

**Harbor and Shellfish Advisory Board  
Tuesday, Oct. 19, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.  
Community Room, 4 Fairgrounds Road  
\*HSAB meeting are video-recorded and  
available at Nantucket Government TV on YouTube**

**Members present:** Andy Lowell, Dave Fronzuto, Dave Bossi,  
Tom Szydlowski, Ginger Andrews, Dan Pronk, Peter Brace

**Members Absent:**

**Marine Dept:**

**Natural Resources Dept:** Tara Riley

**Others:** Kona Hosier, Steve McKenna

**CALL TO ORDER**

5:01 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Unanimously approved, 6-0.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Draft minutes of Oct. 5, 2021**

Unanimously approved, 6-0.

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

**Outcome of Select Board vote on liveboard regulations**

Mr. Szydlowski updated the HSAB on a recent meeting of the Select Board at which these regulations were amended. Mr. Szydlowski read the revised regulations aloud to the HSAB, noting afterwards that the HSAB did not get recognition for contributing recommendations that were used to form the amendments to the Town's liveboard regulations. He also reported that the slip lottery was not revised.

Dan Pronk joined the meeting at approximately 5:10 p.m.

## **MARINE DEPARTMENT REPORT:**

### **General Marine Department report – Sheila Lucey**

No report.

## **NATURAL RESOURCES REPORT**

### **General Natural Resources Department report – NRD staff**

Ms. Riley reported that the Natural Resources Department plans to open Hummock and Sesachacha pond to the ocean by the end of October. She added that she is bringing in all their gear, sunk oyster cages in Polpis Harbor and collected eelgrass at Brant Point, bundling up the eelgrass plants to be transplanted on Hussey Shoal with the help of Boston University students coordinated by the Nantucket Land Council. More than 4,000 plants were transplanted.

Ms. Riley reported that her staff is continuing with its recreational scalloping in-the-field education of scallopers while checking what recreational scallopers are bringing in, especially out in Madaket. She added that she has completed her dive surveys she does to check on their larval release scallops and she has found some seed populations in the middle of Madaket. The following week, she said she and her crew will do these surveys in Nantucket Harbor as well.

Mr. Lowell asked if there's any information that can be sent out to the public on how to deal with the macroalgae, Lyngbia. Ms. Riley reported that she's heard from recreational scallopers that they're seeing a lot of it in both harbors. She added that she hopes to learn a lot from the long-term benthic surveys the NRD has been doing in both harbors. Ms. Riley said that once she has the results of the most recent surveys in a few months, she'll be better prepared to come up with possible solutions and report on the causes.

Ms. Andrews wanted to know if other coastal communities in New England have this algae in their marine waters and what their

solutions are. Ms. Riley said she did to. She added that, personally, she felt this algae has increased substantially in Nantucket's harbors within the last three years. Mr. Lowell asked if excessive bird guano entering the harbors is one of the contributing factors to these algae blooms. Ms. Riley said she is seeing birds roosting on oyster cages in the Head of the Harbor and that she is aware of more and more cormorants hanging out on Coattue's points. She added that Town water quality specialist Thais Fournier is doing fecal coliform research in Madaket Harbor to discern if bird poop is contributing factor to shellfish bed closures in this harbor. Mr. Brace asked if seasonal property owners staying in their homes longer is a contributor. Ms. Riley said that Ms. Fournier is working to split out human waste from bird waste in her water samples to determine the levels of each pollutant entering the harbors. Mr. Pronk said the cormorants eat a lot of juvenile fish from the harbors in addition to pooping in them.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT ON MARINE DEPARTMENT / NATURAL RESOURCES REPORT**

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **Excessive sand in scallops/dredging plan – Discussion with Steve McKenna, Cape & Islands Director for the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management**

Mr. Lowell summarized this issue, the HSAB's discussions on the issues and contributions of information from members of the public to the HSAB for Mr. McKenna.

Mr. Lowell asked if such a dredging project could be joined with a coastal resilience project in which the spoils could be used.

Mr. McKenna said he hasn't seen a dredging project in the southeast region done for improving marine habitat. He said such a project proposal would require a lot of environmental review and if such a project could be approved, the sediment would definitely be used in a coastal resilience project. He added that most of the

projects for ecology enhancement are to improve water quality. However, he said he hasn't seen dredging projects proposed solely for water quality improvement. He added that with any dredging project there is a lot of permitting required, at least six different local, state and federal agencies. Mr. McKenna said a dredging proposal specifically targeting excess sediment removal from eelgrass beds would most likely require a lot more scrutiny and permitting.

Mr. McKenna said eelgrass, shellfish and sediment experts would need to be consulted on how such a dredging project might help or hurt an eelgrass bed.

Mr. McKenna talked about a dredging project in Sandwich needed for water quality improvement but with a navigation improvement aspect to the project.

Mr. Fronzuto asked if this could be some kind of pilot program that might work if the Land Council, the NRD and other off island agencies signed on to the pilot project. Mr. McKenna said this could work. He added that there would need to be a pre-application meeting with all of the involved parties working to define such a project. Mr. Fronzuto asked Ms. Riley if she'd be onboard with this idea. Ms. Riley indicated she would but would need to get the Land Council to support.

Mr. McKenna said that such a science-based project opens up more funding sources.

Mr. Fronzuto said the best case scenario would doing something like 100 square yards in a couple of locations in otherwise healthy eelgrass beds.

Ms. Andrews thanked Mr. McKenna on his knowledge on how to make a dredging project happen. She detailed during the eelgrass blight of 1931 scallops attached to algae on the bottom or shells, and that scallops grew bigger because of better circulation.

Mr. Lowell thanked Mr. McKenna for his knowledge and help on this issue.

## **HEALTH OF THE HARBORS**

## **Excessive lawn fertilizer use – Update & discussion**

No discussion.

## **FDA shellfish taking prohibition in mooring fields**

Mr. Fronzuto said that Mr. McKenna was not aware of shellfish areas being closed due to boats being moored within them. He said Mr. McKenna would be following up on this issue and reporting back to Mr. Fronzuto. Mr. Fronzuto said 90 percent of the boats in the area closed to the taking of shellfish in Nantucket Harbor don't have an onboard bathroom (a head) or a holding tank. He said he couldn't understand the FDA's rationale with its blanket closure. Ms. Riley said the NRD has been working with Ms. Lucey and Christy Baker to find out the number of boats in the harbor that have heads. Ms. Riley learned that there are less than 25 boats in the entire mooring field have heads. She added that this is a great opportunity for the NRD to work with the FDA to show this federal agency the facts and what the Town is working on to re-open shellfish beds.

Mr. Fronzuto reminded the meeting that Nantucket waters were declared a federal no-discharge zone in 1993.

Ms. Andrews said she was happy that the NRD are using water quality samples to learn levels of human and avian waste pollution in the harbors. Mr. Lowell agreed.

## **Water quality testing update and boat holding tank dye tablet distribution**

Mr. Lowell asked Ms. Riley for an update on this issue. Ms. Riley didn't have anything to add at this time

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **HSAB's general advisory protocol**

Mr. Brace said it was important for the HSAB to regularly report to the Select Board on what the HSAB is working on, discussing or

working toward advising the Select Board so that the Select Board is prepared for recommendations that may come from the HSAB. Mr. Fronzuto asked Mr. Brace if he felt that the Inquirer & Mirror could give the HSAB the same level of coverage as Mr. Brace did when he wrote for the Nantucket Beacon and the Nantucket Independent. Mr. Brace said that the HSAB needed to be proactive and call the Inky when the board had issues it needed exposure on. Mr. Lowell suggested that the HSAB send the Select Board its minutes on a regular basis. Mr. Szydowski didn't think the HSAB should send its minutes to the Select Board, overload them with more to read. Instead, he suggested the HSAB keep the Select Board apprised of specific issues the HSAB is working on. Mr. Fronzuto agreed. Mr. Brace agreed with Mr. Fronzuto and Mr. Szydowski, and stressed the importance of advising the Select Board while CCing our departments.

Mr. Bossi agree and said the board need to come up with a format for reports it would send to the Select Board.

Mr. Brace agreed.

Mr. Fronzuto said at the end of these reports there should language advising the Select Board to refer requests on harbor and shellfish issues from the public to the HSAB.

The HSAB discussed how frequently the HSAB should send out these reports.

Mr. Lowell thanked Ms. Riley for always attending HSAB meetings and sending her reports when she couldn't make meetings.

### **Coastal Resilience Advisory Board – Update**

Mr. Brace reported that the final draft of the Coastal Resilience Plan (CRP) will be released on Oct. 26, 2021. Mr. Lowell said he hoped there would be more time for public input going forward given the enormity of some of the CRP's recommendations. Mr. Brace stressed that the CRP is simply 40 recommendations on how the Town can deal with impacts of sea level rise on Nantucket and

that of course there would be plenty of meetings, including Town Meetings, and lots of time for the public to have their say. Ms. Andrews asked if the CRP consultant, Arcadis, did any original research of its own or asked for any research to be done. Mr. Brace said it wasn't the Arcadis job to do research.

## **PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENT**

### **RECAP and ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING**

Mr. Lowell reminded the board that the deadline for citizen articles for the 2022 annual Town Meeting is Nov. 15. Mr. Lowell said he might submit an article relating to storm water runoff. He asked that HSAB members should call him with their input on this idea.1

### **ADJOURN**

Unanimously approved, 7-0, at 6:46 p.m.

### **YOUTUBE MEETING LINK**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6XTV6aBWfMw&list=PL49sKqpy7VAj6nJnAlrlKlxWm6VQTfuXg&index=1>

### **Future Meetings:**

Nov. 2 and Nov. 16

Respectfully Submitted,  
Peter B. Brace, Secretary