

PROCEEDINGS
of the
ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION
ISFMP POLICY BOARD

February 26, 2003

Double Tree Hotel Crystal City
Arlington, Virginia

ATTENDANCE

Board Members

Lew Flagg, Maine DMR
Sen. Dennis Damon, Maine Leg. Rep.
Ritchie White, New Hampshire Gov. Apte.
Paul Diodati, Massachusetts DMF
Bill Alder, Massachusetts Gov. Apte.
Gil Pope, Rhode Island Gov. Apte.
Jerry Carvalho, proxy for Rep. Naughton (RI)
Ernest Beckwish, Connecticut DMR
Fred Frillici, proxy for Sen. Gunther (CT)
Gordon Colvin, New York DEC
Pat Augustine, New York Gov. Apte.
Brian Culhane, proxy for Senator Johnson (NY)

Bruce Freeman, New Jersey DFG&W
Tom Fote, New Jersey Gov. Apte.
Gene Kray, proxy for Fred Rice, PA
Roy Miller, Delaware DFW
Eric Schwaab, Maryland DNR
Jack Travelstead, Virginia MRC
Fentress Munden,, North Carolina, DMF
David Cupka, South Carolina Gov. Apte.
Benjamin Gregg, South Carolina, DNR
Spud Woodward, Georgia DNR
Anne Lange, NMFS
Jaime Geiger, USFWS

ASMFC Staff

Megan Gamble
Bob Beal
Tina Berger
Vince O'Shea
Carrie Selberg

Mike Lewis
Lydia Munger
Brad Spear
Nancy Wallace

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Summary of Motions
February 26, 2003

No motions made

The ISFMP Policy Board of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission convened in the Washington Room of the DoubleTree Hotel Crystal City, Arlington, Virginia, Wednesday, February 26, 2003, and was called to order at 4:25 o'clock p.m. by Executive Director John V. O'Shea.

-- Call to Order --

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JOHN V. O'SHEA: Ladies and gentlemen, I'd like the ISMFP Policy Board to come to order. The normal process is for John Nelson to chair this board. He couldn't be here today and the vice-chair of the commission, Mr. Preston Pate, is also absent, so I'm going to chair the board.

I'd like to welcome two new board members today; Senator Dennis Damon, a new commissioner from the state of Maine. Welcome to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, Senator.

We also have a new commissioner from the state of South Carolina, Mr. Ben Gregg, Jr. I'd also like to welcome you, Commissioner Gregg.

-- Approval of Agenda --

We have in front of you the agenda that was passed out. I have a couple of modifications to the agenda. I understand the report from Item Number 6 will not be taken today, nor will the NEAMAP report, so I'm going to delete those two.

We also had scheduled review and take action on non-compliance. That was in anticipation of possible action by the management board, and it turns out that there will not be any action to come before this board for that. I propose to delete Number 5.

Under other business, I have one speaker that has asked to address the board and we'll take care of that, the National Marine fisheries Service, and I see a hand from Dr. Geiger so we will handle that under other business. So with that understanding, are there any other changes to the agenda? Is the agenda acceptable?

-- Approval of Proceedings --

All right, the next item on our agenda then is to review and take action on the proceedings from our last board meeting, November 21st. You have been provided those minutes and had an opportunity to review them. Do I have a motion to accept the minutes? Mr. Augustine.

MR. AUGUSTINE: So moved, Mr. Chairman.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR O'SHEA: Second from Dr. Geiger. Is there any objection to accepting the minutes? Hearing none, the minutes have been accepted by consensus.

-- Public Comment --

The next item on our agenda is to accept public comment. I'll call for that. Is there anybody in the audience wishing to make public comment to the policy board?

Seeing none, I will go to other business and call on Anne Lange from the National Marine Fisheries Service.

-- Other Business --

MS. ANNE LANGE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would first like to make a comment and then express a concern that I have related to things that have happened over the past day or so.

My comment is that I feel that it's very important for every board within the commission to have the opportunity to have before it all information necessary for each board to make its management decisions, whether that information comes at the last minute or is something that has been reviewed.

It's important because sometimes information, data analyses don't have an opportunity to be peer reviewed ahead of time. My concern is -- and, again, I'm speaking in general terms -- that the commission has an established specific guidance or has established specific guidance related to the review of technical documents and analyses both for the deliberations of its internal

technical committees and for subsequent peer review for those documents that need additional peer review.

I think it's important that this policy board think about that guidance that was very important for the commission as a whole in developing. It provides a greater level of credibility to this commission.

I feel very comfortable that we have a lot of credibility with our constituents, with the stakeholders, with the industry, for most of the actions that all of our --

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR O'SHEA: Anne, excuse me. In the back of the room, would you please give the people that are speaking the courtesy, please. Thank you.

MS. LANGE: Thank you, Vince. I guess my point is that we have guidance established for technical review, and I think it puts us at a disadvantage if information that is available for technical review is not reviewed by the technical committee or the opportunity, if it's available, isn't used.

I think that rather than a board making a decision based on information presented at the last minute, if that information was available to the technical committee and the technical committee had reviewed it, that's the information that should be used.

If the board at the last minute or into the late hours of the evening needs to make a decision, I think it would be better to have the assessments or the analyses reviewed by the technical committee and come back at a later time before a decision is made.

I'm having a difficult time getting my point out, but I think people understand what I mean; that it's important. We have a process in place that is very important to the credibility of this commission. I think that it's important that each board take advantage of that process rather than working around it.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR O'SHEA: Thank

you, Anne. Dr. Geiger.

DR. JAIME GEIGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm passing around now a notice announcing a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Region V Stakeholder Outreach Meeting. This meeting is scheduled at the Northeast Fish and Wildlife Conference in Newport, Rhode Island. It's scheduled to happen on April 16th. Many of you if not all of you will receive letters to participate in this Region V outreach effort.

Our sister fish and wildlife service, Region IV, will also be scheduling outreach efforts basically to make you aware of the new Fishery Strategic Vision for the future and to solicit your comments and your opinions on what the priorities of the Fish and Wildlife Service should be as we get into the next five budget cycles.

The reason I want to bring it to the attention of this board is many of you know that the Fish and Wildlife Service is a broad-based natural resource agency. And, rightly or wrongly, very few of us have the opportunity to participate in inter-jurisdictional coastal marine fisheries.

Indeed, I would go even so far as to say that inter-jurisdictional marine fisheries and fisheries management support is not the highest priority of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. And to that effect, this is why I desperately desire to have your comment.

Your opinions are very important for us in Region V and also in Region IV, to clearly state to our new director that marine fisheries conservation and inter-jurisdictional fisheries management is an important role and responsibility, and partnerships are an important role and responsibility for the Fish and Wildlife Service to work with our member states.

To this effect, I am inviting all of you to participate. We have a web-based questionnaire that is part of this process. The web addresses are there. We ask you to also, if at all possible, those of you that get personal invites, hopefully if you could attend the Northeast Fish and Wildlife Conference, I would highly recommend you do so and provide your input.

Our director has promised and made a commitment to Congress, to the Department of Interior, and to other stakeholders that he will put the fish back in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. We are going that extra mile to make sure that we do hold our director to his word and that you hold us to our word to rededicate our commitment to fisheries. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR O'SHEA: Thank you, Dr. Geiger. I'm sure there's a lot of folks around the table that will be interested in helping you and Director Williams continue to put the word "fish" back in Fish and Wildlife Service. So, thank you very much for that, and thank you for the courtesy of giving us notice on the upcoming meeting.

Just so I keep myself square with Joe, I neglected to mention at the beginning of this meeting, looking around the room, I noticed there is a quorum present and that staff will be

taking attendance. We will do that in lieu of the roll call.

The other issue was Bill Cole had offered to give a preliminary update on the most recent tagging cruise, but that is preliminary data and I know that many of you are concerned about the weather and hoping that we can wrap this up this afternoon.

Bill has been gracious enough to agree to give us that report the next time we meet in June and maybe have a little bit more finalized numbers as well. I want to thank you very much, Bill, for offering us that information at this time.

Having said that, is there any other business to come before this board? Seeing none, motion to adjourn. Mr. Augustine; seconded by Mr. Adler. This meeting is adjourned.

(Whereupon, the meeting adjourned at 4:35 o'clock p.m., February 26, 2003.)

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