



Committee on Fisheries

August 20, 2015– 6:32 PM - **Minutes**
Councillor William Saltzman Antechamber, City Hall, Room 213

MEETING: COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

DATE: AUGUST 20, 2015

TIME: 6:32 P.M.

PLACE: COUNCILLOR WILLIAM SALTZMAN ANTECHAMBER, ROOM 213, MUNICIPAL BUILDING

PRESENT: COUNCILLORS KERRY WINTERSON, CHAIRMAN; LINDA MORAD, VICE-CHAIRPERSON; DAVID ALVES; DANA REBEIRO (6:47)

ABSENT: COUNCILLOR HENRY BOUSQUET

* * *

Councillor Winterson called the Fisheries Committee Meeting to order and took attendance. The Clerk informed the Committee that Councillor Bousquet called to say he is unable to attend this meeting.

* * *

Notice, City Clerk of reference of a Written Motion, Councillor Lopes requesting, that the City of New Bedford's Committee on Fisheries consider the recommendation of the Acting Fisheries Commissioner Ronald Labelle, to terminate the commercial dredging of shellfish and only allow the process of relocating shellfish stock for propagation purposes in designated areas (Ref'd 5/10/12) was received and placed on file by Councillor Alves and seconded by Councillor Morad. (1)

The Chair recognized Councillor Lopes as the maker of the motion and he explained that Ron Labelle was unable to attend the meeting but Deputy Shellfish Warden Thomas Ringuette is here to speak in favor of the proposal. The issue was originally discussed a few years ago, but nothing ever came of it. The original discussion to close off a designated area in Clark's Cove to commercial dredging/fishing of shellfish. Studies showed that it can take up to 12-154 years to replenish the dwindling shellfish stock after one commercial dredging.

Shellfish Warden Ringuette explained that they are planning on reseeding the area, but that out of ten million seeds as they are called only two hundred thousand would survive.

Councillor Morad asked if what was before them would be applicable to commercial dredging only and she was told yes. Family permits would be continued to be issued, that this was for anyone who would be moving to sell the product commercially. Non-commercial fishing is not the issue.

Councillor Alves asked to look at a map of the area. Shellfish Warden Ringuette showed him the map, the Committee reviewed the map and informally discussed what areas the Warden would like to see closed. Councillor Alves asked if it was their intent to close the entire Clark's Cove, because half of it belongs to the Town of Dartmouth.

Councillor Lopes explained that back in 2012, they had the Town's full support on this; but he does not know if their support has changed since it was first discussed. We would need to check with the Town.

Councillor Alves would like to have the Shellfish Warden approach the Town of Dartmouth to see if they are still in favor of supporting the proposal. The Shellfish Warden said he would reach out to them. Councillor Alves suggested that their agreement be received in writing. He pointed out that from Roger Street out into Clark's Cove belongs to the Town of Dartmouth.

Councillor Morad asked what the difference between recreation and commercial fishing was and the Shellfish Warden explained that you are allowed to harvest one peck per week on a recreational permit, near the shore line. They cannot sell what they take and can only use a rake and you are permitted to do commercial harvesting now 100 feet past the jetties. They want to create a buffer zone, which will leave shell fish in a zone that will allow them to spawn both ways. If a commercial fisherman goes into the family/recreational designated areas now they will deplete the area. There are currently 175 recreational permit holders and 5 commercial permits all together, 2 dredgers and 3 diver permits.

Councillor Alves suggested if they did amend the language, that those fishermen who have pulled commercial permits should have them reimbursed.

Councillor Morad asked if you need a boat to fish 100 feet beyond the recreational area and she was told yes you do.

On motion by Councillor Alves and seconded by Councillor Morad, the Committee VOTED: To conduct this meeting in an informal format. This motion passed on a voice vote.

A discussion ensued about the areas other commercial fishing could take place in and how it would happen. They discussed how diving for shellfish would be just as detrimental as dredging. The Shellfish Warden recommended that they prohibit all types of commercial shell fishing in the designated areas.

Councillor Morad was concerned that there is a commercial fisherman now who does not have a boat and this would affect his livelihood, she agrees with the proposal but wants to make sure that he is given back the money he paid for his permit.

A series of motions were made by the Councillors and they were to remain in Committee until such time that the Shellfish Warden receives, in writing, a letter of support to the shellfish bed closing proposal from the Town of Dartmouth.

The Committee did make a motion to be referred out at the completion of this meeting to the full City Council meeting to be held directly after this Committee Meeting, placing a 30 day moratorium on the issuance of any commercial permits, prior to receiving a reply from Dartmouth. The motion is as follows:

On motion by Councillor Morad and seconded by Councillor Alves, the Committee VOTED: To recommend to the City Council, ADOPTION of the ORDER, to stay the issuance of Commercial Shellfish Commercial Dredging Permits in the City of New Bedford, effective Day of adoption until October 1, 2015. This motion passed on a voice vote.

On motion by Councillor Alves and seconded by Councillor Morad, the Committee VOTED: To recommend that the City Council consider the recommendation of the Acting Fisheries Commissioner Ron Labelle to terminate the Commercial Fishing of Shellfish and only allow the process of relocating shellfish stock for propagation purposes in designated areas being from Mosher Point, Dartmouth to the designated

marker west side of Fort Rodman on Clark's Point for a total of ten (10) years. This motion passed on a voice vote.

Councillor Alves explained that he knows that in the past when beds were closed for an extended period of years, they began to smother each other and actually killed off the supply. He thought it best that whoever was around in ten years could revisit the issue.

NOTE: This motion will be referred to the full City Council once the Town of Dartmouth replies in favor, in writing.

On a Related Motion by Councillor Morad and seconded by Councillor Alves, the Committee VOTED: To request the Deputy Shellfish Warden communicate to the Town of Dartmouth, New Bedford's decision to close Clark's Cove to Commercial Dredging/fishing and further asking that the Town of Dartmouth provide to the City of New Bedford, written documentation that they are in agreement of the proposed closing. This motion passed on a voice vote.

The Deputy Shellfish Warden agreed to reach out to the Town of Dartmouth and secure their agreement in writing.

Councillor Morad made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Councillor Alves.

This meeting adjourned @ 7:02 p.m.

ATTEST:

Clerk of Committees