

OFFICIAL MINUTES

RFAB Meeting for Final Recommendations to the VMRC.

May 12, 2003

Members Present

George Hudgins
Jesse Duell
Edward Rhodes
Carolyn Brown
Andy Ligon
Jim Deibler
John Barr
Carlisle Bannister

Members Absent

Charles Randolph

At 7:05 Chairman George Hudgins called the meeting to order.

Mr. Hudgins started by asking Cory Routh to review the status of the license fund. Mr. Routh stated that there would be approximately \$1,549,910 available for allocation in September. Mr. Routh stated that there is 1.3 million dollars in proposals up for recommendations.

Mr. Hudgins asked Mr. Jack Travelstead for any announcements.

Mr. Travelstead stated that due to some alternate funds becoming available there would be some changes in the Agenda. Item E. on the agenda "Monitoring Relative Juvenile Abundance of Young-of-Year American Eel, in the Virginia tributaries of the Chesapeake Bay" will receive half of its funding from the Marine Improvement Fund (CFAB) and half from the Virginian Saltwater Recreational Fishing Advisory Board (RFAB). So the request from the RFAB will be reduced to \$11,746.00. Item K; the Pamunkey Shad Restoration project will be fully funded by the CFAB (\$10,000), so the proposal will be deleted from RFAB consideration. Project F, Wallop-Breaux match; the CFAB has agreed to allocate funds to the match, so the request to the RFAB for Wallop-Breaux match will be reduced from \$104,870 to \$71,527.

Mr. Rhodes made a motion to incorporate these changes to the agenda items E, F, and K. Mr. Duell seconded the motion and the vote was passed unanimously to accept the changes.

Mr. Hudgins asked for a review of the minutes from the March 10, 2003 meeting and a vote to make them official. Mr. Rhodes made a motion to accept the minutes as official. Mr. Deibler seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous to accept the minutes as official.

Mr. Jon Lucy made an emergency request for \$20,141 to finish the project: "Exploratory Study of Circle and J-shaped Hooks on Release Mortality in Adult Spotted Trout". Mr. Lucy stated that due to the lack of fish, he needs additional funding to complete the project. Mr. Lucy stated that the additional funding would be used to track additional fish and to finalize the project.

Ms. Brown asked why this request is considered an emergency. Mr. Lucy stated he wanted to catch the first run of migrating fish coming from North Carolina.

Mr. Barr asked why didn't Mr. Lucy follow the normal grant procedure. Mr. Lucy stated that the project was already approved in the past by the RFAB.

Mr. Ligon stated that this is not the first time that emergency funds have been requested.

Mr. Barr asked if MR. Lucy has solicited anglers groups for volunteer anglers. Mr. Lucy stated that it is difficult to get some anglers to change their fishing methods.

Mr. Duell asked if the reason for the request is because of the shortage of fish. Mr. Lucy stated that the shortage of the spring run of fish was the reason for the request.

Mr. Ligon made a motion to approve the project. Mr. Duell seconded the project, and the Vote was 7 to 1 to recommend the project for funding.

Mr. Hudgins then asked for any public comment on the Chincoteague Curtis Merrit Harbor Project changes.

Mr. Mike Handforth of the Chincoteague Charter Boat Association stated that he supports the improvements and that the facility needs a lot of work. Mr. Handforth stated that he has a lot of handicapped business and the boat access areas are substandard for this type of usage.

Mr. Jerry Ryan of Chincoteague, stated that he supports this project and that the recreational needs now exceed the commercial needs of the facility.

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Project A. Estimating Relative Abundance of Recreationally Important Finfish in the Virginian Portion of The Chesapeake Bay. \$49,270

Rhodes made the motion to recommend the project for funding. Mr. Duell seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous to recommend the project for funding.

Project B. Support of Finfish Ageing for Virginia Catches. \$62,080

Mr. Rhodes made a motion to recommend the project for funding. Mr. Deibler seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous to recommend the project for funding.

Project C. Boat Scarring Effects on SAV in Virginia. \$95,116

Mr. Deibler made a motion to recommend the project for funding. Mr. Ligon seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous to recommend the project for funding.

Project D. Enhancing SAV Habitat. \$95,116

Dr. Orth stated that he may be receiving additional funding for this project and amounts requested for future requests will be reduced.

Mr. Hudgins stated the RFAB applauds Dr. Orths aggressive search for additional funding and the way he keeps the RFAB informed.

Mr. Rhodes made a motion to recommend the project. Mr. Duell seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous to recommend the project for funding.

Project E. Monitoring Relative Abundance of Young-of-Year American Eel. \$11,746

Mr. Barr made a motion to recommend the project for funding. Mr. Deibler seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous to recommend the project for funding.

Project F. 2003 Wallop-Breaux Match. \$ 71,527

Mr. Deibler made a motion to fund the project. Mr. Ligon seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous to recommend the project for funding.

Project G. Capital District Kiwanis Club Children's Fishing Clinic. \$5,557.50

Mr. Rhodes made a motion to fund the project for \$4,000. Mr. Deibler seconded the motion. Mr. Rhodes stated the he made the motion because the requested amount has changed three time. Mr. Ligon stated that if they set limits on one project, then they should set limits on all children's programs. Mr. Bannister stated that they should discuss the limits at the next work session. Mr. Duell stated that the kid's programs should be standardized, but now is not the time to make the changes. Mr. Barr stated that if reductions were made, then the program would not be able to support the purchase of the fishing rods. Ms. Brown stated that until guidelines are and she feels uncomfortable singling out one group. Mr. Rhodes withdrew the motion to partially fund the project. Mr. Deibler seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous to recommend the project for full funding.

Mr. Rhodes made a motion to combine Projects H. (Sunshine Program Children's Day Challenge \$3,954), I. (Morley's Wharf Youth Fishing Tournament \$800), and J. (Saxis Youth Fishing Tournament \$800) as one request. Mr. Deibler seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous to combine the projects.

Mr. Barr made a motion to approve the block of projects. Ms. Brown seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous to recommend these projects for funding.

Project L. Human Health Issues Related to Mycobacteriosis in Striped Bass. \$40,099

Ms. Martha Rhodes of VIMS stated that this issue is very relevant to recreational fishermen, and that the disease is being observed in fish 75% of the time.

Mr. Ligon asked if this was going to be an ongoing project. Ms. Rhodes stated that it is yet to be determined if this will be ongoing. Mr. Duell made a motion to accept the project and Mr. Ligon seconded the motion. Mr. Rhodes asked if the reviews are selected based on the qualifications of the reviewer. Mr. Travelstead stated that the reviewers are selected based on their familiarity with the subject matter. The motion was defeated by a vote of 6 to 2. The project was not recommended for funding.

Project M. Determining Stock Status of Tautog in Virginia's Waters. \$25,679

Mr. Deibler asked if there was a special computer needed for the project. Dr. John Hoenig of VIMS stated that there is a need for an improved computer for the project.

Mr. Rhodes moved that the project be funded less the \$2500 requested to buy the computer. Mr. Barr seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous to recommend funding of the project, less the cost of the computer (\$22,555).

Project N. Genetic Analysis of Population Structuring within the Cobia. \$46,584
Dr. Graves stated that the need for this project was taken from the needs developed by VIMS and VMRC. He stated that Cobia are one of the few solely recreational fish. Dr. Graves stated that he is interested in determining if Virginia has a distinct Cobia population. He stated that for the first year he wants to compare three Cobia populations for genetic differences. If he finds a difference, then he will seek another year of funding. Mr. Ligon made a motion to decline the project. Mr. Rhodes seconded the motion. Mr. Barr stated that he could not justify funding this type of study with recreational funds. The vote was unanimous not to recommend this project for funding.

Project O. Establishment of a Chesapeake Bay Trophic Interaction Laboratory Services Program. \$89,475

Mr. Rhodes made a motion to approve the project. Mr. Bannister seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous to recommend the project for funding.

Project P. Daily Movement of Age Two Striped Bass in the Poropotank River. \$24,216
Mr. Ligon made a motion to decline this project. Mr. Deibler seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous not to recommend this project for funding.

Project Q. Chincoteague Curtis Merrit Harbor Improvements. \$145,000

Mr. Rhodes made a motion to approve the project in the amount of \$89,000. Mr. Duell seconded the motion. Mr. Rhodes stated that the reason for his motion was that the funds were simply reallocated. Mr. Jim West from the Town of Chincoteague stated that a restroom was never in the budget, but was required by the Health Department, and that is why the town came to the RFAB. Shuffling funds around is common practice, and the town is more than happy to fit the license funds to the anglers needs. Mr. West stated that the primary users of the facility would be saltwater anglers. Mr. Rhodes amended his motion to approve the full \$145,000. Mr. Duell seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous to recommend the project for funding.

Project R. Development of Molecular Tools for in situ Hybridization Studies of Mycobacteriosis in the Striped Bass. \$ 96,567

Mr. Ligon made a motion not to recommend the project. Ms. Brown seconded the motion. Dr. Wolfgang Vogelbein of VIMS stated that his study does not deal with the human aspect but looks only at the effects on the fish stocks. His study will develop probes that will determine the effects of mycobacteriosis on the quality of the fishery. Mr. Barr stated that this project seems to be looking at the effects on the fishery and that it is a project worthy of funding. Mr. Ligon retracted his motion. Mr. Rhodes made a motion to approve the project. Mr. Duell seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous to recommend the project for funding.

Project S. Little Island Fishing Pier Improvements. \$291,000

Mr. Ligon made a motion to defer this project to the next cycle, there was no second so the motion was killed. Mr. Rhodes made a motion not to fund the project. Mr. Deibler seconded the motion. Mr. Rhode stated that he has a problem that the pier will have no financial returns for the license fund. Mr. Duell stated that during the public comment session that there was a record crowd in support of the project. Ms. Brown stated that she also would support the project and not vote with Mr. Rhodes' motion. Mr. Rhodes amended his motion to fund \$36,000 to cover the shore to pier connections. Mr. Deibler seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous to recommend the funding of \$36,000 of the requested amount.

Project T. Age Specific Fecundity of Bluefish in the Mid-Atlantic Bight. \$13,750

Mr. Rhodes made a motion to recommend the project for funding. Mr. Barr seconded the motion but requested that Dr. Bobko use more volunteer help from anglers clubs when collecting samples. The vote was unanimous to recommend the project for funding.

Project U. Law Enforcement Vessels for the Virginia marine Patrol. \$27,648

Mr. Rhodes made a motion to recommend the project for funding. Mr. Barr seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous to recommend the project for funding.

Project V. Gloucester Point Boating Access. \$150,000

Mr. Ligon made a motion to approve the project. Mr. Rhodes seconded the project. Mr. Barr stated that this project would benefit more anglers than any other project on the agenda. The vote was unanimous to recommend this project for funding.

Mr. Rhodes asked Mr. Hudgins to assemble a committee to review the issue on indirect costs and to begin discussion on kids fishing programs. Mr. Hudgins assigned Mr. Rhodes as the chair and Mr. Ligon and Ms. Brown as members.

Mr. Routh mentioned that the Oyster Boat Ramp Parking project is being delayed because the Nature Conservancy does not want to sell the land to the Town of Oyster, even though the Nature Conservancy has signed a contract to sell the property. Mr. Routh suggested that the Town nullify the contract or keep The Nature Conservancy to their contractual obligations. Mr. Routh said that he would contact the town and get their decision. Mr. Barr stated that the Nature Conservancy is legally bound to the contract, and by law, must sell the property. Mr. Barr said the he is for the development of the needed facility.

Mr. Hudgins adjourned the meeting at 9:45pm.