

Final
VIRGINIA MARINE PRODUCTS BOARD (VMPB)
ONLINE MEETING THROUGH WEBEX
6/16/20



Call to Order: Mike Oesterling called the meeting to order at 1:06 PM. 8 board members were present which represents a quorum. The meeting is being held online through WebEx.

The Virginia Marine Products Board, established within the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services pursuant to Va. Code § 3.2-1200 et seq., is holding an electronic meeting via WebEx on Tuesday, June 16, 2020 at 1 pm. This meeting is being held during the Governor's declared state of emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic making it unsafe for the public body to assemble in a single location.

INTRODUCTIONS:

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ann Gallivan
Kim Huskey
Mike Oesterling
Mike Schwarz
J.C. Hudgins
Daniel Knott
Brian Terry

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Wayne France
Rick Barlow
Hannah Kellum
John Anthony Hall

STAFF PRESENT:

Dylan Mills, VMPB
Mike Hutt, VMPB

GUESTS PRESENT:

Melissa Ball- VDACS
Memo Maquivar-VDACS

Approval of Last Meeting's Minutes

Mike S. moved to approve the minutes from March 3, 2020 and Ann Gallivan seconded, the motion passed unanimously.

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Financial Report

We had a carryover balance of \$665,875.45 for FY 2018-2019 and a balance of \$623,144.75 as of April 20, 2020.

Review and Approval of the FY 20-21 Budget

Economic Impact Study

Mike Hutt and Dylan Mills have been working with Virginia Tech AREC and have received a proposal for the economic impact study that was sent out to the board for review. Mike O. would like to clarify that this study will not include any for hire or charter fisheries; he would also like us to consider increasing the travel funds in the proposal. After discussion on this the board decided that an addendum can be made at a later date if it is felt that is needed.

Oyster Website Redesign

The current Oyster website is about 10 years old and after discussions with Stratum Mike and Dylan believe it is time for a redesign of the site, because of this they have asked Stratum to put together a proposal and this was sent out to the board members for review. The overall consensus from the board is that the redesign is very reasonably priced and feel Mike and Dylan should move forward with the redesign.

Digital Advertising (Seafood Source)

Mike Hutt was approached by SeafoodSource about a digital advertising opportunity and feels that this would be a great opportunity for the board to try out. After discussion the board concluded that would not want to commit to 4 months yet however they would like to try one month and review the metrics to see if this is a good fit for us. They also stated that if it is decided to move forward with 4 months we should not do consecutive months.

Seafood Expo Asia 2020

Due to the coronavirus this show was cancelled for it's original date for 2020, however it will be moving from Hong Kong to Singapore and they are looking to have the show in November of this year.

Canadian Seafood Show 2020

Due to Coronavirus the board will not be exhibiting at this show this year so it will be removed from the budget.

VA Agribusiness Legislative Reception

This is an event that the board does every year and it is very beneficial to give us a chance to get in front of elected officials and have some one on one conversations with them about the industry. Each year Deborah Pratt and Clementine Macon work the booth with us shucking Oysters for \$500.00.

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VA Waterman's Legislative Luncheon

The board has worked with the waterman to put on this event for almost 10 years now and it is another event that the delegates and senators look forward to and a great way to keep Virginia Seafood in front of our elected officials. We served 500 lunches last year. We will put together a menu at our next board meeting and then put that menu out on bid with different companies. Previously the limit was \$5,000.00 through VDACS however that has been increased to \$10,000.00, due to this change the board decided it would be best to increase the budget line item from \$6,000.00 to \$7,000.00.

Seafood Expo North America 2021

Due to the Coronavirus this show was cancelled last March, since the board had already paid for booth space in 2020 our booth fee will be rolled over to 2021. After discussion the board decided to increase the travel budget for this show up from \$4,000.00 to \$5,000.00 and the contractual budget from \$3,000.00 to \$4,000.00.

Seafood Expo Global 2021

This is a SUSTA event being held in Barcelona that Mike Hutt is a co-activity manager for. As of now SUSTA plans to have a pavilion there and the board has Virginia companies interested in exhibiting.

National Restaurant Association Show 2021

Dylan walked this show last year to gauge if it would be a good fit for us. He felt that the amount of attendees and the quality of attendees would make this a worthwhile show. If we exhibit at the show we will try to get into the USA pavilion.

Misc. in-state events

This line item is for various events throughout the year not listed above that may arise (ie. VA Aquaculture Conference, and other single day marketing events).

Additional Budget Comments

Ann Gallivan noticed that the cost for the website redesign was not included in the Website line item so that \$4,500.00 cost was added.

Ann Gallivan moved to approve the FY 20-21 budget with the above listed changes and Kim Huskey seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Impact of COVID-19 on Virginia Seafood Industry

Mike Hutt began this discussion saying that he has heard aquaculture Oyster companies report that sales are off anywhere from 60-100%. A lot of these companies have developed online store and moved into direct sales as well as diversified their product lines which has helped to generate some revenue. Similarly the Scallop industry is reporting 90-95% drops in sales. The board has tried to do some social media posts to increase awareness of the various retail sale options from companies and Mike would like the board's comments on what else they think we can do to help during this time.

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The board members think Mike and Dylan are doing a good job and would like for us to keep doing what they are doing.

J.C. spoke on the experience from the watermen and says that the crab picking market is almost non-existent and the Waterman's Association in meeting with VMRC to help to delegate relief funds to various watermen.

Mike Schwarz gave an update saying that he will be reaching out to the board through National Sea Grant about a few projects with the aim to support industry online sales and direct marketing.

Public Comments

No public comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 2:50 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mike Hutt
Executive Director

Mike Oesterling
Chair