



Island County Marine Resources Committee

<http://www.islandcountymrc.org>

MINUTES

October 1, 2003, 4:02 – 5:20 pm

Heller Road Firehall
Oak Harbor

Present: Chair Tom Campbell, Hi Bronson, Sayed El-Sayed, Mike Gallion, Phyllis Kind, Roger Sherman, Exec. Director Gary Wood, Admin. Ass't. Dan Pedersen.

Absent: Martin Behr, Don Meehan, Rolf Seitle, Jeff Tate, Benye Weber.

Visitors: Kim Bredensteiner, Island County Public Works; Frank Roberts, Lagoon Point.

Call to order: 4:02 pm, Campbell called the meeting to order.

Quorum: Declared.

Agenda: Adopted with one addition. Frank Roberts requests a few moments to address the group.

Minutes of 9-17-2003: Adopted. Motion by Toft. Second by Kind. No objections.

Discussion – Stewardship Areas:

Campbell introduced a written proposal that, if adopted by the MRC, would ask the county commissioners to establish two marine stewardship areas for educational purposes. At the Sept. 17 MRC meeting several members had asked to see the proposal in writing before voting on whether to support it. The written proposal was drafted by Pedersen and jointly edited and shaped by a subcommittee of Toft, Sherman, Weber, Kind, Campbell and Pedersen that met Sept. 25. It was e-mailed to the full membership two days ago, on Sept. 29.

Campbell asked whether members had any further comments, having now reviewed the written proposal. El-Sayed recommended several edits, all but one of which were accepted. There was lively discussion about his recommendation to replace the term "inside and outside waters" when referring informally to the two separate areas described in the proposal. He recommended changing this reference to "inner and outer waters" or "eastern and western waters." Several members spoke in defense of "inside and outside," saying this characterization is familiar and understandable to boaters and local people who fish in these waters. Bronson said "eastern and western" would confuse Camano Island people, since Saratoga Passage is west of Camano and Port Susan is east, but both of these would be included within the proposed Saratoga Passage Marine Stewardship Area. In the end, the majority felt "inside and outside" was the clearest way to draw the necessary distinctions.

El Said asked whether a definition should be added to the proposal for the term "stewardship." Gallion said everyone has a different idea of what it means. Wood said he favored leaving it open to some individual interpretation. To define every term and parse all the words would have the effect of making the proposal sound like a law, which is the opposite of what's intended. He said the definition of stewardship may be gleaned from reading the proposal. **ACTION: Motion by Kind, second by Toft, to adopt the proposal as modified.** Discussion: Gallion said he had discussed the proposal with several sport fishers whose reaction ranged from "against" to "really against." Toft commented that a key idea behind this proposal is that it will help afford the county an element of protection against outsiders coming in and imposing regulations. Wood said one way to guarantee the imposition of regulations from the outside would be to take the position: "We will do nothing." This proposal is informational and educational -- an alternative to prohibiting something. **Motion carried. YES: El-Sayed, Sherman, Kind, Bronson, Toft, Campbell. NO: Gallion.**

Campbell explained that the complete proposal package will include two other pieces, a draft outreach plan and a proposed resolution for the county commissioners to issue. A copy of the draft outreach plan was attached to the e-mail the membership received on Sept. 29. Copies of the proposed resolution for

the commissioners, which was drafted by Toft, were distributed to the members at the meeting. The outreach plan will be given to the commissioners along with the proposal as backup to illustrate what the MRC intends to do if the stewardship areas are established. Copies of these pieces were distributed to the group and Campbell encouraged anyone having further recommendations to send them to Pedersen. Toft explained that these materials would be presented to the commissioners at one of their Wednesday staff meetings and that when this takes place, he recommends members of the MRC attend so the commissioners may see who they are and know of their interest.

Executive Director's Report

NWSC meeting. Campbell delivered the first part of the report, having attended last Friday's Northwest Straits Commission meeting at the Lummi Nation on behalf of Wood, who was out of town. Campbell said the major presentation at the meeting dealt with the sudden and mysterious disappearance of eelgrass from two bays in San Juan County. Wood commented there is some indication eelgrass beds may "wax and wane" over time, perhaps partly in response to inbreeding.

Island County eelgrass survey. Wood reported that the Island County eelgrass survey was completed during the last week of September.

Navy interest in derelict gear. Wood said he had received an invitation from the White House and Navy to submit an application for funding for derelict gear removal around Navy ports and facilities.

DNR grants. Wood said the Department of Natural Resources has established a fund offering \$10,000 grants to each MRC to pursue certain nearshore projects.

Port Townsend NWSC conference prep. Wood said our MRC will be presenting the Friday evening "closing act" at the NWSC conference later this month. Our presentation will focus 75 percent on shore stewards and 25 percent on eelgrass mapping. He'd like to devote some time at the Oct. 15 meeting to group preparation. A large delegation from our MRC is attending.

PIE grant for signage. We will submit a PIE grant application by the Oct. 13 deadline requesting funds for interpretive signage, probably tying in with the proposed marine stewardship areas and showcasing the information we've gathered about the nearshore.

MEHP grant. We are not submitting an MEHP grant application, Wood said. It was too amorphous.

Boat ramp removal at Cama Beach. The contractor has submitted a proposal for removal of the old concrete boat ramp at Cama Beach. Wood says the contractor believes he can remove it in large pieces basically intact, thanks to the extensive rebar. The ramp would be broken up and used terracing in the parking lot.

Whidbey News-Times articles. Wood shared copies of two articles that appeared in today's Island Living section of the Whidbey News-Times, dominating the section-front. One large article featured Clyde Johnson's work conducting the shoreline hardening survey of Whidbey Island. The other reported on presentation of the Coastal America Award to Wood for his work on the derelict gear removal project.

DNR aquatic reserves. Campbell commented that Department of Natural Resources commissioner Sutherland has proposed four new aquatic reserves in Puget Sound, none of which would be located in Island County.

Public input.

Frank Roberts addressed the group, saying, "I have a long history of being mistaken – let's put it that way." He said he regretted that his recent letter to Campbell inquiring about the availability of reports had been interpreted as accusing Meehan of being untruthful. He said in the future, he would restrict his inquiries to the letter of the public record and not ask for anything one-on-one.

Adjournment: 5:20 p.m. There being no further business, Campbell declared the meeting adjourned.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, October 15, Trinity Lutheran Church, Freeland.