

Maine Commercial
Fishing Safety Council

Janine Drouin, Chair

Parker Poole, Vice Chair

Ann Backus, Secretary

Members:

Kris Boehmer

John Drouin

Curtis Haycock

Marc McCole

John McMillan

Mark Murry, DMR staff

Jeff Nichols, DMR staff

Commercial Fishing Safety Council

Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting, June 14, 2023

Held virtually.

Present: Ann Backus, Janine Drouin, John Drouin, Curtis Haycock.
DMR staff: Mark Murry, Jeff Nichols

Note: A quorum was not present.

Public: Michael Ames, Rob Odlin, Brian Smith (USCG)

Invited Guest Speakers: None

Absent: Marc McCole, John McMillan, Kris Boehmer, Parker Poole

I. Welcome – Janine Drouin, CFSC Chairman

Janine welcomed the CFSC members.

II. Presentation of Minutes of March 15, 2023

There was no quorum of CFSC members present. The minutes were not voted on.

III. Update on harvester/diver position on the Council

Marc Murry reported that Zac Gower is interested and will be vetted by Commissioner Keliher. It was decided that Marc McCole would be

excused from the Council for not meeting the attendance requirements, and that Janine would write a letter to him explaining the decision. Rob Odlin expressed an interest in returning to the CFSC. He is president of the Board, Portland Fish Exchange, and has 30 years fishing experience.

IV. Update on memo to the Commissioner re 1) possible financial support for damage control kits, and 2) consideration of flexible radar reflective markings for aquaculture sites.

Ann Backus reported that Pat Shepard (REDDE) has not returned calls about the cost of providing damage control kits. Kris Boehmer is undertaking this project to provide damage control kits (to survey raffle winners and for demonstration at the Fishermen's Forum). Curtis Haycock is concerned about the aquaculture sites and the fact that the pogie gillnets in channels and near shore are difficult to see. Rob Odlin offered that the aquaculture community would likely be interested in the flexible radar markings, but that it would probably take a regulation to bring that forward.

V. Update and discussion of the National Commercial Fishing Safety Advisory Committee (NCFSAC) meeting – Kris Boehmer

This item was tabled as Kris Boehmer was not present.

VI. Discussion of wind turbine concerns (as a follow-up to the presentation by Larry Wise at the March 15th quarterly meeting)

There were no follow-up questions or actions at this time.

VII. Discussion of Report to Commissioner Keliher due October 1.

Janine summarized that our efforts for social media presence and a CFSC website were on the back burner as is discussion of the whale take reduction regulations (pending outcome of suit in DC court brought by Maine Fishermen's Association).

Janine lead a discussion on training for commercial fishermen based on the results of our Near-Miss Survey where only 28% of the 182 respondents reported having had US Coast Guard Training and 21% had had CPR/First Aid Training. Key points of the discussion were

- Changes could be coming re drill conductor regulations for state registered vessels.
- The sea urchin industry will probably not push back on training requirements.
- Fisheries that drag and use cables and winches (scallop and pogie fisheries) could benefit from training, especially the crews.
- There are different requirements for vessels depending on if federally regulated or state registered.
- Retraining and training for new entries/renewal could be good for urchin, scallop, pogie and elver fisheries. 1) law change would be required; 2) grandfather current license holders- keep recommendations basic; 3) differentiate between those who use boats and those who hand-harvest.
- Use an online safety class?
- Focus on the boat not hand harvest. Training needs further discussion, can only regulate state fisheries; need to have a cogent rationale re training requirements.
- Could the lobster apprentice program be a model for the other fisheries?
- Steve Ingraham is involved in the development of new safety regulations for recreational boaters.
- The scallop council has discussed but not embraced the apprentice program for that fishery.
- Discuss training issues at the July meeting.

Regarding reflective markings for aquaculture beds and gillnets: Curtis mentioned that in addition to inadequate marking of aquaculture beds and deployed gillnets (e.g., only small lobster buoys are used to mark gillnets), pogie fishermen are overloading their boats with fish barrels and gillnets.

Summary: Commissioner's Report could include: Near Miss survey, 2023 Fishermen's Forum, recommendations regarding reflective markings, damage control kit demos and funding to support that program, training, and the discussion of the USCG involvement in siting offshore wind.

VIII. New Business

A. MaineHealth Research Institute and Tufts Medical School: Ann Backus reported that these entities have reached out to her for a program that will help introduce medical students in the Tufts Maine Medical School program to the hazards of fishing. This would be scheduled in April 2024

B. Ideas for Council-sponsored activities for the Fall: Tabled for time.

C. Other

IX. Next meetings: The July and August informal meetings were scheduled for July 12 and August 16 from 7 pm-8 pm with the required quarterly meeting scheduled for September 13, 6 pm-8 pm via TEAMS. (NOTE: The August meeting was cancelled to give members a break.)

X. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Backus, Secretary
September 12, 2023