

Meeting Minutes

Virginia Recreational Fishing Advisory Board
Virginia Marine Resources Commission
Monday, August 10, 2020 6:00 p.m.
Applicant Presentation Virtual Meeting

Members Present

J. T. Holland
Wayne Jessie Jr.
Randy Pack
Meriwether Payne
Charles Randolph
Ed Rhodes
Maggie Whittemore

Staff Present

Sheri Crocker
Debbie Corker
Pat Geer
Lewis Gillingham
Adam Kenyon
Alicia Nelson
Terri Short

Board Members Absent

Sheldon Arey
Charles Southall

Others Present

David Anderson
Rob Cowling
Ike Eisenhower
Mary Fabrizio
Jim McCaddin
Susanna Musick

The minutes and webinar were recorded by Alicia Nelson; an audio recording of the meeting is available at <https://mrc.virginia.gov/calendar.shtm>.

Agenda:

I. Introduction, Announcements, Comments.

Alicia Nelson thanked everyone for logging on to the virtual meeting and explained some details of WebEx, including using the chat function to make comments. She noted that any votes would need to be roll-call votes, and asked speakers to please name themselves when speaking. She also reminded applicants that if anyone had not turned in funds from cancelled 2020 events, to please return checks to Debbie Corker.

II. Status of Fund.

Sherry Crocker gave an overview of the funding levels in the VSRFDF. She noted that there was \$1,138,881 available for projects.

III. Review of Minutes from the September 2019 RFAB Meeting.

Mr. Randolph motioned to approve the minutes from the September 2019 meeting. Ms. Payne seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

IV. Fishing event applications for 2021 events:

- A) 0420-01 2021 Knights of Columbus Annual Kids Fishing Day. Jim McCaddin, Knights of Columbus. **\$7,500.**

Mr. McCaddin sent a slide with pictures, and gave some information about the plans for the 2021 event.

- B) 0420-01 2021 Hope House & Oak Grove Nursing Home Fishing Excursions and Clinics. Joseph Stephenson; George Reich, Great Bridge Fisherman's Association. **\$2,900.**

Mr. Stephenson described that they had cancelled the events for 2020 due to the at-risk nature of the event attendees and social distancing requirements at the pier. He noted that the supplies purchased for 2020 would be used for 2021, and that amount would be subtracted from the 2021 request.

- C) 0420-03 2021 Virginia Beach Anglers Club/Seton Youth Shelter Children's Fishing Trip. David Anderson, Virginia Beach Anglers Club. **\$2,500.**

Mr. Anderson noted that they had hoped to have a heavily modified event in 2020, but with the new requirements, they were unable to do so. They are trying to have some sort of event for the vulnerable population of children they work with. He described a typical event in a normal year for the board.

Mr. Rhodes suggested speaking with the local Sheriff and offered to set up a meeting with the club.

- D) 0420-04 D 2021 Children's Fishing Clinic. Rob Cowling, Newport News Rotary Club and Coastal Conservation Association-Peninsula. **\$7,500.**

Mr. Cowling noted disappointment that the 2020 event was cancelled, and noted that there event would be consistent with previous years' events in 2021. He gave details about the social distancing requirements for public events that would be very difficult with the large number of kids planned.

- E) 0420-05 E 2021 Kiwanis Club Children's Fishing Clinic. Wesley Brown, Capital District Kiwanis Club. **\$7,500.**

Mr. Brown was unable to log on; Chairman Rhodes noted that if there were questions, Mr. Cowling could likely answer since the two clubs work together on their events.

- F) 0420-06 F 2021 Saxis and Morley's Wharf Children's Fishing and Conservation Educational Outings. Steven Elliot, Eastern Shore of Virginia Anglers Club. **\$2,200.**

Because the applicant anticipated being unable to log onto the webinar, they sent a statement to be read by the coordinator (statement below).

The Eastern Shore of Virginia Anglers Club is planning to conduct three (3) children's Fishing and Conservation Education Outings for the year 2021. These events are scheduled to be held at Morley's Wharf, Saxis, and Assateague Island, Chincoteague. The events are for children ages 6 to 15. The children will be provided with tee shirts, rod and reel, line and bottom tackle. Club members and accompanying adults will teach the method of proper and safe fishing techniques. All participants are made aware of VMRC

funding, Virginia Junior Anglers Program as well as conservation. At the close of the event they are provided lunch and modest trophies and certificates for the three longest fish. These outings provide an introduction to recreation fishing from many eastern shore Youth which encompasses two of the poorest counties in VA. ESVA appreciates the past support of VMRC and looks forward to future support.

- G) 0420-07 G 2021 Norfolk Youth Head Boat Fishing Trip. James “Ike” Eisenhower, Norfolk Anglers Club. **\$1,200.**

Mr. Eisenhower presented the project. He described the need to cancel the 2020 event, and described the event planned for 2021.

- H) 0420-08 H 2021 Sunshine Children's Fishing Program. Denny Dobbins, Portsmouth Anglers Club/Sunshine Program. **\$9,904.**

Mr. Dobbins was not able to attend the WebEx event. He noted via phone call with the coordinator that the 2020 event had been cancelled, and that the 2021 event would be consistent with previous years' events.

V. Research Projects

- I) 0420-09 I Virginia Game Fish Tagging 2021. S. Musick (VIMS), L. Gillingham (VMRC). **\$88,806.**

Ms. Musick gave a presentation describing the program and highlighting the recent program accomplishments. She noted a 37% increase in tagging, and that this would be the 25th year of the program. She also described some of the changes with the awards ceremony and training workshops that she and Lewis Gillingham completed during the last several months.

- J) 0420-10 J *Estimating Relative Abundance of Young-of-Year American Eel in the Virginia Tributaries of Chesapeake Bay. M. Fabrizio, T. Tuckey, VIMS. \$28,906. **(\$14,453 from VSRFDF, and \$14,453 from MFIF).**

Dr. Fabrizio presented the American eel project for the 2021 season. She described the efforts to estimate recruitment of glass eels at three sites for many years. She noted that for the 2020 season, the team was able to collect all of the necessary samples safely during that time.

Mr. Randolph asked for clarification about the status of American eel on the endangered species list. Dr. Fabrizio answered that they are not considered endangered in the US.

- K) 0420-11 *Federal Assistance (Sportfish Restoration) Matching Funds, Federal FY 2020. P. Geer. \$283,835 **(243,287 from VSRFDF, 40,548 from MFIF)**

Ms. Nelson presented the details of the project and the research programs supported by the funding. She noted that there would be upcoming changes due to budget cuts and other challenges expected due to COVID-19, and unspent funds would be returned to the agency's balance.

VI. Access Projects

- L) 0420-12 Reconstruction of a Saltwater Fishing Pier on the Severn River. L. Lawrence, MPPDC. **\$50,000.**

Mr. Lawrence gave a presentation describing the proposed work on a damaged fishing pier at the Captain Sinclair Recreational Area in Gloucester County. He described the donated land at the recreational area, and presented pictures of the washed out existing piers. He noted the number of fishing licenses in the area, and that the only other saltwater fishing pier in the area was over 14 miles away. Existing structures will be used during construction to the maximum extent possible. He noted the public use of the site prior to the pier damage, specifically by the elderly.

Mr. Rhodes asked where the location was in relation to Jellystone Park. Mr. Lawrence said that it was just over two miles away by water. Mr. Rhodes also asked about lighting and ADA compliance. Mr. Lawrence said that it would be complaint per building codes.

There was also to clarification about the JPA process with the VMRC and local wetland's boards. The VMRC habitat division is responsible for the JPA process, and that is handled separately from the RFAB process.

The next RFAB meeting has not yet been set. The soonest possible meeting date would be the second Monday in September. Mr. Holland moved to adjourn the meeting; the motion was seconded by Mr. Jessie. The meeting adjourned at 6:58 pm.