

ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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ISLAND COUNTY
MARINE RESOURCES
COMMITTEE

Minutes

Prepared by Sarah Ruether

May 3, 2022

ZOOM

PRESENT: Vice Chair, presiding, **Jill Lipoti**, Chair, **Barbara Bennett**, **Scott Chase**, **Ed Halloran**, **Andi Kopit**, **Alexandra Plumb**, **Elsa Schwartz**, **Kes Tautvydas**, **Tim Lawrence**, WSU Extension (non-voting), **Jenn Johnson**, IC DNR Manager/Island LIO Coordinator (non-voting), **Kelly Zupich**, MRC Staff, **ABSENT:** **Gwendolyn Hannam** (notified), **Hannah Liss**, (notified), **Ken Collins**, (notified)

VISITORS: **Hillary Hayford**, PSRF, **Sasha Horst**, NWSC, **Ron Beier**, MRC Volunteer, **Sego Jackson**, **Carter Webb**, **Clea Barenburg** IC Watershed Planner (non-voting), **Carlie Miller** IC Water Quality

CALL TO ORDER: Barbara called the meeting to order at 3:00pm. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Introductions were made. **QUORUM:** A quorum was declared. **AGENDA:** Kes moved to approve the agenda. Scott seconded. The agenda was approved. **MINUTES:** Andi moved to approve the March 1, 2022 minutes Kelly wanted to add Ed's attendance to the meeting minutes. A second motion to approve the minutes as amended was made by Andi. Barbara seconded. The minutes were approved.

CORRESPONDENCE: Ian Miller contacted the MRC last week about working on a new sea level rise vulnerability assessment. She is hoping to get him in to present but cannot match up dates. He is recommending members interested in providing feedback attend the ILIO meeting where he will be presenting next.

TRIBAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge the lands we're on today are the ancestral and current homelands of Indigenous Nations who have stewarded them since time immemorial. We respect their sovereignty, support their Treaty rights, their right to self-determination, and we honor their sacred spiritual connection with the land and water. These Indigenous Nations include the Jamestown S'Klallam, Lower Elwha Klallam, Lummi, Makah, Nooksack, Port Gamble S'Klallam, Samish, Stillaguamish, Swinomish, and Tulalip Tribes.

LEADERSHIP REPORTS

Chair: The executive committee is working on some team building. They took personality tests which were very interesting to be able to appreciate each other's strengths and weaknesses.

Chair Recruitment for vacancies on MRC are working on targeting different groups like agriculture, veterans, and small businesses. A good strategy for recruitment is to cast a wide net and see who volunteers. Another strategy is to present to these groups and then ask for volunteers.

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Chair A discussion of the attendance at the Salish Sea ecosystem conference and she thinks that including agricultural, commercial fishing and other groups would make MRC more well-rounded.

Tim Lawrence said that he applauded that approach of having people from tribes, fishing, etc. and it used to be that these groups were included and somehow MRC got away from that.

Chair Gwendolyn has had her baby. Kelly will give her a gift if you would like to contribute.

Kelly Would like to add someone from the Planning Department.

Andi Would former military count as filling the nice. The VFW would be a good place for a presentation.

There was a discussion of adding a person from the Planning Department and Barbara said she thought it might have value in training Planning Staff. The discussion around military was that it would be good if the military representative had a connection to the base. There was a discussion of whether anyone knows someone who may have a person who works on base to recommend.

Barbara wanted to discuss her experience at the Salish Sea Conference. She was impressed that they indigenous perspective was given. She thinks it is important to have these voices as part of the conference.

Jill said that she enjoyed the black marine scientist and her explanation of why she did not feel included. Ken Collins did a talk at a Conference and it is on you tube. **Jill** suggests that everyone watch it.

PRESENTATION Hillary Hayford of PSRF was introduced by **Jill**. She gave a presentation on building a collaborative network to quantify kelp forest ecology with SUBA based index sites in the southern Salish Sea. This project is building a collaboration to quantify kelp forest ecology. She hopes to expand in the future to BC. Her organization is medium sized with 14 staff. Hillary shared a map of kelp decline in Puget Sound. The goal is to conserve and restore. They are actively trying to grow kelp in the water, kelp restoration. They need to catalog existing natural resources and species. They need to define the environmental range for healthy kelp, including temperature and nutrients needed. There is a lot of kelp survey work needed and she shared a list of organizations they are working with.

Below the surface they are using 6x30 meter transects to do annual biological surveys to better understand kelp forests. Hilary shared information on what is done for biological surveys. She also showed a slide with an instrument array and said this was the application they sent to JARPA which explained technically how they anchor and test for light, salinity, pH, dissolved oxygen and water level. She said detection was different from site to site based on how much the water is stratified. There are 14 planned sites. The way the sites were selected was somewhat arbitrary but the sites chosen were nominated by different researchers. The only reason there is tight cluster in Puget Sound is because some are grandfathered in. There are some big gaps, including big gaps around Island County. If there is funding those areas are also need for sites.

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Hillary discussed the need to develop a good network as part of her work. Her organization is good at bringing people together, she has a list of groups that she has met with to cover different areas of Puget Sound. Reef Check is going surveys in CA, which has used this data to see how well areas have been protected. Reef Check trains community divers and they did a trial site at Camano State Park and they have some data.

Hillary asked if anyone had questions. **Jill** asked if there was a quality assurance plan for water quality monitors. **Hillary** responded that they don't have this, but they are working on a data management plan. They are also working on a realistic deployment plan.

Carter asked how the data would be stored and accessed. **Hillary** said the data will be in different places, some was added to the Reef Check database, which is a publicly available dataset but must be requested. They need a long-term data plan in the future and are hoping to convince a state agency to take that on.

Scott asked if they have seen a sea urchin problem in the kelp beds. **Hillary** responded that from where the divers she has worked with, they have seen nothing and that WA doesn't have the same problems as CA.

Kelly asked how they deal with liability. **Hillary** said that they partner with Reef Check because they are a small organization, and Reef Check deals with the liability issue.

Barbara asked about Hillary's work as it relates to the vital signs of Puget Sound Partnership. **Hillary** said she has been attending some of those meetings and she is looking at metrics for indicators that could tell if we are doing better or worse. Instead of trying to convince everyone of the basics they are trying to tie into a vital sign to an indicator species.

Carter asked about the sites that have already been established, how long is that dataset? **Hillary** responded that this year they are adding 3-5 sites by bringing on Reef Check and have a couple site that were started in 2020. They have a goal of 14 sites for next year.

Jill said that she likes the way Hillary is going about this with biological species and real time data. She thinks this will change the way we look at kelp. **Jill** asked if there are plans for chemical monitoring. **Hillary** said at this time there are no plans for that. Before pollution the first thing to look at would be nutrients.

Jill said that nutrients are measured by existing NPDS permitting and through DOH monitoring. **Jill** thinks that this data may be able to be used and is a resource that we shouldn't forget about.

PROJECT PROPOSALS

Kelly gave updates on project proposals. The 200,000 funding from Congress can be used for vessel removal but MRC cannot be reimbursed, so Kelly wondered if it was better to spend the money elsewhere. She is looking into whether the County might front the money and then they could get reimbursed. Barbara's preference is to explore ways to spend that money and be reimbursed. Kelly told her that this was not possible, so no one voted on the motion that she made proposing this. Jill proposed to table the motion and think about other options on how to

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spend the money. **Kes** made a motion to table the motion and think about other option on how to spend the money. The motion was seconded. None opposed. The motion was approved.

Kelly had a discussion of the IC workshop. **Barbara** wants to collaborate with Planning and PW on which content would be most useful.

Kelly discussed shore friendly outreach ad ways to be supportive of the shore friendly program. **Kelly** said that there is \$15K budgeted for shore friendly and \$15K for IC workshops.

Kelly discussed education and outreach supplies. She then discussed the Cornet Bay restoration. She is working on drafting an amendment for that to allocate money, over \$6k. That is for the stewardship. The grant year starts in October. As for Cornet Bay, one area has poor soil and dries out so they will try to mulch it well. They will be getting their own water truck this year.

Kelly discussed the Port Susan project and is working on an amendment right now. The students are giving feedback about what worked and didn't work and keystone species.

Kelly is working to get a communications or marketing plan and then implementing it. She is keeping it broad as we don't know yet what those recommendations will be.

There was a discussion of water quality monitoring and data management. **Jill** wanted to know how data would be made available. Richard Austin was mentioned as someone who may want to work on making the data available. Linda used to manage Bull Kelp temperature data. Ken will be taking over the management of that. It would be good to have this on our website. Ron Beier would like data to be coordinated so that it can be used. Another meeting is needed to discuss data and data management.

Kelly gave a discussion of budget, saying that \$34K would be going to restoration and monitoring. There is \$20K for water quality monitoring. Kelly said she would keep the group updated on any requirements for this funding.

COORDINATORS UPDATE

Kelly gave an update of the mulching event. She also thanked Barbara for doing the tidewalk and the film festival at the Clyde Theatre.

Tim Lawrence introduced **Kristine** Vannoy as the new Shore Stewards coordinator. **Tim** also shared that he is retiring and that this is his last meeting.

Elsa Schwarz of the NW Straits Commission gave an update that they are hoping to meet in person in La Conner and reminded everyone to put the conference on their calendar.

Barbara made a motion to adjourn the meeting. All voted in favor.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business and no further comments, the meeting adjourned at **5:00pm.**