



Alaska Mariculture Task Force (MTF) Meeting Minutes May 24, 2017

Attendees

Mariculture Task Force members attending: Julie Decker, Angel Drobnica, Sam Rabung, Mike Stekoll, Heather McCarty, Eric Wyatt, Micaela Fowler (delegate for Chris Hladick). Late: Kate Sullivan

Members of the Public: Tamsen Peeples- Premium Oceanic, Kirsten Shelton-Walker McDowell Group, Charlotte Regula-Whitefield- Knauss Fellow at Senator Murkowski's office, Tomi Marsh, Patrick Simpson- Silver Bay Seafoods, Lorne Donke
Cynthia Pring-ham, and Michelle Morris- Department of Fish and Game
Linda Mattson - Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development

Materials distributed to task force members included: Agenda for May 26 meeting, minutes from April 26 meeting, Outline of Phase 2 by McDowell Group, Petersburg Mariculture Q&A, Draft-Press Release- Legislation and new permit applications, 2017 Aquatic Farm Application Summary, Updated Diagram of Comprehensive Planning Process, Washington Shellfish Initiative Phase 2 Overview and Work Plan

8:35am Vice-Chair Julie Decker called meeting to order

Agenda was reviewed and approved

- Sam Rabung motioned to approve the agenda as amended, Mike Stekoll seconded

April 26 meeting minutes were reviewed

- Sam Rabung motioned to approved the minutes, Heather McCarty seconded

Public Introductions & Comment

Public Comments opened at 8:38am

Tamsen Peeples gave an update on the Larson Bay harvest from Kodiak in which 20,000 pounds of sugar and ribbon kelp were harvested

Public Comment closed at 8:43am

Old Business: McDowell Group Discussion

Kirsten Shelton-Walker provided an update to McDowell's work on their report

- They are working toward their June 28th deadline for chapters 2 and 3 and are prepared to have those chapters to present at or prior to the deadline but stressed that the report is a work in progress
- Chapter 1 will be submitted to the MTF after it has been finalized
- Heather asked what the timeline was for chapter 1 to be finalized

- Kirsten and the McDowell group will continue to work with the AC's to finalize chapter 1
- McDowell group plans to give the MTF time to edit the report prior to producing a final
- Eric asked about whether or not the McDowell group would cover issues that were not covered by the AC's
 - Kirsten explained that they might not capture all of this issues in the document which is why it was still a draft
 - Some of the issues that are not addressed in Chapter 1 will be addressed in Chapter 2
 - Kirsten suggested that at the June 28 MTF meeting, they review the document to address holes that need to be filled

Old Business: Updates from Advisory Committee Chairs

Mike Stekoll: Research, Development, and Environmental Information- had a meeting on May 19

- They have five potential documents that they are working on
 - Near-term priorities document
 - Mid-term priorities document
 - Long-term priorities document
 - Existing resources and future needs document
 - Document that addresses the things that need to be done to set up a mariculture enterprise
- They are focusing on the near-term priorities which according to their timeline, are two years out. Midterm priorities are five years out and long-term priorities are ten years out.
- Julie Decker asked whether or not the timeline approach identified in this AC would work for all AC recommendations
 - Sam Rabung explained that they crafted the recommendations of the Regulatory Issues AC in order of importance versus a timeline as a timeline can be fluid
 - Julie recommended that we keep this item in mind for the final document with regards to organization
 - Heather mentioned that the final product would maybe be a hybrid of the two

Sam Rabung: Regulatory Issues

- Have not met since they crafted their final recommendations. They are standing by.

Angel Drobnica & Jeff Hetrick: Investment & Infrastructure AC- met on May 1

- Worked on 11 recommendations at the AC meeting, updated some, and added a couple
- As the recommendations have not yet been approved by the AC, they are not yet final, AC chairs will present them to the full task force when they have been approved.
- Fine HM recommendation

Paula Cullenberg: Workforce Development AC- not present; no update

Heather McCarty: Public Education and Marketing AC

- Met with Kirsten of the McDowell Group to see how the AC recommendations and McDowell's recommendations will fit together
- Heather will send the recommendations to the whole task force once they are finalized

Updates on Legislation

- Bills did not pass the full body but all four are in Senate Finance for next year
- Julie encouraged MTF Members to contact the sponsors of the legislation and thank them and to encourage them to continue the work in this area
- Heather mentioned that the task force made huge headway and that the bills are well positioned for next year

Grant Application Updates

- ARPA-E: two grants were submitted to the Department of Energy on May 15th
- Alaska Sea Grant has not yet heard on anything on their application to NOAA
- Michelle from Fish and Game mentioned that Ms. Brenda Konar of the University of Alaska Fairbanks who has been working on a Sea Grant proposal for kelp harvesting. Brenda is looking for letters of support. Michelle will send Julie Decker Ms. Konar's contact information so that they can talk further.
- Mike Stekoll mentioned that a group in Southern California has submitted an ARPA-E application to put together a modeling for site selection
- Eric Wyatt informed the task force that The Nature Conservancy in partnership with OceansAlaska has put in for a grant with the wildlife conservation society that has to do with a kelp demonstration farm.

Communications

Future Presentations

- Mike is presenting in Cape Town South Africa at the end of June
- Mike is presenting on algae at the International Phycological Conference in Poland at the end of August
- Charlotte mentioned that at the end of June there will be a congressional briefing with the National Sea Grant Association
- NOAA Aquaculture Extension workshop in Boise, ID in June

Discussion on press release regarding legislation

- Eric expressed concern about the tone of the press release and requested that the length be shortened. He was also not comfortable with the size feasibility study information being included in the press release
- Sam suggested that the press release be shortened to be more of a summary
- Pat from Silver Bay Seafoods requested that the applicants be allowed to work with their respective shareholder groups before the MTF gets too far in-front of these efforts
- Kate mentioned that the MTF should be mindful of the concerns that could be raised by different user groups if the information on the permits is sent out in the press release
- Angel requested that the MTF keep the progress of the bills and the thank you in the press release
- Eric agreed with Sam's assessment to change the order of the press release and asked that the MTF be allowed to approve any edits via email so that momentum is continued
- Kate motioned to change the press release to tone down the language on the permit applications, to highlight the kelp harvest and to shorten the length. Heather seconded
- Julie proposed a friendly amendment that the updated draft press release be sent to the MTF for electronic approval before making public. Heather seconded the amendment

- MTF edits to press release due to Julie Decker on Friday, May 26 so that the press release can go out on Tuesday, May 30.
- Press release will be on DCCED Letterhead and go out from the DCCED Commissioner's Office. Linda Mattson will be the contact person and will funnel any questions to Julie Decker

New Business

Discussion: 2017 Aquatic Farm Applications

- The Department of Natural Resources receives all applications for State of Alaska land, and the Department of Fish & Game receives all applications for non-State land
- Eric explained that it is common for sea cucumbers to grow better under suspended culture oyster farms. He was also curious to know if permits for divers harvesting those products was allowed. He mentioned that a FAQ sheet to address different groups would be helpful to answer those questions.
 - Sam explained that there are several prerequisites for F&G permitting and that one of the ones is that a new farm site cannot have a significant negative effect on an existing or traditional fishery. They cannot permit new farms if there is an existing fishery which will be negatively impacted. There is much information on the F&G website as well as their statutes and regulations.
- Kate requested that the MTF be sure to be prepared for any questions that may come up from stakeholders and that we prepare an FAQ for the MTF website.
- Heather asked who will actually put the FAQ's together and suggested that the MTF have a process to proceed
- Eric suggested that maybe Sea Grant might have the information that would answer some of the FAQ's
- Julie will ask Paula Cullenberg before committing them and emphasized that communication efforts should focus on places like Sitka, Kodiak, and Craig
- Heather volunteered her AC to work on the FAQ's and to bring them back at the next meeting
- Eric suggested that the MTF look at any existing information that is already public knowledge and incorporate them into the FAQ's
- Kate will work with Sam Rabung and Cynthia Pring-Ham from F&G and will send her ideas to Heather so that she can work on them

Discuss Washington Shellfish Initiative- Phase 2

- Charlotte from Senator Murkowski's office updated the MTF on ideas developing at the federal level as to what a federal aquaculture initiative would look like. They are also taking ideas from a 1980 federal aquaculture law (Aquaculture Act 1980) as to what it would look like.
- Senator Murkowski's office has begun to seek input from Alaskan stakeholders on what Alaskans would like to see from this initiative
- Julie asked Charlotte if she could send the 1980 aquaculture law to the MTF as well as if there was a timeline for compiling data for this initiative
- Charlotte will send the law and does not have an official timeline but are looking at dates from July to September
- Heather moved that the MTF draft a letter to the Congressional Delegation and others to address interest and concerns in federal aquaculture issues. Sam seconded

- Julie will draft the letter with help from Eric
- They will bring the draft letter back to the MTF for approval at the next meeting
- Sam suggested that the MTF get feedback from Governor Walker's office to be sure that they are aware of the letter and ensure their support.

Discuss diagram of comprehensive planning process

- MTF Members held a discussion on the securing funding bubble on the comprehensive planning process. No decisions were made at this time
- Sam Rabung reminded task force members that they should name a drafting committee for the final plan. More discussion to be had at a later date

Form to document MTF member time for in-kind match to NOAA Grant

- Form was passed around to the task force members to indicate their time worked

Next Steps and Homework

Next meeting dates:

June 27, 2017 from 8:30am to 12:30pm

August 23, 2017 from 8:30am to 12:30pm

PLANNING PURPOSES: September 27, 2017

11:26am Meeting adjourned by Co-Chair Decker