

Virginia Marine Resources Commission
Crab Management Advisory Committee (CMAC) Minutes
2600 Washington Avenue, Newport News, VA
VMRC Commission Room, 4TH Floor
Monday, April 27, 2015 – 6:00 P.M.

ATTENDANCE

Members Present

Honorable James Close
Honorable Lynn Haynie
Viola West
Ken Diggs Jr.
Mark Sanford
Marshall B. Cox
Ernest George
Glen Wayne France
Chris Moore
Bernard Wayne Morris
Donald Porter Sr.
Ken Smith
Kevin Wade
Johnny Graham (phone)

VMRC Staff Present

Joe Cimino
Laurie Dozier
Ande Ehlen
Joe Grist
Rachael Maulorico
Rob O'Reilly
MPO Robert M. Park
Sally Roman

Members Absent

Tom Powers
Pete Nixon
Daniel Dise

Others Present

Bill Mullis
Tim Wivell
Rom Lipscius
Danielle McCulloch
VIMS students
Ty Farrington
Doug Jenkins
Beverly Ludford
Jerome Bonnville
Cody Pauls
John Ward
Gregory Perez
John Boudiette
J.C. Hudgins

Minutes were recorded by Laurie Dozier.

I. Introductions; Announcements and Approval of February 18, 2015 Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm and 14 members were in attendance. A recording of the minutes can be found on the agency's website. The committee voted to approve minutes from January 20, 2015 and February 18, 2015.

II. 2014/2015 Bay-wide Winter Dredge Survey: preliminary results

Mr. Joe Grist presented the preliminary results for the 2015 Winter Dredge Survey. The survey results estimated that overwintering mortality was a factor in reducing abundance, however spawning age female and juvenile abundance increased from last year's survey results.

III. Discussion: Management measures for 2015

a. Blue crab sanctuaries

VIMS presented 3 options to change the size and or time of the current sanctuary closures. The presented options were based on requests made by CMAC at their last meeting. Dr. Rom Lipscius explained that in order for VIMS to support any such changes they must provide similar protection to spawning females as the current sanctuary and seasonal closure.

Several members of CMAC did not support a year round closure of any kind. A member of the public suggested an option to have the sanctuary open in June and have partial closures of the rivers and tributaries. Generally, the CMAC did not support the three options presented. Mr. Mark Sanford made a motion to work on developing an amendment to Area four sanctuary to be Cape Henry light to Rudee inlet to a half mile off the beach from May 16th to September 15th. This motion was seconded by Mr. Wayne France. The Committee unanimously passed the motion.

b. Sponge-crab regulations

Members of the CMAC suggested consideration of an option which allows a tolerance or allowance that they could keep in addition to the crabs they are already allowed to keep. Mr. Ken Diggs Jr. made a motion to allow harvesters to keep sponge crabs starting as early as June 1st. This was seconded by Mr. Sanford. The motion passed with 7 members in favor, 1 opposed, and 5 members abstained.

c. Effort-control

Mr. Bill Mullis, chair of the Virginia Blue Crab Industry Panel, and provided some recommendations approved by the Panel for CMAC to consider. The recommendations included an endorsement for pot tagging, a control date, incentives for electronic harvest reporting, and future studies on peeler mortality, invasive predation and recreational harvest estimates.

IV. New Business

Mr. Marshall Cox made a motion to move the beginning of meetings to 5:00pm. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Cox also requested VMRC staff to research how much a tagging system would cost and how would it compensate with gear losses due to winter.

V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:33 P.M.