

**Marine Advisory Committee  
April 5, 2016  
Milton, Florida**

The Marine Advisory Committee met on above date with the following members present: Rick Harris, Scot Mason, Pascoe Gibson and Heather Barrineau. Also present was the County Administrator, Tony Gomillion and Roger Blaylock, County Engineer. In the Chairman's absence, Rick Harris called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

The minutes of the February 2, 2016 meeting were approved.

**PURSE SEINE FISHING FOR MENHADEN**

Chad Black appeared before the committee representing Cap'n Black's Bait & Seafood. He distributed some information on purse seine fishing and stated he was appearing before this board to ask for support in the way or a resolution. He begins by stating that in June of 2014 it was brought to his attention that a rule was still on the books, Rule 68B-3.028 of the Florida Administrative Rules Code which allowed for purse seine fishing in the nearshore and inshore waters in Santa Rosa and Escambia counties. He said he inquired with local FWC officers questioning the validity of this rule and was told it was okay to fish. He added that they were checked several times by the FWC and never received a citation. He stated that in January of 2015 he again inquired because it was time to begin the process of getting the boats/nets ready and he didn't want to spend the time and money if he was told differently. He said that they were again told we could fish and did for the first time on July 6, 2015. He stated that they fished their boat from that date until now and were checked and even filmed numerous times by the FWC and Coast guard, receiving no citations.

On January 29, 2016 he was contacted by Allen Pierce with FWC in Tallahassee informing him that on April 13 & 14, 2016, in Jupiter, FL, the FWC would be voting on a recommendation to abolish this rule. Mr. Black stated that Escambia County had already unanimously passed a resolution requesting that we be allowed to fish in Escambia waters and he is in hopes that Santa Rosa County will also follow suit.

Ms. Barineau asked what was FWC's reason for wanting to remove this rule and Mr. Black stated that it conflicts with the law that was put on the books in 1995 which said that nets have to be 500 square feet or less in the endshore and nearshore waters. He added that this was a specific rule that applied only to Santa Rosa and Escambia Counties but it was assumed that when the net ban went through that this would be removed. Mr. Black stated that he realized that Santa Rosa and Escambia County did not have the power to dictate to FWC but after meeting with staff from Senator Greg Evers and Representative Doug Broxson's office he knew that he needed to pursue this issue.

Mr. Gibson asked if the staff from Senator Greg Evers and Representative Doug Broxson's office were supportive after speaking with them which Mr. Black stated most definitely. Mr. Gibson stated that he didn't realize that FWC could make the rules themselves and thought that they were an enforcement agency. Mr. Harris then stated that the commission can, especially if it's a rule already in place.

Mr. Black stated that there is specific language on when one can fish, what size net one can use and what size boat. If this is upheld, no boat over 40 feet will be allowed. Mr. Mason asked if there is a limit on how much you can get during the year and Mr. Black stated 3 million lbs. before May 31<sup>st</sup> and that the state kept a count. Mr. Gibson then made a motion to ask the Board of County Commissioners to approve a resolution much like the one Escambia County did, leaving the statute in place and this was approved without objection. Mr. Gomillion stated that this request would be placed on the agenda for the next County Commission meeting.

#### **NRDA OYSTER FISHERY ENHANCEMENT PROJECT UPDATE**

Mr. Harris stated the bid process opened yesterday and will close on April 14, 2016. The work is scheduled to begin in June. There was discussion about the size and grade of the material and Mr. Gibson stated that we needed to stay with the small size material. He added that the large size tears up the boat gear. Mr. Harris stated that he will call Ms. Verlinde for confirmation on the size.

#### **PROJECTS / ISSUES UPDATE**

Boater Registration Fees as of March 31, 2016 is \$242,419.

Mr. Furman reported that the two kayak launches have been completed, one is off of Cross Street in Bagdad which is part of the Bagdad Mill Site. The other kayak launch is on an existing dead end county road/park in Navarre at the end of Blue Tip Drive which was funded with District 4 Rec funds.

Mr. Furman added that a derelict vessel had been pulled up and tied off at the courtesy dock at Oyster Pile Boat Ramp in Bagdad a couple of months ago. The County worked thru FWC and got it declared as a derelict vessel and it has been hauled off and destroyed at the landfill according to their process.

Mr. Blaylock reported that a restoration/renourishment project at Navarre Beach is anticipated to start mid-April. He added that there will be two hopper dredgers operating within four miles of the beach over the course of the next 50-60 days and should start sometime next week. Ms. Barrineau asked when the estimated completion date would be and Mr. Blaylock replied mid-June.

**NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next meeting is scheduled for May 3, 2016 at 5:00 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Committee the meeting was adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

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Chairman