

ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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Minutes

Prepared by Anna Toledo

October 18, 2016

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

PRESENT: Linda Rhodes, presiding, Ed Adams, Barbara Bennett, Lois Farrington, Florian Graner (non-voting technical advisor), Ed Halloran, Ruth Richards, Kestutis Tautvydas, David Thomson (WebEx), Anna Toledo MRC Coordinator (staff) **ABSENT:** Lori Clark, Richard Hannold, Tim Lawrence, Elsa Schwartz, Anthony Turpin, Stan Walsh, Frances Wood, Todd Zackey

VISITORS: Leal Dickson (former MRC member)

CALL TO ORDER: Rhodes called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm. **PRESIDING OFFICER:** Halloran moved to have Rhodes preside over the meeting, in the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair. Richards seconded. The motion passed unanimously. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Introductions were done. **QUORUM:** A quorum was declared. **AGENDA:** Rhodes requested an amendment to the agenda to add a recognition of former member Leal Dickson after the approval of minutes. Farrington moved to approve the amended agenda. Bennett seconded. The agenda as amended was approved. **MINUTES:** Adams moved to approve the minutes of the Island County MRC meeting held on October 4, 2016. Richards seconded. The minutes were approved.

RECOGNITION OF LEAL DICKSON: Rhodes thanked Dickson for his service on the MRC from 2009 to 2016. In addition to his regular scientific input on the Committee, Dickson was instrumental in initiating the bull kelp monitoring project in Island County. Rhodes presented Dickson with a certificate and card from the MRC.

CORRESPONDENCE: No correspondence.

BUSINESS ITEMS

Outreach Update (Bennett): The MRC's purpose, as defined in its bylaws, includes outreach both to elected officials and local leaders, as well as to the general community. Bennett outlined a plan to hold one-on-one discussions with leaders in Island County government to gauge how the MRC can help them stay informed on marine resource issues, and whether there are areas where the MRC can support their work.

Suggestions included:

- Speaking with all Commissioners, including candidates for Commissioner, time allowing
- The MRC can review agenda topics in advance of Commissioner meetings to be aware of upcoming topics of relevance to the MRC
- The MRC should stay informed on the Critical Area Ordinance updates

ACTIONS/DECISIONS/FOLLOW-UP

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- **Bennett, Graner, and Toledo** will develop questions to ask local leaders. **All MRC members** are invited to provide their suggestions to Bennett.

MRC Opportunity Fund (Toledo): Toledo presented the proposed MRC Opportunity Fund application, which included 2 proposals:

1. **Outreach:** The development of a video describing the MRC and the importance of its work, the development of on-the-beach materials (e.g. sandwich boards) for use during monitoring events, identifying gear for MRC members, and an outreach intern to help with the development and dissemination of outreach materials. Budget: \$7,000
2. **Pigeon Guillemot Coordinator:** In collaboration with Clallam County MRC, a coordinator to work on data management and outreach for the pigeon guillemot project. Budget: \$3,000.

Suggestions for adjustments to the application included:

- For outreach:
 - o Emphasize how this proposal complements the needs assessment in the MRC annual grant.
 - o The success of the project should be in the development of the materials.
- For pigeon guillemot:
 - o Explain how this coordinator is different from the summer research intern.
 - o Obtain letters from Clallam County MRC and Whidbey Audubon indicating their level of commitment. Provide a letter to them with our commitment.

ACTIONS/DECISIONS/FOLLOW-UP

- **ACTION: Adams moved to approve sending the MRC Opportunity Fund application, with minor modifications as noted during the meeting, to the Northwest Straits Foundation. Tautvydas seconded.** The motion passed unanimously.

2017 Jan Holmes Island County Coastal Volunteer of the Year Award (Toledo): Halloran is working with Lawrence and Derek Pritchard (Sound Water Stewards) to develop and review criteria for the award. The MRC recommended getting an announcement out as soon as possible to allow for as many nominations as possible.

Coordinator's Update (Toledo): Toledo will be driving a County van from Port Townsend back to Whidbey at the end of the MRC conference on Saturday, as the Coupeville-Port Townsend ferry will be closed. Toledo circulated a sign-up sheet for those interested in traveling in the van. Toledo advised anyone driving to Port Townsend on Friday to make ferry reservations, and reminded all that there is no MRC meeting on November 1st in light of the conference that weekend.

The 2016-2017 MRC grant is on the Commissioners' work session for approval on Wednesday, October 19. If approved, the effective date of the agreement will be October 1.

Election of officers will be held during the first January meeting. The Executive Committee had discussed serving as the Nominating Committee to present candidates for Chair and Vice-Chair.

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ACTIONS/DECISIONS/FOLLOW-UP

- **ACTION: Halloran moved to have the Executive Committee serve as the Nominating Committee. Tautvydas seconded.** The motion passed unanimously.
- **MRC members** are encouraged to present themselves or another member to the Nominating Committee as candidate to serve as Chair or Vice-Chair.

Forage Fish Update: Surf smelt eggs were found at Cornet Bay in a sample from September! The eggs were found in the natural beach sample site adjacent to the restoration work completed in 2012. Richards and Farrington will sample again on Thursday to check for eggs.

NWSC GRANT REPORTS:

Eelgrass Monitoring (Tautvydas): As a clarification from the previous update, Albert Foster is not leaving Whidbey Island or the eelgrass study team. He bought some property near Port Angeles, but plans to continue volunteering on the team. This year's videography and multi-beam sonar data are being analyzed. They will evaluate how the sonar data compares with that from the traditional survey methods, and what information can be gathered from the data. Rhodes noted that eelgrass wasting disease has been documented in the Salish Sea.

Seining (Tautvydas): Toledo is organizing a call with Tautvydas, Jim Somers, Dawn Pucci, Lucas Hart, and the Northwest Straits Commission Science Advisory Committee to discuss how best to complete a thorough data analysis of the Cornet Bay seining data.

Bull Kelp Monitoring (Rhodes): Field work is completed for 2016, and the annual report was submitted for the MRC's FY16 grant cycle. A copy of the report can be obtained at this link: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/0nazcd5yvk6a5sa/MRC%20bull%20kelp%20monitoring%20report%2020160924.docx?dl=0>. The report has also been shared with Helen Berry with WA DNR, who is interested in how to use citizen science for bull kelp surveys.

A workshop for MRC participants will be sponsored by the Northwest Straits. The workshop has been postponed due to weather concerns on the original date; an alternative date will be selected.

OTHER REPORTS:

Smith and Minor Islands Aquatic Reserve – SMIAR (Rhodes): The informational kiosk at Libbey Beach Park was installed on September 27th. Whidbey Watershed Stewards (Rick Baker) is producing banners and posters on sustainable kelp and macroalgae harvest to post on the reader board. Graner noted that he has images which could be included on posters about kelp.

A group session on conducting the SMIAR bird disturbance survey will be held on Saturday, October 29th at West Beach County Park (2395 West Beach Road, Oak Harbor) & led by Steve Ellis. Look for the folks with binoculars & clipboards!

Salmon TAG (Thomson): The Salmon TAG is in the process of reorganizing into a more technically oriented citizen's committee. A draft letter outlining the reorganization and proposed bylaws have been developed.

Island Local Integrating Organization (Bennett): No update.

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Sound Water Stewards (Farrington): A correction to the previously distributed Project Updates: The SWS meeting is for internal project leads only. SWS will plan on holding a separate meeting for project leads from external organizations at some point in the future. They will also be sending satisfaction surveys to project leads from external organizations.

Project opportunities are presented during SWS training sessions, usually in March. This is a good opportunity to find new volunteers for projects.

Emily Grayson with Washington Sea Grant will be giving a presentation on green crab to SWS at their January 24th meeting.

LEADERSHIP REPORTS

Chair: No report.

County Lead: No report.

County Commissioners: No report.

COMMUNITY COMMENT FORUM AND Q&A FROM THE PUBLIC: No comment.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business and no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 5:22 pm.