

MEETING MINUTES

Virginia Recreational Fishing Advisory Board
Virtual Meeting, Monday, September 8, 2025
3:00 pm

Members Present

Stan Gold
Meriwether Payne
Charles Randolph
Ed Rhodes
Charles Southall
Wally Veale
Maggie Whittemore

Board Members Absent

J.T. Holland
Wayne Jessie Jr.

Staff Present

Debbie Corker
Sheri Crocker
Joseph Grist
Gloria Hatcher
Alicia Nelson
Steve York

Others Present

Sarah Cayton
Susanna Musick

The meeting was held virtually via Microsoft Teams. Meeting minutes were recorded by Alicia Nelson. A recording of the meetings and presentations are available.

Agenda:

- I. Introduction, Announcements, Comments.

Ms. Nelson thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

- II. Status of Fund.

Sheri Crocker reviewed the status of the fund and noted that there was just over \$5 million available for projects.

- III. Review of Minutes from the July 2025 RFAB Meeting.

Mr. Southall made a motion to approve the minutes from the July 2025 meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Randolph. The motion passed unanimously.

- IV. Artificial Reef Update:

Ms. Nelson updated the board on recent reef program activities and the upcoming plans for reef tetrahedron deployments, the latest information from the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel Construction, and the possibility of the reefing the Freya (from the Middle peninsula maritime foundation).

V. Fishing event applications:

- A) Item A was recommended for approval at the July 2025 RFAB meeting.
- B) Item B was recommended for approval at the May 2025 RFAB meeting.
- C) Item C was recommended for approval at the May 2025 RFAB meeting.
- D) Item D was recommended for approval at the May 2025 RFAB meeting.
- E) 0425-05 2026 Sunshine Program. Steve York, Norfolk Angler's Club. **\$10,500.**

Steve York thanked the board for the opportunity to present and noted that most of the trips this year went as planned with one staying in Lynnhaven inlet due to weather conditions. He said that they had planned five trips for the 2026 season, and that the program was doing well. Mr. Southall motioned to recommend approval of the application, and Mr. Randolph seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- F) Item F was recommended for approval at the May 2025 RFAB meeting.
- G) 0425-07 Virginia Rod and Reef Slam. Sarah Cayton, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Inc. **\$5,000.**

Sarah Cayton reviewed the updated budget for the Virginia Rod and Reef Slam after the requested items had been removed from the budget. Mr. Randolph noted that the applicants had listened to the board's concerns and appreciated their changes. He motioned to recommend approval of the project, and the motion was seconded by Ms. Payne. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Other Projects:

- H) 0425-08 MLC Public Access Waterfront Enhancement and Community Saltwater Learn to Fish Program (SL2F). Bernadette La Casse, Mathews Land Conservancy. **\$34,140.**

Mr. Southall motioned to recommend approval of the application, and Mr. Gold seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- I) 0425-09 Virginia Game Fish Tagging 2025. S. Musick (VIMS), M. Hargis (VMRC). **\$93,228.**

Mr. Randolph motioned to recommend approval of the application, and Ms. Payne seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- J) 0425-10 M Year 2: Use of Pop-Up Satellite Archival Transmitting Tags (PSATS) to evaluate air exposure and handling effects on the survival of red drum (*Scianops ocellatus*) released during Virginia's late summer recreational fishery. Hamish Small, William & Mary's Batten School of Coastal & Marine Sciences & VIMS. **\$87,051.**

Mr. Southall noted that this project complemented an earlier project studying red drum survival during different times of the year. Mr. Southall motioned to recommend approval of the application, and Mr. Gold seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

K) 0425-11 Marine Sportfish Collection Project 2025. Ethan Simpson, VMRC. **\$18,000.**

Mr. Veale motioned to recommend approval of the application, and Mr. Randolph seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

L) 0425-12 *Federal Assistance (Sportfish Restoration) Matching Funds, Federal FY 2026. P. Geer. \$204,822 (**\$153,616 from VSRFDF**, \$51,206 from MFIF).

Mr. Randolph motioned to recommend approval of the application, and Mr. Veale seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

M) 0425-13 Seagrass Habitat Restoration and Monitoring. Christopher J. Patrick, VIMS. **\$99,038.**

Mr. Southall motioned to recommend approval of the application, and Mr. Randolph seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. Other Business.

Ms. Nelson noted that the first meeting for the 2026 cycle would likely be held at the agency in spring 2026. This meeting would be intended for reviewing plans and finances for the 2026 season before applications were submitted. She asked for any other suggested topics.

The board requested information and clarity on the final reports for the sea grass work, noting that the past reports were very informative and helpful. Ms. Nelson noted that they were available and would make sure that they were distributed.

Ms. Payne asked for summary information about the license numbers and revenue, and Ms. Nelson replied that we could provide a report at the next meeting.