

INFORMATIONAL MINUTES  
**VIRGINIA MARINE PRODUCTS BOARD (VMPB)**  
**VIRGINIA INSTITUTE OF MARINE SCIENCE (VIMS)**  
**WATERMEN'S HALL, DIRECTOR'S CONFERENCE ROOM**  
**GLOUCESTER POINT., VA**  
**NOVEMBER 10, 2015**

**Call to Order:** Chairman Erskine called the meeting to order at 4:38 PM. Five board members were present which did not represent a quorum. This meeting is informational only.

**INTRODUCTIONS:**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

A.J. ERSKINE  
BILL PURCELL  
HEATHER T. LUSK  
DAN KAUFMAN  
PETE NIXON

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

JOHN D. GRAY  
CAMERON CHALMERS  
KEVIN WADE  
CLARKE MORTON  
KELLY MINOR  
MEADE AMORY

**STAFF PRESENT:**

MIKE HUTT, VMPB  
RICK BARLOW, VMPB

**GUESTS PRESENT:**

DANIEL VOGT– BIG ISLAND OYSTER COMPANY  
KATHY VOGT– BIG ISLAND OYSTER COMPANY

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**Seafood Expo Asia  
Hong Kong  
September 8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

Mike attended the Seafood Expo Asia in Hong Kong. 3 Companies attended. Thirty trade leads were generated. Quality buyers were there. New business was generated by the 3 Companies that were present. Event is usually paid for by SUSTA – VDACS picked up the funds to go. There was great interest in Porgy, Scup, Scallops, Oysters, Clams, Conch and Croaker. There was interest in fresh product there; it's always a hurdle as it the cost of Air-Freight runs the cost up. Some companies have reported new sales since the show.

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**America's Food & Beverage Show**

**Miami, Florida**

**October 26<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

Mike Hutt: We have done this show for the last 5 years. VDACS has a Virginia section there we had a 10 foot space there. There was great interest in oysters as we sampled oysters from 3 different regions. We took a variety of fin fish, shellfish and value added products. We generated 22 trade leads. Interest in Value Added products, Crab Cakes, Clams, Spot, Croaker and Scup. The support from VDACS make the show possible to attend. VDACS has offered the VMPB the space at the show for next year. Mike offered a verbal commitment that the VMPB would go. We developed an important lead with the potential of exporting ray to Chili. Customer stated that the culture in Chili has been eating ray for a long time and that the catch season in Chili and the US offset each other.

**Virginia Oyster Trail**

**November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

Yesterday officially at 3:00 p.m. the Governor of Virginia opened the Virginia Oyster Trail. The 7 regions were represented. They are recruiting all aspect relating to the Oyster Trail; growers, chef organization and anything that Virginia has to offer relating to oysters. A lot of media was present.

**Virginia Seafood Week – General Assembly**

**Richmond, Virginia**

**January 18<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016**

VMPB will setup a display where we will carry educational and promotional materials. The watermen's luncheon will be January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016. The menu will be Blue Catfish filets, clam chowder, cornbread and sole slaw. We are on the first full week of session. Mike Hutt has asked Mike Osterling to come be he is unable to come this year.

**Websites**

Rick has a added a form to the sites so we can always be actively collecting data on people from the industry that want to hear about what is happening in Virginia Seafood. This will give us permission to email these people since the database we currently have is outdated.

**Social Media**

Rick handed out a report that showed the following statistics on social media. Virginia Seafood Facebook 200 likes, Twitter 45 followers, Instagram, 24 followers, and LinkedIn 6 followers.

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**Rhinehart Food Show**  
**Virginia Beach, Virginia**  
**October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

VDACS had 30 foot of booth space. We exhibited an array of fin fish, shellfish and value added products. The owner and buyer of Rhinehart came by and were not aware of the products we had. Mike has a meeting at the first of the year with him where they can add more Virginia products to the line.

**Shucked Oyster Marketing Brochure**

Rick has developed a brochure for Shucked Oysters. Passed around for board to see. This will be more effective once we started collecting more emails from the websites.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Sensible Seafood**  
**Virginia Beach, Virginia**  
**October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2015**

Mike Hutt sits on the advisory board for Sensible Seafood at the Virginia Beach Aquarium. A lot of our industry are members of Sensible Seafood. They have 1 event a year that is well attended. Would like to have a booth at this year's event in 2016. We talked about scallops which is one of the best managed fisheries on the east coast as its on the list as not one of the best choices on their list. They are talking to the other aquariums and that will be changed to best choice. Being on this board help with this mis-information. A lot of restaurants are paying attention to this.

**Virginia Aquaculture Conference**  
**Newport News, Virginia**  
**November 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

We will have a display there and industry signup sheets. We always sign up new aquaculture growers. A lot of good seminars at this event. One seminar of interest is "What will happen to the price of oysters with Gulf Oysters coming on board."

**SUSTA Fall Meeting**  
**Asheville, North Carolina**  
**December 2<sup>nd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

Mike Hutt will be attending. All traveled will be paid for by VDACS and subsidized by SUSTA. We talk about projects we have done this year, our goals and our return on investment. We talk about what projects we are doing for next year and finalize for the following year and what activities may be cancelled.

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**North American Seafood Expo**  
**Boston, Massachusetts**  
**March 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

VDACS has secured and paid for our 20 foot of our booth space. The VMPB is responsible for the funds to get our employees there or help like Deborah Pratt. People enjoy seeing Deborah Pratt there. It's the largest industry event here in the states.

**Assateague Island**

Industry members in Chincoteague contacted Mike about the park service coming in and wanting to close down any commercial harvesting on and around Assateague Island over the next 5 years. Mike got VDACS involved and it went to the Governor's office. Sam Towell with the Governor's Office got involved. They have met with the Park Service and now they are not going to close it down. They will allow the harvesting of shellfish, fin fish and lease bottom but they will close the harvesting of the Horse Shoe Crab and close the beach down. A lot of people will be out of work if the Park Service would close this area down. All of this is verbal. Mike has asked if there will be a contract drawn up but he has not received an answer back on this. AJ stated this is a federal issue and this same issues has happened on the west coast. AJ stated that it's clear the park service has a mandate to close down some of these areas.

**Oyster Tasting – James River Association**  
**November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

The James River Association is holding their annual meeting on Nov. 18<sup>th</sup> 2015 where they are having an oyster roast. They have requested that the VMPB sample oysters. We will have a captive audience. They will have about 200 people present.

**UPDATE: 11/12/2015 – Bill Street the CEO of the James River Association emailed us and stated that the Willow Oaks Country Club will not allow outside food vendor to come in. This event has been cancelled.**

**Rick Barlow**

Mike announced that Rick Barlow has resigned from the VMPB and will be ending either November 30<sup>th</sup> or no later than December 7<sup>th</sup>. Mike is performing a request to fulfill position. Mike expects that the position will not be filled until February – March 2016 with the holiday schedule coming up. Rick will provide information to Mike to help with a smooth transition. AJ asked if we are keeping the same job description. It has been Mike's recommendation to VDACS that we keep the same job description. Mike believes financially that we are a 2 person office. Pete Nixon suggested that we need to look at different funding streams so we can run the office of the VMPB like we need. Pete questioned "Is license fees the only way we can get money and have we considered changing the code to consider other sources". Pete stated we need to make every legislature know that we need a sustainable income stream. Mike will go to Stephanie Agee and see if she can give any direction to where to find this money stream.

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**New Seafood Council Director – Don Davis**

AJ brought up the new hiring of Don Davis. He lives around the DC area. His local travel will be in the Hampton, Newport News, and meetings like this. The seafood council will have to pick up his travel to Boston. Don has experience of building associations and combining associations. Very enthusiastic. He is the former president governmental affairs of the American Society of Interior Design. His father was a commercial fisherman off Catalina Island. He will obtain an email and cell phone in the near future. He will be officially onboard on November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Kim Huskey will broadcast the change and will drive Don around and introduce him to the industry. Don is interested in developing a strategic plan for the VSC – short term and long term.

**Board Appointments**

AJ wanted an update on board appointments. Mike stated that the appointments have been made but do not know if they have been sent out. Mike believes that there are 6 new appointments. Kathy Vogt stated that Bruce Vogt would be interested in becoming a board member of the VMPB. Bruce has a lot of marketing experience.

**INTERESTED PARTY REPORTS**

**Virginia Institute of Marine Science: Not Present**

**Virginia Tech: Dan Kaufman**

Mike Jahncke vibrio study is ongoing but winding down. Karen Hudson and Dan are doing an oyster budgeting exercise at the Virginia Aquaculture Conference. Dan mentioned that the Ornamental Fin Fish Aqua Culture program that is a new project on the Eastern Shore that looks highly successful and has relatively low investment cost oppose to other fin fish aquaculture programs.

**Virginia Marine Resource Commission: Not Present**

**Virginia Seafood Council: Not Present**

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**COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS**

**Virginia Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services**

**VDACS** – Mike stated that he appreciates everything that VDACS does and he will go to VDACS to see about other funding options.

**Chesapeake Ray Update – Mike Hutt**

**Mike Hutt:** Still have people that are interested in Ray. Meade was not able to secure ray this summer when we had an order out of Germany. Mike will this individual at the Brussels show. We did meet a great prospect at the Americas Food & Beverage Show where a attendee from Chili was very interested in Ray. Mike has passed the information onto Meade.

**Aquaculture Oysters Update – Mike Hutt**

**Mike Hutt:** Still promoting oysters. We have more people signing up for the Oyster Aquaculture Directory.

**REPORTS**

**Finance**

FY Carryover 2014-2015 - \$267,890.53 from the 1<sup>st</sup> of July  
Balance as of September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015 \$234,689.87.

**Public Comments**

No Public Comments

**Expenses for travel for Board Meeting**

**AJ Erskine:** Any Expenses for Travel please email to Rick or Mike.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**AJ Erskine:** Meeting Adjourned at 6:00 PM