

MINUTES

COMMISSION MEETING

April 21, 2026

The meeting of the Marine Resources Commission was held at the Marine Resources Commission main office at 380 Fenwick Road, Bldg. 96, Fort Monroe, Virginia with the following present:

Joseph Grist	Acting Commissioner
Patrick Hand	
Lynn Kellum	
A.J. Erskine	
William Bransom	
Jeremy Headley	Associate Members
Jeanette Edwards	
Thomas Preston	
Preston White	
Kelci Block	Assistant Attorney General
Gerald Pitt	1 st . Sgt., Marine Police
Randy Owen	Chief, Habitat Management
Justin Worrell	Deputy Chief, Habitat Management
Claire Gorman	Engineer, Habitat Management
Brad Reams	Engineer, Habitat Management
Ethan Simpson	Deputy Chief, Fisheries Management
Alexa Galvan	Fisheries Management
Adam Kenyon	Chief, Shellfish Management
Andrew Button	Deputy Chief, Shellfish Management

Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS):

Lyle Varnell	Emily Hein	Megan Lafeyre
David Rudders	Alex Sabo	

Commission Meeting

Others present:

Suzanne Ash	Tom Fenn	David Bleeker
Eric Braker	Brian Owen	Gary Kellessk
Sharon Neal	Kelley Singleton	Hannah Darby
Jennifer Hume	John Waechter	Phil Zalisak
Jim Rogers	Ross Kellum	Kevin Knowles
Cindy Morgan	Cindy Mogan	Steven Morse
Ross Robbins	Karia Havens	J.C. Hudgins
Natalie Peoples	David Rudders	Pamel D'Angelo

and others.

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APPROVAL OF AGENDA. – Acting Commissioner Joseph Grist asked if there were any changes from the Board members or staff.

Associate Member Headley moved to approve the agenda as presented. Associate Member Erskine seconded the motion. The motion carried, 7-0. Associate Member Hand was not present during the vote.

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MINUTES: Acting Commissioner Grist asked if there were any changes or corrections to be made to the March 31, 2026, Commission Meeting minutes.

Associate Member Bransom moved to approve the minutes as presented. Associate Member Headley seconded the motion. The motion carried, 7-0. Associate Member Hand was not present during the vote.

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Acting Commissioner Grist swore in the VMRC staff and VIMS staff that would be speaking or presenting testimony during the meeting.

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2. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS: There were no Consent Agenda Items presented.

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3. CLOSED MEETING FOR CONSULTATION WITH, OR BRIEFING BY, COUNSEL. – No meeting needed

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4. PUBLIC COMMENT:

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5. PETITION FOR RULEMAKING

Petitioner Ms. Tanya O'Connor requests the following:

1. Grant this petition by adopting a temporary moratorium on purse-seine reduction fishing for menhaden within the Chesapeake Bay and initiating rulemaking to amend 4VAC 20-1270-35.
2. Maintain the moratorium until VMRC has affirmatively demonstrated, on the administrative record, compliance with all applicable statutory and public trust obligations.

There were several people that spoke both in support and in opposition to the petition for rulemaking. Their comments are a part of the verbatim record

The matter was before the Commission for discussion and action.

Associate Member Preston moved to deny the petition base on the most available science data presented. Associate Member Headley seconded the motion. The motion carried, 6-2. Associate Members White and Hand voted no.

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6. DISCUSSION: Waterway Maintenance Fund Applications.

Alicia Nelson, Natural Resource Manager, gave the briefing of the information provided in the staff's evaluation, with PowerPoint slides. for the Associate Members. Ms. Nelson's comments are a part of the verbatim record.

Kellen Singleton, Coastal Project Manager, was sworn in and spoke on behalf of Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission. His comments are part of the

verbatim record.

Mindy Strevis was sworn in and gave a presentation for the Middle Peninsula. Her comments are a part of the verbatim record.

The matter was before the Commission for discussion and action.

Associate Member Preston moved to approve to fund Eastern Shore work for \$1,000,000 and Middle Peninsula for \$500,000 as presented. Associate Member Edwards seconded the motion. The motion carried, 6-0-1. Associate Member Hand abstained. Associate Member White was not present during the vote.

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7. **PERMITS** (Projects over \$500,000.00 with no objections and with staff recommendation for approval).

Justin Worrell, Deputy Chief, Habitat Management, reviewed the Page 2 items 2A and 2B for the Associate Members. Mr. Worrell's comments are a part of the verbatim record.

- 2A SKANSKA USA, VMRC #2025-2462**, requests authorization to install and backfill a 228 linear-foot steel bulkhead, a maximum of two feet channelward of the existing structure, replace five (5) existing mooring dolphins, and to mechanically dredge up to 84 cubic yards of state-owned submerged lands to maximum depths of minus seven (-7) feet mean low water from the Southern Branch of the Elizabeth River adjacent to their commercial facility at 123 Sampson Creek Road in the city of Chesapeake. Dredged material will be offloaded on-site and transported via truck to the Dominion Recycling Center. Staff recommends approval including a royalty of \$2,280.00 for the fill of 456 square feet of state-owned submerged lands at a rate of \$5.00 / square foot, \$50.40 for the dredging of 84 cubic yards of submerged material at a rate of \$0.60 / cubic yard, and \$69,862.00 for the encroachment of 34,931 square feet of state-owned submerged lands at a rate of \$2.00 / square foot. This project requires a Subaqueous permit.
- 2B UPPER BRANDON FARM, LLC, #2025-1537**, requests authorization to construct an 8-foot wide by 307-foot long multi-user, open-pile pier; and to

construct 610 linear feet of living shoreline consisting of three 25-foot wide riprap breakwaters (totaling 530 linear feet), a 215-foot long backshore riprap revetment, sand nourishment and wetlands plantings, and channelward extensions of an existing 15-inch pond overflow pipe and an 8-inch dry hydrant intake pipe - adjacent to 1802 Upper Brandon Road, situated along the James River in Prince George County. This project requires a Tidal Wetlands permit.

Associate Member Erskine moved to approve Page 2 items 2A and 2B as presented. Associate Member Headley seconded the motion. The motion carried, 7-0. Associate Member White was not present during the vote.

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- 8. ROBBINS MARITIME, INC., VMRC #2025-1590**, requests authorization to construct and backfill 66 linear feet of steel bulkhead a maximum of 10 feet channelward of the existing structure, and to install 13 mooring dolphins adjacent to 914 Pearl Street, situated along the Elizabeth River in the City of Norfolk.

Claire Gorman, Environmental Engineer, Habitat Management, gave the briefing of the information provided in the staff’s evaluation, with PowerPoint slides. for the Associate Members. Ms. Gorman’s comments are a part of the verbatim record.

Three representatives were present and two of them spoke on behalf of Robbins Maritime Inc. Their comments are a part of the verbatim record.

The matter was before the Commission for discussion and action.

Associate Member Erskine moved to approve the project as presented. Associate Member Preston seconded the motion. The motion carried, 6-1. Associate Member Headley voted no. Associate Member White was not present during the vote.

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- 9. JAMES MISHLER, VMRC #2025-2275**, requests authorization to construct a 17-foot by 36-foot open-sided boathouse onto an existing statutorily authorized private pier situated along College Creek at 110A Archers Hope Drive in James City County. This project is protested by an adjacent property owner.

Brad Reams, Environmental Engineer, Habitat Management, gave the briefing of the information provided in the staff's evaluation, with PowerPoint slides. for the Associate Members. Mr. Ream's comments are a part of the verbatim record.

Carla Havens, agent for the applicant, was sworn in and spoke. Her comments are a part of the verbatim record.

The matter was before the Commission for discussion and action.

Associate Member Headley moved to approve the project as presented. Associate Member Edwards seconded the motion. The motion carried, 7-0. Associate Member White was not present during the vote.

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10. PUBLIC HEARING

Proposed amendments to Chapter 4 VAC 20-950, "Pertaining to Black Sea Bass" to establish the recreational management measures for black sea bass, including a minimum size limit of no less than 12.5 inches, and amend the annual commercial quota determination.

Alexa Galvan, Fisheries Management, gave a briefing of the information provided in the staff's evaluation, with PowerPoint slides for the Associate Members. Ms. Galvan's comments are a part of the verbatim record.

The matter was before the Commission for discussion and action.

Associate Member Bransom made a motion to set the management measures for the 2026 regular recreational season as May 1 to December 31 with a 13" minimum size limit and 15 fish bag limit and for the 2027 regular recreational season as April 1 to December 31 with a 13" minimum size limit and 15 fish bag limit as presented. Associate Member Hand seconded the motion. The motion carried, 7-0. Associate Member White was not present during the vote.

Associate Member Bransom made a motion to close the 2026 recreational season from May 1 to May 10 to pay back the February 2026 landings. Associate Member Hand seconded the motion. The motion carried, 7-0. Associate Member White was not present during the vote.

Associate Member Bransom moved to approve the recommended commercial quota change to the regulation pertaining to Chapter 4 VAC 20-950, "Pertaining to Black Sea Bass" Associate Member Hand seconded the motion. The motion carried, 7-0. Associate Member White was not present during the vote.

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11. LICENSE STATUS REQUEST.

Adam Kenyon, Chief, Shellfish Management, gave the briefing of the information provided in the staff's evaluation, with PowerPoint slides. for the Associate Members. Mr. Kenyon's comments are a part of the verbatim record.

Jennifer Hume:

Hannah Darby was sworn in and spoke on behalf of Ms. Jennifer Hume. Ms. Jennifer Hume requested an exception to the two-year delay entry for a Commercial Fisherman Registration License so she could access the striped bass bay quota currently allotted to her. Ms. Hume last held a CFRL in 2022. Ms. Darby's comments are a part of the verbatim record.

The matter was before the Commission for discussion and action.

Associate Member Headley moved to grant an exception to the two-year delay to reestablish Jennifer Hume's Commercial Fisherman Registration License and return her striped bass bay quota and permit. Associate Member Edwards seconded the motion. The motion carried, 7-0. Associate Member White was not present during the vote.

David Bleeker:

Mr. David Bleeker requested an oyster user fee based on the history of oyster harvest. Mr. Bleeker has never held an oyster user fee since it was established. His comments are a part of the verbatim record.

The matter is before the Commission for discussion and action.

The Commission declined to make a motion on David Bleeker's request.

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**19394
April 21, 2026**

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There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:30 p.m.
The next Commission meeting will be on **Tuesday**, May 26, 2026.

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Joseph Grist, Acting Commissioner

Jamie Hogge, Recording Secretary