email to members to choose a date in October that most members would be able to attend. This meeting will address the specific coordinates that the Committee feels would be appropriate when discussing the narrowing of the sanctuaries. Dr. Rom Lipcius, of VIMS, stated that the population of blue crabs is coming back from the 2012 drop so this would be a good time to make changes to optimize the fishery. He also stated that now is a good time to look at the economics of the fishery and would like to bring Andrew Scheld, a Natural Resource Economist from VIMS, to participate in the discussion.

### **Effort control measures**

Staff discussed effort control measures that are currently in place in the crab fishery. The 2015 waiting list for crab pot licenses is down considerably from its inception in 2009. The causes for this attrition can be attributed to individuals buying into the fishery through transfer, individuals no longer holding a current CFRL or individuals who are granted an exception from the Commission. Mr. Chris Moore asked if staff could provide more information on the specific levels of each cause at a future meeting. Staff also discussed the use of crab agents. Last year the Commission capped the number of agents allowed into the fishery at 125, based on CMAC's recommendation.

The Committee members discussed the current market situation for crabs and how important effort control is. Mrs. Viola West stated her concern about how flooded the current market is and how low the price of a bushel of crabs currently is. The Committee also discussed the difference between a fulltime vs. part-time watermen and its impact on the industry.

### **III. New Business**

The item of new business for future discussion was presented by Potomac River Fisheries Commission member Ida Hall. On April 1, 2012, PRFC instituted the crab pot buoy tagging program. This is used to maintain the compliance with effort control within the fishery and to combat the problem of individuals oversetting their allowed pot numbers. This program is funded entirely by the crabbers themselves. PRFC offers crabbers two ways to mark pots by using either decals or removable tags. Ms. Hall stated that the decals are the preferred method. When a crabber comes in to renew their license they are asked if they want to purchase decals or tags for \$50.00, if they decline to purchase their buoy tags they are considered inactive and will not become active by

PRFC until they pay for their tags. Crabbers are issued the number of tags to match their permits plus 5% to allow for some pot loss. Individuals who long line crab pots have to have the buoy at each end of the line marked. Law enforcement has been extremely supportive and there have been minimal complaints from the crabbers.

The CMAC members took this information into account and will discuss it further at a future meeting.

**IV. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 PM.

DRAFT