

Final
VIRGINIA MARINE PRODUCTS BOARD (VMPB)
VIRGINIA INSTITUTE OF MARINE SCIENCE (VIMS) WATERMEN'S HALL, DIRECTOR'S
CONFERENCE ROOM GLOUCESTER POINT., VA
February 13, 2018



Call to Order: Chairman Peter Nixon called the meeting to order at 2:02 PM. 9 board members were present which represents a quorum. The meeting is being held at VIMS in the Director's Conference Room in Waterman's Hall.

INTRODUCTIONS:

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Kim Huskey
Peter D. Nixon
Meade Amory
John Anthony Hall
Wayne France
Brian Terry
Hannah Kellum
Mike Oesterling
Michael Schwarz

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Anne Gallivan
Kevin Wade

STAFF PRESENT:

Mike Hutt, VMPB
Dylan Mills, VMPB

GUESTS PRESENT:

J.C. Hudgins- Watermen's Association

Approval of Last Meeting's Minutes

Kim moved to approve minutes from our meeting on May 16th, 2017, the motion was seconded by Hannah Kellum and was taken to a vote and passed unanimously.

Kim moved to approve the minutes from our meeting on October 3rd, 2017, it was seconded by Brian Terry and taken to the vote. The motion passed unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Sensible Seafood- VA Aquarium

Mike Hutt: This is funded by a grant from VIMS that was applied for and received by J.C.

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Hudgins and Meade Amory. We are currently working with the VA Aquarium on how we want the layout of the card to look and what species we would like to put on this card. This card with strictly contain sustainable Virginia species to help consumers decide what species they should purchase.

China Fisheries & Seafood Expo/G-Fresh Invite
November 1-3, 2017

Mike Hutt: I was invited by G-Fresh to this event in Qingdao, China and offered free space for the VA companies that are already using their online platform which are Wanchese Fish Company, Chesapeake Bay Packing, and Rappahannock Oyster Company. Overall it was a good show, hopefully next year they will sample products at the booth in order to give the booth more appeal.

Virginia Aquaculture Conference
November 17-18, 2017

Mike Hutt: This is an event held every other year at the Towne Center here in Newport News, VA. Dylan and I worked a booth there and educated people about aquaculture Oysters as well as met new companies to add to our Suppliers and Oyster growers' directories.

SUSTA Conference
Mississippi
December 5-8, 2017

Mike Hutt: This conference was used to help us to plan SUSTA events for the coming year including Seafood Expo Global and the Asian Seafood Show. I am an activity manager for the shows, being an activity manager one of my main duties is recruiting companies to come exhibit in the SUSTA pavilion, which I am currently in the process of doing. If anybody is interested in exhibiting please send me an email.

VA Agribusiness Legislative Reception
January 11, 2018

This reception is held at the Richmond Raceway Complex. We served Oysters on the halfshell and had Deborah Pratt come and shuck for us. We served 900 Oysters in about 2 hours. The legislators look forward to this every year and they love meeting and talking with Deborah.

VA Sea Grant/VA Seafood Council Legislative Reception
January 24, 2018

This was held at the Hilton in Richmond, this year attendance was down a bit, but that is most likely due to the fact that there was a caucus meeting that night. A few of our board members were there and even though attendance was a little down there was still a line at the door waiting to get in at 7 so it was still successful.

VA Legislative Luncheon
Richmond, VA
January 31, 2018

This is an event we do every year serving lunch to the legislators. About a week prior we pass out tickets to every office to come. This year we served fried Catfish, a fruit cup,

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pasta salad, and clam chowder. The fried Catfish was prepared by Arnest Seafood and the clam chowder was made and served by Graham and Rollins. This was very successful, we served over 500 lunches and everything went on without a problem. Overall the final cost came out at \$3,950.00 being probably one of the cheapest ones we have ever done.

NEW BUSINESS

VA Oyster Trail Meeting
February 21, 2018

Mike Hutt: I sit on the committee meeting for this. The main thing discussed will probably be recruiting sponsors for the trail to get more funds moving forward. I will know more about this after the meeting.

Seafood Expo North America
Boston, MA
March 11-13, 2018

Mike Hutt: We have secured our booth space for this show and VDACS will be paying for half of our booth space like they have done in the past and this is a huge help to us. We will be serving Oysters on the half shell and pasteurized Blue Crab meat as well as displaying various Virginia species as always. There will be 10 Virginia companies exhibiting this year with 6 of them in the Virginia aisle.

SUSTA Spring Conference
New Orleans
March 20-23, 2018

Mike Hutt: I will not be attending this conference due to it conflicting the the VA Food & Beverage Show.

VA Food & Beverage Expo
Richmond, VA
March 21, 2018

This is a show put on every other year put on by Virginia's Finest. We will be provided with a booth space and sampling Virginia Oysters as usual. This show is for industry only so there will not be anybody from the general public.

Seafood Expo Global
Brussels, Belgium
April 24-26, 2018

Mike Hutt: I am the co-activity manager on this with Paul Bauthrup from Florida. I have spoken with a few Virginia companies but none have committed yet, a big reason for this is that the shellfish ban has not been lifted yet. However, we will still be sampling various Virginia products. SUSTA does have a cost share program for this if any companies are interested.

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Catfish Processing USDA Inspection from FDA

Mike: The processors inspection program has changed from FDA to USDA as of September 1st which means an inspector needs to be on site whenever catfish are processed. If this is outside of normal business hours they will have to pay the overtime fee which makes it prohibitive to process at this time. This has had an impact on Virginia processors who are no longer going to process Catfish and has an impact on the watermen's market for selling Catfish. The major processors left in Virginia, Maryland, and North Carolina have not been able to take the overrun of fish since some the smaller Virginia processors are no longer processing Catfish. This is going to have a major impact on the Virginia businesses and watermen who process and harvest Catfish. By not harvesting these Catfish it will have a negative impact other species such as Blue Crab, White American Shad, and Herring which the federal and state government agencies are imposing regulations to try to restore. The wild catfish industry in the gulf and on the east coast formed the American Wild Catfish Coalition and hired a lobbyist to try and have this legislation taken from USDA back to FDA. The industry feels like this USDA inspection is uncalled for and there has not been any food-borne diseases from the wild Blue Catfish.

Congressional Staff Tour
May 2018

Mike O.: Shellfish growers believe these staff tours are extremely beneficial because they educate the staffers on the industry and if you don't educate the staffers you don't educate the elected officials.

Kim: We have done two H2B tours and they have been very well received and informational. Recently we have been working on an exemption in the Jones Act for aquaculture, so this is definitely the right time to bring the staffers down and educate them on what exactly aquaculture is. We are looking to do a quick 2-day tour of various companies on the Eastern Shore during a recess the week of May 2nd.

Mike O. made motion that the board provide funds to support the congressional staff tour, Meade seconded and the motion passed unanimously after a vote.

Sensible Seafood Festival
VA Aquarium
May 24, 2018

Mike Hutt: They do this every year and they provide us with a booth to hand out informational material. We generally work the Virginia Culinary Institute to promote and sample Virginia Products. Hopefully we can get a dish served with Blue Catfish this year. They sell tickets to the public for this and it generally goes from 6 PM-9 PM.

Seafood Expo Asia
Hong Kong
September 4-6, 2018

Mike Hutt: SUSTA has already secured booth space for this and I will be the co-activity

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manager for it. So far all 5 companies that exhibited in 2017 have verbally committed to exhibiting this year. If we can get a few more companies, the show has offered us more booth space.

Social Media

Dylan: The biggest thing going on right now is our new partnership with Patrick Evans-Hylton who runs the Virginia Eats and Drinks magazine and blog. Last time we spoke with him he had over 2 million subscribers so this is a great way for us to reach a lot of people with no cost associated. We will be working with him to promote various species as they come in season by publishing articles about them as well as various recipes.

Website Update-Stratum

Dylan: Our current website is very dated so we are working with stratum to get it updated. This will give the site a more modern look and be more mobile and user-friendly. We will be switching the website platform to wordpress which will allow for easier maneuverability on editing on my end as well.

Interested Party Reports

VA Institute of Marine Science

No Report

Virginia Tech

Mike S.: We are still working on getting funding for our new building and we have a lot of support from members of this board and for that thank you. From what I have been told this has become a higher priority and has gained more attention, so that is a good sign. We also have a new marketing person working with us part time and we are hoping to get him into a full time position in August of 2019. We have also begun to try and get Dan Kauffman's position replaced. Another big thing we are working on is to start an ornamental shrimp farm on the eastern shore to try and continue to diversify the Virginia industry.

VMRC

Wayne: The Crab survey should be coming out very soon so we are all crossing our fingers on that. Last year the males were down a bit so we are hoping they will come back up this year.

VA Seafood Council

Meade/Hannah: We are currently working to build our membership back up and hopefully reducing our membership fees to assist in that.

Shellfish Growers of VA

Mike O.: Things seem to be going well in the industry overall. The current legislative session has done no harm to the industry which is a good thing.

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Cooperative Programs

VDACS

Mike Hutt: As we spoke about before they are helping us with several projects and we are continuing to get support from them.

Reports

Finance

Mike Hutt: Carryover balance of \$481,543.95 for FY 2016-2017.

Public Comments

No Comments

Expenses for travel to Board Meeting

Pete: If you are interested in getting reimbursed for your travel to this meeting Dylan will email the forms for you to fill out and return to him.

ADJOURNMENT

Meade moved to close it was seconded by Mike S. Meeting was adjourned at 4:03 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mike Hutt
Executive Director

Peter D. Nixon
Chair