

ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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Minutes

Prepared by Caitlin Budd

March 7, 2017

COMMISSIONERS' HEARING ROOM B-102, COUNTY ANNEX, COUPEVILLE

PRESENT: Elsa Schwartz, Chair, presiding, Ed Adams, Barbara Bennett, Ed Halloran, Ruth Richards, Kestutis Tautvydas, David Thomson (WebEx), Frances Wood, Tom Leschine, Tim Lawrence, Lori Clark, Caitlin Budd Temporary MRC staff

ABSENT: Lois Farrington, Jill Johnson, Todd Zackey, Florian Graner, Linda Rhodes, Tony Turpin

VISITORS: Kit O'Neil, Jennifer Riedmayer (IC DNR)

CALL TO ORDER: Schwartz called the meeting to order at 3:35 pm. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Introductions were done. **QUORUM:** A quorum was declared. **AGENDA:** Adams moved to approve the agenda. Tautvydas seconded. The agenda was approved. **MINUTES:** Richards moved to approve the minutes of the Island County MRC meetings held on February 7, 2017. Wood seconded. The minutes were approved.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- Halloran will hand deliver a letter to Port of Coupeville, which details the vacancy for a three-year voting position and invites them to recommend a representative.
- Turpin has resigned from his MRC member seat. The open MRC member seat has been posted on the Island County MRC website and a press release has gone out through Pam Dill.
- Bennet suggested contacting the Swinomish Tribe as well as Tulalip and Skagit Tribes about the open position.
- Thanks were expressed by Halloran and all to Dawn Pucci for her assistance with the permitting process for the ADA access and signage for Clinton Beach Park in South Whidbey.

ACTIONS/DECISIONS/FOLLOW-UP

- **ACTION: Bennett** to reach out to Swinomish Tribe in reference to MRC member opening.
- **ACTION: Adams** moved to appoint Turpin as a MRC technical advisor for creosote and marine debris removal. Seconded by Wood. The motion passed unanimously.
- **ACTION: Halloran** to hand deliver letter to Port of Coupeville on March 8, 2017. Adams moved. Bennett seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

OUTREACH NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Bennett presented on the Outreach Needs Assessment results.

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Findings that were discussed:

- MRC was encouraged by county staff across departments to be champions of particular topics and to add to county-wide dialogue.
- General topics of interest identified by the assessment included patterns of intensified storms, water quality, pre and post monitoring of county projects, distribution of short update summaries produced by the MRC on various projects to both IC departments and larger community, distribution of summaries of educational presentations given during MRC meetings or by MRC members
- Overall awareness among IC departments of what MRC does is low.

Recommendations:

- Strengthen communication with County Elected Officials, staff and decision makers
- Increase number of public forums
- For every MRC project, articulate the question to be addressed and what has been learned in each report

Further discussion points included:

- Appreciation for Bennett's high quality and useful work was expressed.
- Bennett mentioned that MRC has the opportunity to be more involved. In Bennett's conversation with the Planning Department for example, it was discussed that planning may alter zoning based on drift cells so that all shoreline properties within a drift cell have the same zoning.
- Questions posed by Schwartz: What are the next steps? How do next steps fit into MRC's larger outreach goals?
 - o The MRC can be serving many of the IC departments and can take a scientific approach in identifying questions that direct MRC involvement in IC departments.
 - o It was mentioned that Pucci encourages development of a comprehensive list of all IC monitoring sites.
 - o Conduct outreach within IC departments as well as in the larger community. Bennett suggested distribution of fact sheets and passed around example fact sheets produced by Restore America's Estuaries. It was emphasized that fact sheets should be practical, useful, picture heavy, and light on text. Bennett also distributed an image of a WSU Extension sandwich board as another outreach tool example. Town of Coupeville is rewriting its sign ordinance, which may affect MRC's outreach efforts in the town.
 - o Publicize educational presentations, increase the number of presentations given, and hold presentations at venues that can house a larger audience.
 - o IC volunteer-run beach cleanups were mentioned as an outreach option. Potential limitations around MRC's liability for volunteer injury were discussed.
 - o Identify County Commissioner candidates and introduce them to MRC project topics.
 - o Bennett discussed hiring an outreach intern to aid in the development of the video as well as other outreach materials. Schwartz asked what the anticipated timeline for the intern would be and Bennett proposed that the intern begin sometime in summer or early fall.
- The Net Pen comment letter was mentioned as a good example of MRC contribution.

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ACTIONS/DECISIONS/FOLLOW-UP

- **Bennett** to contact NWSC about outreach intern hiring process.

2017-2018 WORKPLAN DEVELOPMENT

Points clarified:

- Adams shared that NWSC is pursuing alternative funding sources due to budget cuts.
- The 2017/18 workplan needs to cover all projects the MRC is pursuing, including those that do not require funding, not just those projects covered by NWSF grant funds. There can be some overlap between these two categories.
- Potential need for alternative projects list in case of funding loss or decrease.
- Eelgrass: project in need of electric trolling motor as well as a new camera and boat operation funds. Potential of transferring \$2,500 that was allocated for seining to the eelgrass project for these expenses.

2017/18 workplan items:

- After discussion of potential 2017/18 workplan projects to add to the ongoing NWSC grant projects, the following additional projects were suggested:
 - o Monitoring (including inventory of monitoring projects in IC, how to monitor for “No net loss”, and coordination with long-range planning needs) – to be led by Bennett
 - o Outreach: Educational forums – to be led by Bennett
 - o Adding zooplankton monitoring to the kelp study – to be led by Rhodes
 - o Environmental DNA analysis – to be led by Rhodes
 - o Creosote Inventory and Removal – to be led by Turpin
- Current NWCS projects that will continue are:
 - o Forage Fish – leads: Farrington and Richards
 - Reexamining project goals and results
 - o Kelp Monitoring – led by - Rhodes
 - o Eelgrass - Tautvydas
 - o Pigeon Guillemot – Wood
 - Potential new research questions to address
- Seining: removed from this year’s workplan due to inability to conduct seining at study sites
- Projects the MRC would like to stay informed on, but that do not require a budget are:
 - o Oak Harbor Marina restoration
 - o Green Crab monitoring
 - o Storm Surge

Process moving forward:

- Build a \$75,000 budget and adjust accordingly to funding changes

ACTIONS/DECISIONS/FOLLOW-UP

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- **ACTION: Project leads for new and ongoing NWSC grant projects develop project budgets that include budget justification and short descriptions as well as a list of deliverables and/or research questions projects will address.** These need to be into **Budd** by March 19, 2017.
- **Schwartz** to follow up with project leads who were not in attendance at this meeting.
- **Budd** to send out workplan documents from 2016-2017 as examples for developing budget and project descriptions.
- **Budd** to contact Horst about transferring funds from the seining to the eelgrass project.
- **Budd/Pucci** to bring workplan to a Commissioner work session for approval.
- **Budd** to send out edited workplan before the April 4th MRC meeting.
- **FOLLOW-UP: The workplan is due to the NWSC on April 10th.**

BUSINESS ITEMS

- Bennett is attending a conference of the Citizen Science Association in St. Paul, MN in May 2017. Bennett will present on take away points from this conference to the MRC after attending. The conference registration fee is \$450. Wood suggested using left over seabird conference funds for this purpose.

ACTIONS/DECISIONS/FOLLOW-UP

- **ACTION: MRC to cover the Citizen Science Association conference registration fee of up to \$450 for Bennet to attend. Halloran moved. Adams seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**
- **Budd** to submit greensheet for Bennett's conference registration fee approval.
- **Budd** to update MRC contact list to reflect recent changes.

NWSC GRANT REPORTS:

Eelgrass monitoring: Tentative sites have been identified.

Seining: Cancelled for now. The allocated budget will not be used, so it is available for eelgrass monitoring needs.

Kelp Monitoring: No update. Rhodes absent.

Outreach: Moving forward with Outreach Needs Assessment analysis.

OTHER REPORTS:

Smith and Minor Islands Aquatic Reserve: No updates.

Island Local Integrating Organization: No updates.

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Sound Water Stewards: No updates.

WSU Extension: If registered for classes through Everett campus, students can take for-credit classes in Coupeville through the extension using the newly installed video conferencing features. Open House on March 23rd from 4:30-6:30pm.

LEADERSHIP REPORTS

Chair: Schwartz and Adams attended NWSC retreat where useful information about what constitutes a healthy ecosystem and what constitutes a baseline was presented.

Meetings: Reminder that MRC meetings will be transitioning to once per month while Toledo is on leave. The next meeting is April 4th.

Reminder: Maintain awareness of quorum rules. Do not reply all in email if that initiates a group discussion.

County Lead: No report.

County Commissioners: No report.

COMMUNITY COMMENT FORUM AND Q&A FROM THE PUBLIC: Jennifer Riedmayer announced that there are three at large, four-year long, open positions on the Water Resource Advisory Committee.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business and no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 5:21 pm.