**Louisiana Blue Crab Task Force Meeting**

**Tuesday, September 3, 2019, 1:00pm**

**St. Bernard Port Harbor and Terminal**

**100 Port Blvd., Chalmette, LA 70043**

**I.** Pledge of Alligance

**II.** Roll call and introduction of guests

**Voting Members Present:**

Eric Blanchard

LaQuita Meek

Sheb Callahan

George Jackson

Al Cassagne

Britney Breaux

Pete Gerica

**Voting Members Absent:**

Chalin Delaune

Trudy Luke

Rodney Parfait

Dannon Lacoste

**Non-Voting Members Present:**

Julie Lively

Peyton Cagle

Jack Isaacs

Major Edward Skena

**Non-Voting Members Absent:**

Melissa Daigle

**III.** Eric Blanchard motioned to approve the June 4, 2019 meeting minutes, 2nd by George Jackson. Motion carries.

Eric Blanchard motioned to approve the September 3, 2019 meeting agenda as presented, 2nd by George Jackson. Motion carries.

**IV.** Financial Report-

Remaining FY2020 Fund Balance -$263,213

LDWF Budget Balance for FY2020- $42,577

Eric Blanchard motioned to approve the financial report as presented, 2nd by George Jackson. Motion carries.

**V.** New Business-

**A.** Peyton Cagle led discussion on the Derelict Crab Trap Program

Some possible options the board discussed were a buy-back or recycling program. The board also suggested using crab fishermen from the closed area in the cleanup. The program currently uses mostly recreational fishermen volunteers, the task force expressed that utilizing commercial crab fishermen for this purpose would put fishermen back to work while the area is closed and also highlighted the fact that commercial crab fishermen already have the equipment to needed for cleanup

George Jackson mentioned the Mississippi buy-back program, stating that participants get $10/trap

Britney Breaux suggested doing a lottery for commercial crab fishermen volunteers from the cleanup area, and reimbursing them for gas

Peyton Cagle stated that LDWF is looking for increased participation and effort

The task force expressed concern for the data from cleanups being used against the industry, there was also mention of concern for people cutting tags, cork from LA traps to turn them in to Mississippi for the buy-back program

Nolan Exsterstein suggested using smashed traps to restore the coast; Julie Lively said this was tried in the past and it was too much of a liability

Florida uses tags that are administered from the state department for crab traps, board stated that this might an option

Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation is looking into scanning tag options

Nolan Exsterstein requested that LDWF consider the time of year when setting the dates for the derelict closures, asked that the department choose a time of year that least impacts the industry

Al Cassagne suggested paying fishermen in the closure area a day’s work (2 weekends a month), also would need 1 enforcement agent to oversee the operation

Peyton Cagle stated that he plans to come back at the next meeting with more information and continued discussion

**B.** The task force unanimously moved to take up item E. ‘To Consider Funding for the 2020 Louisiana Fisheries Forward Summit’ at this time

The task force considered funding for the 2020 LFF Summit, which will be on Wednesday, March 11, 2019 at The Pontchartrain Center located at 4545 Williams Blvd., Kenner, LA 70065. This year’s event will feature a trade show and hands-on demonstrations

Britney Breaux motioned to provide $5,000 in funding to sponsor the 2020 LA Fisheries Forward Summit, 2nd by Al Cassagne. Motion carries.

**C.** Brad Barth and Brian Lezina from CPRA provided the task force with an update on the Sediment Diversion Program

**D.** The board considered a resolution on Gulf Hypoxia to submit as comments on the Louisiana Nutrient Management Strategy

Britney Breaux motioned to submit the task force’s Gulf Hypoxia resolution as comment to the Louisiana Nutrient Management Strategy, 2nd by George Jackson. Motion carries.

**E.** Peyton Cagle led discussion on the status of the federal fisheries disaster declaration

Peyton stated that 12 months of data would be good, but not completely necessary, still analyzing data as it comes out and looking into impacts and making comparisons; should have a better update at the next meeting as far as start and end dates and where we are in the process

**VI.** Public Comment-

Julie Lively announced a crabber and shedder workshop to be held on October 23, 2019 from 11:00am-3:00pm at the Lafourche Parish Extension Office 115 Texas St., Raceland, LA 70394

Nolan Exsterstein requested adding an item to the next CTF meeting agenda to discuss promotions in September/ October 2020 for local crab

**VII.** The next Crab Task Force meeting was set for Tuesday, November 12, 2019 for 1:00pm at the East Bank Regional Library- 4747 W Napoleon Ave Metairie, LA

**VIII.** Britney Breaux motioned to adjourn, 2nd by Eric Blanchard. Motion carries.