

FINAL
VIRGINIA MARINE PRODUCTS BOARD (VMPB)
ONLINE MEETING THROUGH WEBEX
6/15/21



CALL TO ORDER: Mike Oesterling called the meeting to order at 1:01 PM. Seven board members were present which represents a quorum. The meeting was held online through WebEx.

The Virginia Marine Products Board, established within the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services pursuant to Va. Code § 3.2-1200 et seq., is holding an electronic meeting via WebEx on Tuesday, June 15th, 2021 at 1 pm. This meeting is being held during the Governor's declared state of emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic making it unsafe for the public body to assemble in a single location.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ann Gallivan
Kim Huskey
Mike Oesterling
Mike Schwarz
J.C. Hudgins
Daniel Knott
Hannah Kellum

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Wayne France
Rick Barlow
Brian Terry
Andy Hall

STAFF PRESENT:

Dylan Mills, VMPB
Mike Hutt, VMPB

GUESTS PRESENT:

James Fernald-NBC12
Hannah Brackett-NBC12
Melissa Ball- VDACS
Tommy Kellum- Kellum Seafood

MINUTES:

Mike Schwarz moved to approve the minutes from March 16th, 2021 and Kim Huskey seconded, the motion passed unanimously.

Roll Call:

Ann Gallivan: **yes**
Kim Huskey: **yes**
Mike Oesterling: **yes**

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Mike Schwarz: **yes**
J.C. Hudgins: **yes**
Daniel Knott: **yes**
Hannah Kellum: **yes**

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

NBC12 Ad Campaign Proposal: James Fernald from NBC12 gave a very in depth presentation and proposal for an ad campaign for Virginia Seafood through NBC12 uses various platforms such as the weather app, streaming apps, and a cooking segment. After the proposal and discussion among the board Ann moved to approve the board to spend \$15,000 over 3 months on the NBC12 campaign with the strategies to be determined at Mike Hutt and Dylan Mills' discretion. Kim seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Roll Call:

Ann Gallivan: **yes**
Kim Huskey: **yes**
Mike Oesterling: **yes**
Mike Schwarz: **yes**
J.C. Hudgins: **yes**
Daniel Knott: **yes**
Hannah Kellum: **yes**
The motion passed unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Oyster FIP Project Update: Tommy Kellum gave an update to the board regarding the Oyster FIP Project. He stated that Virginia Oyster companies are now able to advertise to buyers that they are participating in an FIP sustainability application and it is now listed on FIP.fisheryprogress.org. However, this certification will not cover diploid Oysters in cages and spat on shell. He also informed the board that they have received additional funding through a fisheries resource grant and are about 2 years from completion.

Economic Impact Study: Mike Schwarz gave a brief update on the study stating that things are on schedule.

Keith Lanpher Photoshoot: Due to COVID this project has been postponed since March of last year. Mike Hutt has been in contact now that he is cleared to travel and the first photoshoot will be taking place in July.

Seafood Expo North America- Boston, MA July 11-13, 2021

The 2021 edition of this show was cancelled and is currently scheduled for March 13-15, 2022 and the board already has booth space reserved and paid for.

Seafood Expo Global- Barcelona, Spain September 7-9, 2021

This is a SUSTA event held in Barcelona for which Mike Hutt is a co-activity manager. Diversified recently announced that they will be cancelling the 2021 event and have scheduled it for April 26-28, 2022.

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Oyster Website Update-Stratum

Dylan presented a test page for the website that has been launched. It will be very similar in aesthetics to the Virginia seafood site. Mike and Dylan hope to have the website live very soon.

Undercurrent News Advertisement (February 2021)

Dylan spoke on this stating that we received a little over 200 clicks on our ads in March, however since starting this ad campaign visits to the Virginia Seafood site have increased by much more suggesting that people are seeing the ads and then googling Virginia Seafood.

VA Aquarium Sensible Seafood Interview Filming: Mike was contacted by the Aquarium regarding a film they are making to be used in the aquarium. There have been some hiccups in the planning on this due to COVID so Mike is unsure when this will take place.

Updating Oyster Growers Directory

The new Oyster directory has been completed and is on both websites.

Benefits of Oysters and Oyster Reefs

The Benefits of Oysters and Oyster Reefs document has been completed and will be used on both websites as well as used for promotional material at trade shows and events.

2021 Billboard Plans

The board will be doing 2 billboards (one in Richmond and one in Hampton) for the months of June, October, and November. Both billboards have over performed in terms of impressions for the months that have been run so far this year.

NEW BUSINESS

Oyster Trail Updates

The Virginia Oyster Trail has begun having monthly meetings open to all members of the industry. Some of these meetings will have keynote speakers to focus on different aspects of the Oyster industry in Virginia. Given that Mike O. was a speaker at the meeting, along with Chris Moore, this month Mike O. gave a brief update stating that they spoke on the CBF report card on the Chesapeake Bay primarily focusing on Crabs and Oysters as well as the status of the Oyster Aquaculture Industry.

Virtual Trade Show-UK Market

After speaking with consultants in the UK it was determined that now is not a good time for a virtual trade show because most restaurants in the UK are still shut down from COVID. The board will revisit this idea at a later date.

Seafood Source Ad Proposal 2022

Dylan presented a proposal provided by Heidi Weeks at Seafood Source to the board for an ad campaign in 2022. After discussion Ann moved to approve the proposal as presented for the months of February, April, October, and November 2022. J.C. seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Roll Call:

Ann Gallivan: **yes**

Kim Huskey: **yes**

Mike Oesterling: **yes**

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Mike Schwarz: **yes**
J.C. Hudgins: **yes**
Daniel Knott: **yes**
Hannah Kellum: **yes**
The motion passed unanimously.

INTERESTED PARTY REPORTS

VIMS -_No report.

Virginia Tech -Mike Schwarz spoke on behalf of Virginia Tech saying they have hired a new aquaculture technician as well as will be hiring a new microbiology position. Jonathan also has a new research associate to help accelerate the work in economic research and marketing. The new building is scheduled to be completed in November.

VMRC -No report.

Virginia Seafood Council – Hannah Kellum gave an update stating that the DHS has released 22,000 supplemental H2B visas and to her knowledge all Virginia companies that still needed workers have received them.

Virginia Waterman’s Association – A second round of COVID Disaster Relief funding has been laid out for \$3.7 million and is pending public comment before being sent to NOAA for approval. The industry can expect checks from December 2021-February 2022. The winter Crab dredge survey saw a count for females being 156 million.

Shellfish Growers of Virginia – The industry is still trying to recover from COVID.

Omega Protein- No Report.

Cooperative Programs

VDACS –Melissa wanted to thank everybody she has spoken to regarding board appointments. They are still expected to serve until a new appointment is made and she thanks you for your continued service.

Financial Report

We had a carryover balance of \$709,909.59 for FY 2019-2020. With a balance of \$641,547.05 as of May 31, 2021.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

ANNOUNCEMENT- Mike Hutt announced that Dylan Mills has accepted another job and will be leaving the Virginia Marine Products board. His last day will be June 25th, 2021. Dylan would like to express that he has enjoyed his time working with the board and will miss working with everybody.

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ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 3:07 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mike Hutt
Executive Director

Mike Oesterling
Chair