



THE LOUISIANA SEAFOOD PROMOTION AND MARKETING BOARD

The Louisiana Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board held their meeting on February 13, 2008 at the UNO Advanced Technology Center.

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

II. ROLL CALL

The roll was called and a quorum was established.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Tommy Bush
Tommy Cvitanovich
Donna Montgomery
Harlon Pearce
Darrel Rivere
Don Schwab
Elton Theriot
Kevin Voisin

MEMBERS ABSENT

Pete Gerica
Dexter Guillory

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting was made by Donna with a minor change. The motion was seconded by Tommy Bush. There was no opposition. Motion Carries.

IV. PRESENTATIONS/PROPOSALS/PETITION

No action

V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT

The executive director begins his report by discussing meetings with New Commission of Agriculture, Wal-Mart, LTPA, etc. LTPA's program will be a strong initiative for the state and we will get a lot of leverage out that program.

He informed the board of the new chairman Ralph “Buddy” Pausina of the Oyster Task Force. He explains Mike Voisin stepped down and Mr. Pausina was elected.

His next discussion included media coverage with LTPA, Louisiana Network did radio interviews for lent, and Mike sent MSNBC to ACME and Drago’s Restaurants.

He then discussed the LA Alive event that took place in January in Washington, DC where we participated and hosted three events. Five New Orleans restaurants were there displaying and serving our Louisiana Oysters. He passed around the invite that went out for the Wednesday night event. There were about 600 attendees at this event. He then discussed the event held at Mary Landrieu’s house hosted by Mitch Landrieu that our chefs had the opportunity to cook for. He then showed a media clip of the Washington DC trip that appeared on the Channel 9. Thursday night Louisiana Oysters were prominent at the LA Alive. After the media clip he showed a PowerPoint presentation of the three events, including signage and the walk on Capitol Hill.

He discussed and passed around advertisement materials that included LA Cookin’ and Culinary Concierge. He then showed the Williams Sonoma’s catalog displaying Lance Nacio’s shrimp at \$119.00 for 5lbs 80-90 shrimp.

Mr. Smith continued discussions with upcoming meetings and events such as meetings with Ann Rogers of Tails of the Cocktails, the upcoming Boston Show, and upcoming Oyster Jubilee on March 22 that will include a shuck and run event, 1 minute oyster eating challenge, and 340 ft oyster po-boy. Other upcoming meetings are with Rouses, Piccadilly and NFI leadership tour.

Mr. Smith suggests the board open discussions on hosting a legislative day. Lisa Manda of the Department of Agriculture has offered to help with this. She suggests doing a luncheon on the lawn of the governor’s mansion.

A motion to accept the executive director’s report was made by Donna. The motion was seconded by Don Schwab. No opposition to the motion. Motion Carries.

Ewell explains we have selected a candidate for our Public Information Officer Position but it was caught in the hiring freeze issued by governor. Since then we have filed an exemption with civil service to move forward with filling the position but has not received approval yet. However, the temporary 1 ½ year shrimp certification position has been approved.

VI. STAFF REPORTS

No staff repots

VII. SECRETARY TREASURERS REPORT

Ewell explains we are in great shape. The current seafood board account balance is \$84,000, oyster account \$58,000, shrimp marketing \$256,000 and the crab account has a balance of \$40,000. We are within all of our budgets according to budget approved by the board at the beginning of the fiscal year.

A motion to accept the secretary/treasurer report was made by Don. The motion was seconded by Kevin. No opposition to the motion. Motion carries.

VIII. BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

The following positions are open on the board: shrimp processor position, secretary position, catfish industry, crab industry, and shrimp harvesters position. The freshwater/finfish position may become open in the near future.

We can submit names to the governor for three of the positions. Names have already been submitted for the shrimp processor position.

Ewell read the bylaws for filling open seats.

Harlon suggests the members consider the openings we have, canvas the industry and bring back to the next meeting names of possible people to fill the open positions.

Mr. Theriot explains his resignation is not official yet. If he is needed for business at the next meeting he is willing to come. He decided to put resignation off until next meeting.

Jim Rich is the only board member we haven't heard from for over a year now. Kevin asks if a motion need to be made to get Jim off the board. He has not come for a year and we are struggling for a quorum, move on. Harlon states it's already part of the bylaws therefore a motion isn't needed.

Mr. Theriot asks if there will be a meeting with all the new legislators. He had a meeting with a new legislator Joe Harrison from the Morgan City area that is seeking direction. He specifically asked for 5 suggestions for the Morgan City area and 5 suggestions for the entire state.

Darrel suggest writing a letter to commend Mr. Sammanie on his new position with the commission.

Kevin discussed his meeting with the USDA in Shanghai. They have a lot of interest in Cajun food. They expressed an impressive interest in meeting with us. I have a contact; however she is out until next week. They have been looking for a Louisiana chef and Louisiana seafood for a long time.

IX. OTHER BUSINESS

Harlon explains the \$41 mil supplemental from Washington will probably be disbursed to fisherman prior to the May season. At the same time we're working on another \$63 mil supplemental from Washington. Mary Landrieu put this supplemental in for the fisheries of Louisiana. Tomorrow Ewell will be meeting with the appropriations committee in Baton Rouge to discuss funding for the board. I will be meeting with the new assistant secretary of wildlife. We're working with the menhaden people to get into the bait business. We have a severe problem with bait in the crab and crawfish industries. We've talked to Wildlife about opening the season early. Most of the menhaden oil has been going to the salmon industry to make it taste like fish.

Don asks the \$41 mil that's going to the fisherman by May does all of the money go to the fisherman? Harlon responds both fisherman and dealers will get part of the money. The bulk of the money will go to the fisherman. It's based on trip tickets and a sophisticated formula WLF came up with.

Harlon explains the next major battles we will have in Washington are water wars. The Appalachians Basin is in severe trouble with Atlanta growing ½ million people a year. The water reservoirs are being taken for water use in Atlanta and not flowing to the Appalachians basin. Fights will take place along the coast and even in California.

Ewell played a clip regarding legislation in Georgia about country of origin labeling for menus in restaurants. There were brief discussions. With the complexities of the distribution process in mind for the suppliers and the complexities of restaurants managing their menus, the board felt that it was not in the position or the role of the board to regulate what the restaurant industry does mandating labeling on their menus. The board does support strict fines on misleading info on menus. A position statement is being drafted.

X. NEXT BOARD MEETING

The next board meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 12, 2008 at Drago's Restaurant 3232 N. Arnoult Road in Metairie, LA for 2pm.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Thomas Bush. The motion was seconded by Kevin Voisin. No opposition to the motion. Motion carries.