

FINAL MINUTES  
VIRGINIA MARINE PRODUCTS BOARD (VMPB)  
VIMS, Gloucester Point, VA  
9/21/2021



CALL TO ORDER: Mike Oesterling called the meeting to order at 1:09 PM. Six board members were present which represents a quorum.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

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

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Wayne France  
Rick Barlow  
Brian Terw  
Andy Hall  
Mike Schwarz

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Mike Hutt, VMPB

**GUESTS PRESENT:**

Bill Walton VMS  
Andrew Button — VMRC  
Ben Stagg Engineering Survey VMRC  
Melissa Ball - VDACS

**MINUTES:**

Kim Huskey moved to approve the minutes from June 15, 2021 and JC Hudgins seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Economic Impact Study, VA Tech: An interested parties survey was launched today. M. Schwarz will update the Board at the next meeting.

Keith Lanpher Photoshoot: One segment of shooting has been completed of both fish and crab processing. Scheduling has been a challenge, but Mike has been able to move forward

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NBC 12 Filming: Two days of filming (NN & Tidewater) have been completed & it will be launched later this month. M. Hutt will send links to the Board once it is available.

Oyster Website Update: This has been launched. Feedback so far has been great.

Undercurrent News Ads (October & November 2021): The ads are already in place for this.

October & November 2021 Billboard Plans: Three advertisements will be consecutively rotating for October & November. (Fish, generic, oysters) with Lamar and Adams. The locations are the same as last year. The emphasis in November will be on Oyster Month. Mike Oesterling noted that crabs and shellfish should be highlighted in the spring of 2022, Mike Hutt will request a proposal for the next meeting.

COVID-19 Updates: Travel restrictions are still in place with the state.

#### NEW BUSINESS

Vacant PR & Marketing Specialist Position: The recruitment flyer has been posted and will remain up for two weeks. Interviews will be held October 12, 13, and 14. Target is to have someone on board in November.

Seafood Expo North America, Boston, MA, March 13-15, 2021: 20 foot booth space is in place (carried over from the previous fiscal year). A hotel block will be reserved and Mike will send it to anyone interested in rooms. The plan is to sample 400 pounds of blue catfish fillets. There will be a smaller international presence this year due to travel restrictions. The board intends to recognize the efforts Little River Seafood Company for their help with freight for this event.

Seafood Expo Global, 2021, Barcelona, Spain, April 26-28, 2021: World's largest seafood show that has been held in Brussels. Mike is a co-activity manager for this project through SUSTA. There are currently two Virginia companies registered to attend. Approximately ten companies in the SUSTA region have verbally committed to attending. SUSTA also offers a cost-share for interested companies.

Oyster Trail Updates: The last two meetings have been cancelled. It is currently in a state of disarray, The volunteer director has stepped back. COVID-19 seriously negatively impacted the Oyster Trail.

Seafood Source Proposal for Fall 2021 Advertisements: Advertising in October, November, and December 2021 is proposed for a total cost of \$5,940 (\$1,980 per month). This is included as a budget line item and a motion will be entertained with the budget discussion in this meeting.

New Kent Visitors Center Sustainability Brochures: The requested brochures have been delivered.

Virginia Welcome Centers Sustainability Brochures: They received 3,000 last year and have requested 6,000 more which have been delivered.

Undercurrent News July 2021 Ads Activity Report: They demonstrate a very good click (101), opened (52,308) and impressions (258,848).

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Undercurrent News Advertising Proposal 2022: The total amount proposed is \$9,300. This is included as a budget line item and a motion will be entertained with the budget discussion in this meeting. Mike will check to see if they can give us some feedback on inverting Banners 3 and 6.

106.9 The Fox and FM 99 Advertising Proposal: This group has proposed four options for advertising, ranging from \$19,800 to \$62,400 annual. Messaging does not seem to be on target. There also seems to be a limited range of reach. A motion made by Kim Huskey to table radio advertising for the time being. It was seconded by Daniel Knott and the motion carried unanimously.

Seafood Source June Ad Impressions: VMPB had 386,724 ad impressions with 1,126 unique clicks and a .29% click thru rate.

Google Analytics Report August 2021:

We had 135 users in 143 sessions (both are increased). The bounce rate is 79.02%.

90% of our users are in China. Other country users include U.K., Germany and Canada. 55.9% access the site via a desktop, 41.3% access the site via a mobile device, and the remainder is on a tablet.

Legislative Luncheon Update: The House Staff will determine the possibility of this event by the end of September. This is included as a budget line item and a motion will be entertained with the budget discussion in this meeting.

INTERESTED PARTY REPORTS

VIMS - No report.

Virginia Tech — No report. (M. Schwarz is in Blacksburg currently).

VMRC — (Stagg) The Commissioner is going to create a Shellfish Division at VMRC. The chief position is out for public notice now, and a deputy position will be established once that position is in place. The shrimp season in Virginia has been expanded.

Virginia Seafood Council — (Kellum). The Council is appreciative of the Board's support on the FIP efforts.

Virginia Waterman's Association — (Hudgins). There is additional COVID -19 relief money available if you have an over 35% loss. You must demonstrate a loss based on your five year average. They do not expect a lot of participation on the Watermen's side, That ends September 30.

Crab report: this has been a down year. Volume is 75% down from what it typically is. Possible reasons are water temperature, salinity. The price of crabs was double or more of what they typically are. They do not anticipate an extension of the season. Probably close to 15 million pounds will be caught this year. Oyster survey: They are anticipating a good oyster season.

Shellfish Growers of Virginia — (Oesterling). They have started working on the hard clam FIP.

Cooperative Programs

VDACS - No report.

Proposed Budget for 2021-2022:

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Item	Budget
Salary & Fringe 2 People)	\$180,000.00
Telecommunications	\$6,000.00
VITA	\$5,500.00
Equipment Rental	\$2,500.00
Electricity	\$1,300.00
Rent	\$12,000.00
VDACS / EVA Charges	\$1,500.00
Website / Social Media	\$3,000.00
Travel & Events Breakdown below)	\$50,500.00
Advertising Billboards)	\$23,000.00
Advertising Seafood Source	\$14,220.00
Advertising Undercurrent News	\$9,300.00
Printing / Office Supplies	\$5,000.00
Economic Impact Study	\$77,500.00
Photoshoots	\$9,950.00
State Vehicle	\$4,500.00
Reserve	\$100,000.00
TOTAL	\$505,770.00

Travel and Events Breakdown

Event, Date, Location	Total
SEA, / TBD	\$1,000.00
VA Agribusiness Legislative Reception, TBD	\$500.00
VA Waterman's Legislative Luncheon, TBD	\$7,000.00
SENA, Boston, March 2022	\$17,000.00
SEG Barcelona, Spain, April 2022	\$1,000.00
NRA Show,	\$19,000.00
Misc. In-State Events Not to exceed \$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
	\$50,500.00

Summary

Cash Balance 6/30/2021	\$693,292.40
FY 21-22 Budget	\$505,770.00
Est. Income 21-22	\$0.00
Est. 6/30/22 Cash Balance	\$187,522.40

A motion was made by Kim Huskey to approve the proposed 2021-2022 budget as presented. The motion was seconded by Ann Gallivan; the motion was approved unanimously.

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PUBLIC COMMENT - None

TRAVEL — The Board may request travel reimbursement.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at  
2:53PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Mike Hutt  
Executive Director

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Mike Oesterling  
Chair