

OTF Meeting

June 3, 2014

2021 lakeshore drive, suite 310, New Orleans

Meeting called to order at 1:07 p.m.

Present Voting Members:

Shane Bagala
Byron Encalade
Dan Coulon
Brandt Lafrance
Al Sunseri
John Tesvich
Sam Slavich
Willie Daisy

Absent Voting Members:

Wilbert Collins
Ralph Pausina-entered at 2:30
Jakov Jurisic
Brad Robin
Peter Vujnovich

Present Non-voting Members:

Gordon LeBlanc in for Lance Broussard
Steve McManus in for Major Sammy martin
Randy Pausina in for Mark Schexnayder

Absent non-voting members

Jerome Zeringue
Chip Kline
Karl Morgan

Guests:

John Veazy-FDA
Tom Soniat-UNO
Matthew Slavich-OLDEB
Earl Melancon- Nicholls
Randy Pausina-LDWF
Larry Marino-CPRA
Cole Garrett- LDWF
Patrick Banks-LDWF
Corey Miller- CRCL
Rene LeBreton-LDWF
David Helminick- Legislative Auditor
Irinia Hampton- Legislative Auditor

Misty Perry- Legislative Auditor
Julianna Mullen- Audubon Nature Institute
Meg Farris- WWL TV
Jane Mahoney- Trufund Fisheries Assistance Center
Gary Lopinto- LA-DHH
Nick Daisy- W & E Oysters
Damon Morris- LDWF
Francis Ernst, Jr.
Taylor Naquin- Marks Oysters
Mark Naquin- Marks Oysters
Toby Voisin- Wilson's oysters
Karen Profita- LSPMB

Motion by Dan Coulon to give some sort of certificate to further recognize Mr. Ralph Pausina and Mr. Wilbert Collins contribution to the Oyster Industry. Second by Sam Slavich. Motion carried.

Al Sunseri entered at 1:11 p.m.

Approval of April 8 minutes, motion to approve by Al Sunseri, second by Byron Encalade. Motion adopted.

Motion by Al Sunseri to approve April 8 agenda and move New Business item Mr. John Vezey under the health committee report, second by Dan Coulon. Motion carried.

Motion to accept the financial report by Al Sunseri, second by Willie Daisy.

Al Sunseri made a motion to write a letter to LDWF to request a report from 2010- to most current of landing totals based on trip tickets and severance taxes collected. To be presented at next task force meeting. Second by Sam Slavich. Motion adopted.

Mr. Coulon asked that they Public and Private Oyster Grounds committee set up some type of meeting with LDWF enforcement to discuss the poaching and theft that is going on. Mr. Tesvich suggested that this be brought up under the enforcement committee report.

Steve McManus said that they could set-up a joint meeting with Enforcement and interested task force members before the next task force meeting. Mr. McManus said that there number of enforcement agents is increasing so that should help with increasing enforcement efforts. Mr. McManus said that the based on feedback from FDA last year the OTF decided to mandate that all containers have the lot number on them, and that has officially gone into the DHH rule book.

Cole Garrett updated the task force on HB 1046. This bill was signed by the Governor and becomes effective August 1. The department had part of its legislative package a seafood sustainability bill and that bill also was signed by the Governor.

In regards to Senate Bill 469, Al Sunseri would like the legal department look into how that would affect the task force and if they had had concern about a coastal use permit and damages to private oyster farms and if they wanted to take an action as a board and also does it hinder their individual rights to have a legal action against a coastal use permittee that may have damaged their oyster grounds. Larry Marino said that it affects government entities, but it wouldn't affect individual claims. Larry Marino will check on the ability of the task force to make a claim but said that the OTF would most likely not be the correct body to bring a claim forward. He said the bill takes the actions related to a coastal use permit violation or failure to get one and any agency other than the Department of Natural Resources, local agencies that have permitting programs and Attorney General. Any other state or local entity cannot have a claim. Al Sunseri asked for further clarification that individual lease holders rights will not be affected by this legislation, Mr. Marino said it would not. Cole Garret pointed out that this bill has not yet been signed by the Governor.

Patrick Banks that they will be taking the Dermo samples in July with their stock assessment and will turn those samples into Dr. Soniat for him to do the report. This will be ready for the next meeting OTF meeting. Mr. Coulon asked if there were any bright spots, Patrick said that it was a little early to tell, but that they will have more to report with their stock assessment presentation in July.

Karen Profita addressed the task force on what the seafood promotion and marketing board's activities have been, including Boston Seafood Show, National Restaurant Association Show, and oyster promotions as part of the Mrs. America pageant. Their next board meeting is at June 23 at 1 p.m. Their latest perception survey results will be presented at that meeting. Ashley Roth will set up a meeting with the seafood promotion and marketing board and the marketing committee, John Tesvich, Al Sunseri and Brandt Lafrance agreed to help participate in the committee.

Buddy Pausina entered at 2:30 p.m.

John Veazey said that the FDA is pushing the state to change harvest rules, these would include eliminating 36 hours to refrigeration in mid-winter and 24 hours to refrigeration for green tag product and moving everything to 18 hrs. This is a result of changes made to the National Shellfish Sanitation Program guidelines. Al Sunseri said that this is going to be a challenge for folks who like to stay out longer during the colder temperatures.

Motion by Al Sunseri to send a letter to the state public health officer and LDWF asking that they make no further changes to the time/temperature laws in Louisiana until Louisiana is able to go back to the entire ISSC delegation for a vote. Second by Brandt Lafrance. Motion adopted.

Al Sunseri also suggested a meeting with public health officer and regulatory agencies.

Motion to create a sub-committee for professionalism by Sam Slavich, second by Willie Daisy. Motion adopted. Al Sunseri, Mr. Buddy Pausina and Jakov Jurisic on the professionalism sub-committee.

Motion to create a sub-committee for sustainability by Sam Slavich, second by Al Sunseri. Motion adopted. Mr. Buddy Pausina will serve, also Pete Vujnovich.

Stock Assessment workshop will be August 12 at UNO Department of Computer Science. Dr. Soniat asked for a representative this year. Mr. Tesvich recommended Peter Vujnovich.

Washington D.C. Louisiana Alive- request that the OTF sponsor the Louisiana Alive booth for 2015. As well as the same support for the GOIC that they provided this year (chefs travel, OTF travel, oyster transportation, oyster cost,) also that Ashley Roth be allowed to travel to help. Second by Dan Coulon. With a budget of approximately \$40,000. Motion adopted.

Cole addressed the group regarding the oyster survey refund checks that were issued and clarified the language in the letter that accompanied those checks.

Mr. Coulon asked if they are doing their own surveys are they allowed to take the lease plus 10 % which used to be allowed when you had a 15-year renewal. Cole Garret will look into this and have it on the next agenda.

John Tesvich and Al Sunseri spoke about the potential to bring staffers from Washington, D.C. to New Orleans for a tour of oyster beds, facilities, etc. Al Sunseri suggested that if they haven't spent the \$40,000 transferred to the seafood board then potentially those funds could be used to do that. John Tesvich suggested including other species as well, Byron Enclade said that if they did a tour of public leases then he could assist with gas purchases. Dan Coulon said that he would like to see more emphasis on oysters. Mr. Buddy Pausina asked that we make sure the staffers have the task force's objectives for their visit.

Francis Ernst addressed the task force and asked them to enforce VMS systems on all boats. Randy reminded the task force that the current VMS program expires in 2015/16.

Next meeting Tuesday, August 5 at 1 p.m. in New Orleans.

Motion to adjourn by Al Sunseri, second by Byron Enclade. Meeting adjourned at 3:19 p.m.