

DRAFT

**MINUTES
MEETING
CT SEAFOOD COUNCIL
JANUARY 7, 2009 – 1:30 P.M.
BUREAU OF AQUACULTURE, MILFORD**

Meeting was called to order at 1:45 p.m. by Co-Chair Larry Williams.

Present: D.J. King; Linda Piotrowicz; Tessa Getchis; Nancy Balcom; Bill Clayton; Larry Williams; David Carey; Don Bell; Mike Theiler and Barbara Gordon.

Minutes accepted by motion and second as amended.

CO-CHAIR'S REPORT – MIKE THEILER

Lobster prices still extremely poor. Supply of product in Maine is shrinking. Lobsters at \$3.50 - \$4.00 per lb. Prices may pick up, but not a certainty. In spring, prices could go higher; Restaurants are hurting; off season work is gone for fishermen.

CO-CHAIR'S REPORT – LARRY WILLIAMS

Larry dined at Max's Oyster Bar in West Hartford; spoke to Bob Cook and Scott Miller, chef. Determined that some of our local producers could in fact handle distribution to the Max Group of restaurants.

Bill Clayton said it is a good idea to pick up a couple of customers on a steady basis. Need to be called regularly for orders.

Mike Theiler commented that things have changed. There are fewer raw bars; more sushi bars now.

There is a big range in prices. No protection in place. Increases do not reflect efforts such as sanitation and other regulations.

Larry Williams is building a third boat; other two are busy meeting market demands. Discussion followed re: buying fuel in advance.

BUREAU DIRECTOR'S REPORT – DAVID CAREY

Count by Bureau scientist, Inka Sunila showed 45 sites for spat on oyster shells. Highest number in 2008 since 1997. DJ. King reported an incredible number of oysters in pots. Bill Clayton concurred. De-chloronization may have helped.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT – BARBARA GORDON

Discussion of Seafood Retailer's List by Nancy Balcom. Service should be provided first; then membership in Seafood Council should be sought. Questions as to whether or not retailers sell CT products will be listed on website. David Carey will draft correspondence for Nancy; Jaimee Smith of the Dept. of Ag might be able to put this on website.

Ag Day will be held at the Capitol on Wednesday, March 18 at 9:00 p.m. Seafood Council will participate with its popular New England Clam Chowder.
Discussion of Seafood Buyers Mission by Linda Piotrowicz.

E-mail from Rep. Joe Courtney re: Congressional meeting with National Marine Fisheries Service to discuss improved management of multi-species fisheries; by- catch reduction; evaluating of closed areas; amendment 16 interim measures; and implementation of Magnuson-Stevens Act. Rep. Courtney's office will keep Executive Director apprised of any progress.

Also, discussion of "Chowderfest" to be held in Westport. Executive Director will call contact person and report back.

ED also spoke about lobster V-notch program. Very successful so far, but more funding needed. ED will pursue.

OLD BUSINESS

Larry Williams reported on event, organized by Kiki Kennedy, held in Branford on December 18 celebrating the court ruling which ended Islander East's attempt to put a pipeline in Branford. Executive Director acknowledged work of Dave Carey, Larry Williams and the late John Volk whose testimony re: potential damage to shellfish beds, was very instrumental in the rejection of Islander East. Seafood Council was credited as well by the opponents of the pipeline.

Larry Williams said issue was about the entire Long Island Sound and the coastline, and Dave Carey described defeat of pipeline as a win for commercial fishermen.

Bill Clayton commented that science is calling for more research and regulation.

There is a need for cross-notification from departments to fisheries especially with regard to spawning. Dave Carey will address this issue. Nancy Balcom will have person from Mitchell College contact Bill.

Re: Joint Venture Grants: Linda Piotrowicz said applications need to be submitted; Larry Williams will apply, Nancy will apply for funding for plastic bags with CT Grown and CT Seafood Council logo.

Grants range up to \$2,000. Closing date to apply is January 31..

NEW BUSINESS

Farm to Chef event is Wednesday, January 21. There will be a moderated discussion by producers and users on various topics and questions, including plans for summer event.

Linda also announced that D.J. King will be appearing on WICC with Tim Quinn this month.

Dave Carey reported that CT Fund for the Environment will be working with the Obama Team on the stimulus program. Sewage problems need correcting. Part of the Stimulus program through Bridgeport, New Haven and Hartford to include water quality projects – This would provide jobs. Project has been on the books since 1975.

Stan Sorkin is the new Executive Director of the CT Food Association replacing the late Grace Nome.

Tessa Getchiss is working on an insurance program for oystermen. Feds promising to have a non-insured disaster assistance program for USDA'S farm service industry by January 18. Tessa is writing standards for the Feds.

Sixty-two people are due to attend the 5th annual shellfish Commission gathering on January 10, 2009.

Dave Carey praised Tessa for all of her work on this meeting.

No further business. Meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Gordon,
Executive Director