

FINAL MINUTES
Recreational Fishing Advisory Board Meeting
May 17, 2010

Members Present

George Hudgins - Chairman
Carlisle Bannister
Carolyn Brown
H. "Jim" Deibler

J. "Jimmie" Duell
Charles Randolph
Charles Southall

Members Not Present

Edward Rhodes - Vice-chairman
John Barr

At 7:10 p.m., Chairman Hudgins called the meeting to order.

Ms. Sonya Davis provided a short update on options being pursued, regarding the National Angler Registry requirement. In discussions with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), indications are that they may be able to provide an internet registration option, at no cost to Virginia and the Potomac River Fisheries Commission. Even if MDNR provides this service, there may still be a need for a phone registration process that would cost the Fund money. At this point, we are not sure what the total cost will be. The Virginia Legislature did give the Commission the authority to increase the recreational boat license up to \$10.00 more and the other recreational licenses up to \$5.00 more, to make up for the additional cost of a Virginia Angler Registry. However, the Commission will need to wait until after July 1 to advertise for public hearing. Also, we are finalizing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with NOAA/NMFS for an official exemption for the charter and head boat sector. This should be complete in the next few weeks. We will then be able to automatically transfer the license information to the National Registry for the for-hire sector. We will continue to pursue all of these issues and keep everyone updated throughout the summer and fall.

Ms. Davis also explained the status of the Great Bridge Fisherman's Association's (GBFA), 2009 Hope House & Oak Grove Nursing Home Fishing Excursions and Clinics. Because funding was not available until the end of July, the GBFA cut back on the programs, as much as possible. Also, some receipts were lost and they could not document any additional expenses. The entire project, totaled \$3,898.10. The original proposal indicated that the recreational fund would provide \$4,000 and GBFA would match with \$1,150. State guidelines do not allow for an organization to retain unspent funds on this type of program, so we must request the \$101.90 be returned to the Fund. The question to the RFAB members was whether they would waive the entire match requirement of \$1,150. Ms. Brown made a motion to waive the match. Mr. Randolph seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous to accept the motion.

Ms. Jane McCroskey provided a brief status report of the budget. She explained that the report shows a balance of \$829,113. This report includes the expenses for the on-going projects, the VMRC obligations for July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011, and the estimated license sales through June 30, 2010.

Mr. Hudgins asked for a review of the draft September 14, 2009 RFAB meeting minutes. Mr. Deibler made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Southall seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous to accept the draft minutes as final.

Multi-Year Projects for 2010 Renewal.

- A) 2010 Sunshine Children's Fishing Program. Denny Dobbins, Portsmouth Anglers Club. **\$7,194.** Mr. Dobbins provided a review of the 2009 program, and explained that the 2010 program would be similar to previous years. The three head boat trips and one pier fishing day will occur in July through early August this year. Depending on the condition of the Lynnhaven Fishing Pier, they may need to move the pier trip to the Little Island Fishing Pier at Sandbridge. The boats trips are planned to leave out of Hampton and Newport News this year. This program educates and introduces approximately 300 children to the Chesapeake Bay and the joys of recreational fishing.
- B) 2010 Saxis and Morley's Wharf Fishing Piers Youth Fishing Tournaments (Year 9). Allen Evans, Eastern Shore of Virginia Anglers Club. **\$2,000.** Mr. Frank Joyce provided a review of the 2009 Saxis Fishing Tournament. The Club would like to return to providing the two tournaments for the children. The two tournaments introduce angling to approximately 200 children on the Eastern Shore, ranging from ages 3 to 15. The first tournament is currently scheduled for June 13.
- C) 2010 Youth Developmental "Hooked on Fishing" Adventure (Year 3). John Wager, Virginia Charter Boat Association. **\$6,100.** Mr. Wager provided a review of the 2009 program, and explained that the 2010 program would be similar to previous years. This year the main location is Norview Marina. The trip is planned for August 28. This program educates and introduces approximately 100 boy and girl scouts and chaperones to the Chesapeake Bay and the joys of recreational fishing and safe boating. Also, included in this program is a Chesapeake Bay essay contest. They must have a ratio of one chaperone per five scouts.
- D) Sheepshead Diet in Chesapeake Bay between 2006 and 2008, Virginia. H. Liao, C. Jones, ODURF. **\$27,724.** Dr. "Hank" Liao provided a Power Point presentation and presented some of the findings from the 2006 to 2008 sheepshead studies. Generally, the Chesapeake Bay fish are older, heavier, and grow faster than fish from the south Atlantic. He explained that they would now like to look at the diet of the sheepshead samples, over 200, which were collected from 2006 through 2008. This would help set a baseline diet and growth pattern for tracking changes in the future. This is listed as a renewal project only because the fish were collected, weighed, measured, and aged utilizing money from the recreational fund. Diet was not part of the previous studies. However, stomachs were collected and stored for a future diet study. This is a 1-year study planned for October 2010 through September 2011.
- E) 2010 Virginia Marine Sportfish Collection (Year 4). J. Grist, J. Cimino, VMRC. **\$10,000.** Mr. Joe Grist provided a Power Point presentation and supplied a brief review of the past three years of the program. He is not requesting funds to purchase any additional freezers this year. The funds are to support the freezers, supplies, and rewards for the five current locations and the sampling done at some tournaments. He is looking to put freezers at two more locations in the Northern Neck/Middle Peninsula area and at

- F) Federal Assistance (Wallop-Breaux) Matching Funds, Federal FY 2011. Jack Travelstead, VMRC. **\$325,468**. Ms. Sonya Davis explained that this was the annual request for matching funds for the same six research and monitoring projects, as requested in previous years. The six projects are the VIMS juvenile striped bass monitoring, the VIMS adult striped bass mark and recapture survey, the VIMS American shad monitoring, the VIMS ChesMMAP survey, the VIMS juvenile finfish trawl survey, and the ODURF finfish age and growth lab. She reminded everyone that last year the tilefish project started as an RFAB funding proposal. Later in the year, it was approved as a Wallop-Breaux funded project with the addition of some of the grouper species. The state match was approved as a separate RFAB expense. For the second year, May 2011 – April 2012, of the tilefish and grouper project, the match amount needed is already included with the other six projects. The ratio is still three to one, federal to state funds.

Multi-Year Projects for 2011 Renewal.

- G) 2011 Children's Fishing Clinic (Year 14). Rob Cowling, Newport News Rotary Club and Coastal Conservation Association-Peninsula. **\$6,500**. Mr. Cowling provided a review of the anticipated 2010 program, which is scheduled for Saturday, July 17. He explained that the 2011 program would be similar to previous years. This program educates and introduces approximately 250 at-risk children. They are introduced to the Chesapeake Bay, water safety, and recreational fishing. This program and the Kiwanis Club's program work closely together to reduce costs and increase the number of children that can participate.
- H) 2011 Kiwanis Club Children's Fishing Clinic (Year 10). Wesley Brown, Capital District Kiwanis Club. **\$6,500**. Mr. Rob Cowling indicated that this program is intended to continue as done in previous years. The 2010 program is scheduled for Tuesday, July 20.
- I) 2011 Estimating Relative Abundance of Young-of-Year American Eel in the Virginia Tributaries of Chesapeake Bay. M. Fabrizio, T. Tuckey, VIMS. **\$46,574**. Dr. Mary Fabrizio explained that this was the annual request for the continuation of the monitoring of American eel. This is an ASMFC mandated project. A request to the Commercial Fishing Advisory Board (CFAB) was also submitted.
- J) 2011 Virginia Game Fish Tagging (Year 17). J. Lucy, VIMS and L. Gillingham, VMRC. **\$78,904**. Mr. Jon Lucy provided a Power Point presentation and supplied a review of the program. Mr. Lucy said that he will be retiring July 1 and someone else should be taking over his portion of the program. He will still be available, for consultation. Because of the increase in multiple recapture rates for black sea bass and summer flounder, they have set a minimum size for tagging of 6 ½" and 12", respectively. The VIMS portion of the budget was reduced, for 2011, in some areas. However, due to increased shipping costs, the VMRC portion of the budget needed to be increased.

- K) 2011 Enhancing and Restoration of Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV) Habitat in Chesapeake Bay and the Virginia Coastal Bays (Year 16). Robert Orth, VIMS. **\$107,551**. Dr. Orth provided a Power Point presentation and reviewed the restoration success in the coastal bays of the Eastern Shore. They are starting to see a lot of natural restoration and enhancement occurring in the coastal bays. Originally, seeds from the Chesapeake Bay beds were used to seed the coastal bays. Now, seeds from coastal bay beds are being used to try to bring back some of the Chesapeake Bay beds. He also mentioned separate work being done to re-establish the bay scallop in the coastal bay grass beds.

New Project for 2010.

- L) Messick Point Recreational Fishing Pier, Engineering and Design. Dave Callis, City of Poquoson. **\$50,000**. Mr. Callis provided a Power Point presentation. He provided an outline of the proposed location and draft plans for a new recreational fishing pier, with year-round access and no fees. The plan is to build it near, but around, the Point from the current recreational boat ramps and commercial pier. The plan is to build a T-head pier that is 8' wide and extends 500' into Back River off of Messick Point. At the proposed location, the depth towards the end of the pier would be about 6' at mean low water. Lighting is also included in the draft plan, to allow 24 hour access and to work as a fish attractant. To be eco-friendly, they are looking into pervious pavers for the adjacent parking area. In a separate permit, they plan to develop an oyster reef adjacent to the pier to improve habitat and increase oyster spat set in the area. Realizing the current status and obligations on the recreational fund, they are submitting the funding requests in phases. The first phase is to obtain \$50,000 of funding for the final engineering and design work for the pier. The estimated cost of the entire project is between \$900 thousand and \$1 million. Value of the land and maintenance costs are what the City intends to provide as match funding. Mr. Tom Powers, a member of the Poquoson Recreational Advisory Committee, mentioned that one option that was discussed is to request funding to build the fishing pier in one year, the lighting the next, and then the parking the following year to spread the cost of the entire project over multiple years. Insurance would be provided by the City. Mr. Callis was asked by the RFAB to look into the possibility of converting the existing commercial pier into a recreational fishing pier. Mr. Powers believed that the commercial pier may have been constructed with Port Authority funds, and they may not be able to convert it. Mr. Callis said they would look into the possibility of the conversion and inform the RFAB at the next meeting.

The dates for the next RFAB meetings of this review cycle are July 12 and September 13.

Chairman Hudgins adjourned the meeting at 8:57 p.m.

[Note: Audio files of the meeting are available at <http://www.mrc.virginia.gov/vsrfd/index.shtm> (Choose, Current Proposals, on the left-hand menu)]