

**Virginia Recreational Fishing Advisory Board
Virginia Marine Resources Commission
Monday, May 13, 2019**

5:30 p.m. (Work Session) and 7:00 p.m. (Applicant Presentation Meeting)

Board Members Present

Sheldon Arey
J. T. Holland
Wayne Jessie Jr.
Meriwether Payne
Charles Randolph
Ed Rhodes
Maggie Whittemore

Staff Present

Sheri Crocker
Terri Short
Debbie Corker
Pat Geer
Ethan Simpson
Lewis Gillingham
Alicia Nelson

Board Members Absent

Randy Pack
Charles Southall

Others Present

David Anderson
Jim McCaddin
Greg Brown
Charles Clarkson
James Eisenhower
Susanna Musick
Wesley Brown
Joe Stephenson
George Reich
Rob Cowling
Charles Riedlinger
Steve Elliot
Glen Oder

The minutes were recorded by Alicia Nelson; an audio recording of the meeting is available.

I. Introduction, Announcements, Comments.

Mr. Rhodes invited Glen Oder, Executive Director of the Fort Monroe Authority, to speak. Mr. Oder welcomed everyone to Fort Monroe and described the unique history of the area as one of the most historic sites in the country and the plans for the fort.

Mr. Rhodes also introduced the two new RFAB members, Ms. Maggie Whittemore and Mr. Wayne Jessie Jr. and welcomed them to the board.

II. Status of Fund.

Sheri Crocker described the estimate of funds available for projects, as from the Virginia Saltwater Recreational Fishing Development Fund (VSRFDF) was \$722,773.

III. Review of Minutes from the September 2018 RFAB Meeting.

Mr. Holland motioned to approve the minutes from the September 2018 RFAB meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Randolph. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Fishing event applications for 2020 events:

- A) 2020 Knights of Columbus Annual Kids Fishing Day. Jim McCaddin, \$7,510.

Jim McCaddin presented the project for the Knights of Columbus Annual Kids Fishing Day. He described the fishing event and educational programs. Mr. Randolph asked about training, and Mr. McCaddin described the training presentation on how to work with the rod and reels and how volunteers on the pier support the participants. The board asked if both hats and shirts were given as rewards, and this event provides shirts, but not hats.

- B) 2020 Hope House & Oak Grove Nursing Home Fishing Excursions and Clinics. Joseph Stephenson; George Reich, Great Bridge Fisherman's Association. \$2,932.

Mr. Stephenson described changes to the program beginning in 2019. He said that they are doing multiple pier trips instead of pier and boat trips, due to problems with the nursing home patients on the boat trips. Mr. Arey said that it was a big expense to have both hats and shirts when some of the participants were fishing at both events. Mr. Rhodes suggested amending the application to note that participants would be provided shirts or hats during the event to clarify that they would only be provided one at each event.

- C) 2020 Virginia Beach Anglers Club/Seton Youth Shelter Children's Fishing Trip. David Anderson, Virginia Beach Anglers Club. \$2,500.

Mr. Anderson described his event working with children of the Seton Youth Shelter, which specifically caters to children of incarcerated adults. The board also discussed the amount of shirts and hats provided. However, for this event, specific shirts with colors that change annually are required by the shelter. Mr. Anderson also described his desire to continue providing the hats for cooling and shade. Mr. Arey also questioned the \$700 budget item for trophies and tournament prizes. Mr. Anderson noted that many of the prizes were toys (i.e. sports balls, games, etc), so that the children from the shelter could have something of their own to take with them. Mr. Randolph noted that the board was trying to look critically at the budgets and streamline the events to ensure continued funding of the programs.

- D) 2020 Children's Fishing Clinic. Rob Cowling, Newport News Rotary Club and Coastal Conservation Association-Peninsula. \$7,500.

Mr. Cowling and Mr. Brown (item E) presented their projects together. They both described their fishing clinics working with 250 and 300 children, respectively. Mr. Cowling's clinic occurs at the James River Fishing Pier on Saturday, and Mr. Brown's event occurs the following Tuesday at the Buckroe Fishing Pier. The groups work together to share resources where available. Hats are donated. T-shirts are provided; however, the year is not printed on the shirts in case they need to be

reused for subsequent years. They also described problems with the weather during 2018. They invited the board to the 2019 events on July 20th and July 23rd.

- E) 2020 Kiwanis Club Children's Fishing Clinic. Wesley Brown, Capital District Kiwanis Club. \$7,500.

This item was presented with item D (above).

- F) 2020 Saxis and Morley's Wharf Children's Fishing and Conservation Educational Outings. Steven Elliot, Eastern Shore of Virginia Anglers Club. \$2,200.

Mr. Elliot described the two annual fishing events held in June and September at Morley's and Saxis wharfs on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. Mr. Arey asked about the minimum age of children at the event. Mr. Elliot noted that they allowed as young as 3, and that most of the youngest children were siblings of older children at the events. Mr. Arey questioned the feasibility of such young children, and Mr. Arey noted that there were many chaperones available to help.

- G) 2020 Norfolk Youth Head Boat Fishing Trip. James "Ike" Eisenhower, Norfolk Anglers Club. \$1,200.

Mr. Eisenhower presented the request for funding for the 8th year of fishing trips on the Judith Anne from the Norfolk Angler's Club. He noted that approximately 50 kids go on trips. He described the event, partners that come out, and some of the donated materials. He noted that the license funding was funding the boat costs.

- H) 2020 Sunshine Children's Fishing Program. Denny Dobbins, Portsmouth Anglers Club/Sunshine Program. \$8,050.

There were no representatives for item H present.

V. Research Projects

- I) Marine Sportfish Collection Project, Year 12. A. Kenyon, VMRC \$12,000.

Ethan Simpson gave a presentation on the marine sportfish collection project, and provided information on data collection since the inception of the program (almost 11,000 samples have been donated). He noted that purchasing similar fish would be very costly, so that this program saves overall funds. The funds from this request provide freezers, anglers rewards, and shipping for the program. He also noted that funds are only requested when needed (approximately every other year).

Mr. Randolph asked if any new sites were being added this year, and Mr. Simpson said that several freezers were being replaced this year, but that no new sites were planned at this time. The program is always looking out for new locations to add.

- J) Virginia Game Fish Tagging 2020. S. Musick (VIMS), L. Gillingham (VMRC). \$82,487.

Susanna Musick presented the 2020 cycle of the Virginia Game Fish Tagging program. She described the program and success with recapture numbers annually. She described the other leveraging and outreach of the program including outreach events and teacher events. She also described the annual tagging workshop. She noted that the program not only provides data, but also outreach and education in the community. She commented that it was a true user input user benefit program. She also showed the scholarworks readership for the tagging report in 2018. She noted that while most of the readership is in Virginia, there were some readers out of the state and in other countries.

- K) *Estimating Relative Abundance of Young-of-Year American Eel in the Virginia Tributaries of Chesapeake Bay. M. Fabrizio, T. Tuckey, VIMS. \$26,960. (\$13,480 from VSRFDF and \$13,480 from MFIF)

The applicants for the project had previously notified the board that they would be out of the country on a research trip during this meeting. The RFAB agreed to hear their comments on the project at the July meeting.

- L) *Federal Assistance (Sportfish Restoration) Matching Funds, Federal FY 2020. R. O'Reilly, VMRC. \$196,619 (\$167,773 from VSRFDF, 27,946 from MFIF).

Alicia Nelson presented the project. This project matches federal funding for a number of necessary and mandated research programs. Each dollar of state funds is matched by 3 dollars of federal funds. Recently, the funding request has decreased due to a reduction of funds available in the federal program.

VI. Access Projects

- M) Currioman Landing Dredge Project. N. Risavi, Westmoreland County \$117,000.

Charles Riedlinger (Resource International) gave a brief presentation on the request from Westmoreland County. A copy of the presentation is available. This boat ramp was originally construction (along with dredging) in 1999 using recreational license funds. He described usage of the site and the results of a usage survey conducted by the county. He noted that after construction of a pier on an adjacent property, the protective spit was compromised and sand began to fill in the area in front of the ramp more rapidly. The county proposes to dredge the boat turning basin and channel, and to deposit the sand on the protective spit using geotubes. Native planting is also planned to reinforce the shoreline. He noted that the county does not own the spit property yet, but it will be donated to the county during this grant process.

Mr. Arey asked about the plans for maintaining the spit (that is eroding by natural causes). He was concerned that the planned construction would not enhance the spit enough to keep the area from filling in again.

Mr. Arey also noted that the application noted that 36 ft. boats had been launched from the site, and questioned how those boats could get out. He also questioned why the county had not maintained the site or done any additional dredging over the 20 year life span of the area. He noted that there were only 10 parking spaces at the site, making it a relatively low use site. He asked Mr. Riedlinger to relay the board's comments to the County.

Mr. Randolph also commented that no maintenance had been done during the 20-year life span of the project. He noted that new projects are required to have the checklist of requirements that include maintenance of the facility.

He asked that the county provide information on any support provided to the site during the 20 years since it had been constructed.

Mr. Rhodes asked how wide the dredged area was in the channel, and Mr. Riedlinger noted that it was a 30 ft channel. Mr. Sheldon asked if there were channel markers, and Mr. Riedlinger said that he did not believe that there were.

Mr. Rhodes asked if they had applied for their habitat permit; Mr. Riedlinger noted that it would be submitted by May 17.

Mr. Randolph asked for more information to be sent about how the geotubes function. He also asked about the water depth, and Mr. Riedlinger responded that it was 4 ft.

The size and types of boats using the pier was discussed, and Mr. Rhodes asked about how much of the activity of the ramp was commercial use. Mr. Riedlinger estimated around 5% was commercial. He did not believe that commercial use was causing a problem (as in taking up parking spaces) at the site. Mr. Randolph asked about asking the commercial board for partial support of the project.

Mr. Randolph asked for information showing that the County had ownership of the property prior to any vote on the project.

Mr. Rhodes noted that there were several requests for information from the board and asked Mr. Riedlinger to send any updates to Alicia Nelson to provide to the board before the next meeting.

Mr. Holland motioned to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Randolph seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Tentative Dates for Future RFAB meetings:

- July 8, 2019 — Public Hearing (7:00 p.m.)
- September 9, 2019 — Work Session (5:30 p.m.) and Recommendations (7:00 p.m.)
- April 15, 2020 — 2020 Cycle Project Applications Due