

OFFICIAL MINUTES
RECREATIONAL FISHING ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
JULY 14, 2003

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

At 7:12 pm Chairman George Hudgins called the meeting to order. Mr. Hudgins asked Mr. Routh to review the status of the Virginia Saltwater Recreational Fishing Development Fund. Mr. Routh stated there was approximately \$604,001 available for projects as of September 30, 2003.

Mr. Routh asked for a review of the minutes from the May 12, 2003 meeting and a vote to make them official. Mr. Rhodes made a motion to accept the minutes as submitted. Mr. Bannister seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous to approve the minutes as official.

Mr. Rhodes gave an interim report on the findings of the Indirect Cost Subcommittee that met in June. Mr. Rhodes stated there is some concern about the VSRFDF funding graduate work. Mr. Rhodes stated similar projects should be combined and that there needs to be a 50-word summary describing the benefits to the recreational angler. Mr. Rhodes also suggested each applicant submit 5 names for peer reviews. However there will be no requirement for VMRC to use those reviewers. Mr. Rhodes also stated there was some discussion about kids fishing activities. The main suggestions were that reusable equipment be recycled to other kids activities and all kids be eligible not just disadvantaged children. Also, all participating groups should give a written account of their participation in the activities, number of kids and expenses within 30 days after the event. Mr. Rhodes also suggested that the RFAB no longer vote in the projects as a block, but review each project individually. Mr. Rhodes stated that the final report will be submitted at the September meeting.

Mr. Claude Bain, director of the Virginia Saltwater Sportfishing Tournament, gave an update of the citation program. Mr. Bain stated that as of July 3rd, the tournament has exceeded the past records for citations and by the end of the year will exceed past records for several fish species. This may cause a short fall in the number of available citations available in the future. MR. Bain stated that he will make a formal request for additional funds after some research, but the amount could be between \$10,000 to \$25,000.

Mr. Deibler asked what was the reason for the increase in the number of citations. Mr. Bain stated that there is an increase in the number of anglers and they are getting better at catching citation sized fish species. Mr. Bain stated the increase in the abundance of citation-sized fish also contributes to the increased number of citations. Mr. Bain stated that the popularity of the release citation also increased the number of citations.

Mr. Hudgins asked for proposal presentations.

Multi-year Projects for Renewal

A. 2004 Children's Fishing Clinic, Rob Cowling, CCA/Rotary, \$6000.

Mr. Cowling stated this would be the ninth year that his project has come before the RFAB. Mr. Cowling said the \$6000 requested is approximately 45% of the total cost of the project and the Newport News Community raised the rest. Mr. Cowling stated the program is making a difference and that previous attendees are returning as chaperones.

B. 2004 Tidewater Youth's Fishing Day, Jim Hayden, CCA, \$6000.

Mr. Jim Hayden of the CCA made the presentation. Mr. Hayden stated that this project is similar to the Rotary event. He stated that anywhere from 150 to 300 kids have participated in the Southside event annually.

C. 2004 Challenger Little League Marine Science Educational Booths, Jim Hayden, CCA \$1000.

Mr. Hayden made this presentation. He stated that this event brings several thousand people to the tidewater area for special Olympic type baseball events. This proposal is to incorporate a fishing activity as well as booths for the marine science educational programs.

D. 2004 Virginia Game Fish Tagging Program, John Lucy, VIMS, \$57,408.

Mr. Lucy stated that this would be the ninth year of the tagging program. He stated that the scientific communities as well as fisheries management personnel are using the tagging data. Mr. Bain reviewed some tagging numbers for the 2003 three program. He stated that there were no volunteer tagging personnel trained in 2003, but they will train new taggers in 2004. Mr. Barr asked what the data is used for. Mr. Bain stated that the data is used to make fisheries management decisions. Mr. Lucy stated that the VMRC has used the data several times in the past.

New Projects

E. Cape Charles Fun Pier, Jennie Rogers Moore, Town of Cape Charles, \$300,000.

Ms. Moore stated the pier extension and repair would provide excellent fishing opportunities that are currently not available. It would also increase the safety of the area by eliminating the unauthorized fishing access to the jetty. Mr. Rhodes asked if the platform was going to be placed at the end of the jetty. Ms. Moore stated that the platform would not be placed at the end of the jetty. Mr. Ligon asked if there is going to be a fee charged and who will take care of the maintenance. Ms. Moore said that there will be no fee charged and the city will handle the maintenance and operation.

F. How Seagrass Beds Support Healthy Fish Growth, Dr. Cynthia Jones, ODU, \$80,334.

Dr. Jones stated that this project would look at the otolith information to determine the age of the fish as well as provide information about the areas where the fish matured. These results were obtained from previous projects funded by the VSRFDF. Using this data we can now determine that some seagrass beds promote better fish growth than others. This project will determine which seagrass contain foods that promote better fish growth. This information can be obtained through muscle composition; this proposal will look at the muscle tissue taken from fish collected for another project. Mr. Hudgins asked if there was any collaboration with Dr. Orth from VIMS. Dr. Jones stated that there is lots of collaboration on the seagrass projects.

G. Saltwater Boating Access Maintenance Program, Jamea Adams, VADGIF, \$47,100.

No presentation.

H. Mill Creek Boat Landing James Adams, VADGIF \$132,500.

No presentation

I. Conversion of a Protective Wave Screen into a Saltwater Fishing Pier Michael Poplawski, City of Newport News, \$170,250.

Mr. Poplawski stated that this project was conceived in 1993. The purpose of this project is to add steel railing to 1500 feet of the wave screen to convert it into a handicapped accessible fishing pier. He stated that the pier would be ADA compatible and completely accessible to handicapped individuals. Mr. Deibler asked if there was going to be a blanket license. Mr. Poplawski stated that the anglers would be required to have an individual license.

J. An assessment of the Economic Importance of Virginia's Commercial and Recreational Fisheries, Dr. James Kirkley, VIMS, \$235,241.

Dr. Kirkley stated that this project was requested by VMRC and that the 10-year-old data needs to be updated. Dr. Kirkley stated that, currently, the economic importance of the recreational fisheries couldn't be accurately calculated. Dr. Kirkley said that current models need to be updated for both commercial and recreational fisheries. He stated that models have to be updated to make sound management decisions about allocation of the resources. Dr. Kirkley said that there would have to be several types of survey conducted to accumulate the needed data. He stated that this project would take two years to complete. Mr. Deibler asked if the cost included both years and what is the benefit to the recreational fishermen. Dr. Kirkley stated that the cost is for both years. Dr. Kirkley stated that in the past VMRC and ASFMC have both previously used this data for management decisions. Dr. Kirkley stated that for allocation issues, socioeconomic factors are considered by the VMRC.

K. 2004 Early Summer Kids Fishing Program Melvin Dudley, NCAC, \$830.

Mr. Melvin Dudley stated this will be the second year the RFAB has funded this program. He stated this program has created a fishing club at Northampton County Middle School. Ms. Brown asked how many children would participate in the activity. Mr. Dudley stated that about 30 children would participate.

L. Oyster Boat Ramp Parking Lot, Mark Cline, Town of Oyster, \$120,000.

Mr. Mark Kline stated the conditions set in their previously approved contract will not be met, and the county is reapplying for funding to lease for 20 years rather than a permanent purchase of the property. There will be a few changes to meet the Nature Conservancy's requirements, which increased the originally requested amount. Mr. Rhodes made a request to have The Nature Conservancy be at the next meeting.

Mr. Hudgins adjourned the meeting at 10:40pm.