

February 2, 2021 (via ZOOM)

I. Call to Order

- 1909 hrs. by Chairman Harvey Cataldo

II. Roll Call

- Harvey Cataldo, Bryan Couture, Joe Hart, Ray Morrocco, John Jennings, John Thompson, Jeff Berry, Kevin Connors & Jill Sabo
- On advice from Chairman Cataldo, a motion was brought forward by B. Couture and second by R. Morrocco to move agenda item 6R to the top of NHMC's agenda due to the large volume of participants who want to be on record. Approved 7 – 0. Chairman Cataldo then recused himself from this agenda item. Vice Chairman B. Couture to chair 6R.

III. Approval of Consent Agenda (1C & 2C)

- **1C / Minutes** from 01DEC2020
- **2C / Harbormaster Report: see Attachment A.**
- Motion to approve by B. Couture / R. Morrocco. Approved: 7 - 0

IV. Correspondence (3R)

- J. Sabo reported that a memorandum was sent to the Narragansett Town Council explaining that despite all Town of Narragansett's objections, CRMC voted 7 – 1 to approve the boating facility @ 10 Sea Crest Dr / CRMC File #2018-11-092.
- J. Sabo reported that at a recent Town Hall meeting, the Narragansett Town Council is seeking applications for all volunteer commission positions and this includes the NHMC. All members are to contact Town Hall for reappointment applications.

V. New Business

- **4R / Election of Officers – Chairman:** Harvey Cataldo – motion to approve: B. Couture / J. Berry. Passed 7 – 0. **Vice Chairman:** Bryan Couture – motion to approve: H. Cataldo / J. Hart. Passed 7 – 0. **Secretary:** Joe Hart – motion to approve: B. Couture / J. Thompson. Passed 7 – 0.
- **5R / Annual NHMC report to Town Council** – No discussion. Motion to approve: J. Hart / J. Berry. Passed 7 – 0.
- **6R / Aquaculture Preliminary Determination Request (CRMC #2021-01-038):** Discussion and possible action for aquaculture facility just north of the GSO/URI Bay

Campus in the west passage of Narragansett Bay. Comments were solicited and no action was taken by the NHMC. **See Attachment B.**

VI. Old Business

- N/A

Motion to adjourn: B. Couture / J. Jennings. Approved: 7 – 0 @ 2200 hrs. Next Meeting: 02MAR2021.

Joe Hart / NHMC Secretary

Attachment A

2C / Harbormaster verbal report

- All town vessels are in the barn and winterized. Ready for launching on 01APR2021
- H/M reported that the barge that sunk off Pt. Judith Lighthouse was raised and now sits on a self-installed mooring in the Harbor of Refuge. No further information at this time.

Attachment B

6R / Aquaculture Preliminary Determination Request (CRMC #2021-01-038)

- As previously mentioned, Vice Chairman B. Couture assumed Chair for this agenda item only.
- Comments were solicited in the following order: Applicant / CRMC / Narragansett Harbormaster / Harbor Commission Members / RI DEM / Army Corps of Engineers / General Public.
- For the record, an application was brought before the CRMC on 14JAN2021 by A-Team Coastal, LLC for which Azure Dee Cygler is the owner. A. Cygler is a Research Associate at the Coastal Research Center for the RI Sea Grant at URI's GSO. A. Cygler stated that she sought a conflict of interest ruling between her employment and this pending CRMC application.
- **The Narragansett Harbor Management Council took no action at this time.**
- Below are comments of record:
 1. Azure Dee Cygler (Applicant): A. Cygler stated that this CRMC application is a commercial lease for a sugar kelp aquaculture farm just to the north of URI's Bay Campus. She added that this lease would also incorporate research as secondary agenda. The proposed months of operation would be from mid-October through mid-May. All gear and tackle would be approx. 660' to 700' from the shoreline in 25' of water. While most of the gear will be removed in the off months (mid-May to mid-October), some would remain as anchors to mark the farm's exact location.
 2. Benjamin Goetch (CRMC): B. Goetch confirmed that a full application was received from A. Cygler and that tonight's meeting is just a Preliminary Determination (PD) as part of CRMC's application process. B. Goetch also confirmed what A. Cygler had stated aforementionedly. He added that the months of operation can be a variable and the whole application process can take six to nine months and if the lease is granted, it would be for a 15-year term. Lastly, B. Goetch stated that the location for this aquaculture farm is the exact location of a previous application that was denied as it was for year-round operation.
 3. Kevin Connors (Narragansett Harbor Master): H/M Collins provided many comments over the entire 6R conversation and all comments will be notated. Initially H/M Collins stated that he felt that the markers suffice as well as the ground tackle as long as ecological type of an anchoring system will be used. H/M Collins only initial questions would be the use of strobe lights during the summer boating season months?
 4. Bryan Couture (Narragansett Harbor Commission Vice-Chairman): V/C Couture's initial question was A. Cygler's commitment between this being a commercial venture or a research venture to which A. Cygler responded that the application before CRMC is for a commercial lease; research and education would just be a derivative of possessing the commercial lease? V/C Couture questioned CRMC on when markers would be installed for the 30-day observation period and B. Goetch responded that once the application is accepted in full, markers would be placed at the

site. V/C Couture continued to question why this lease would be mid-October thru mid-May when there is one in the Harbor of Refuge that was approved for November 1st thru May 1st and it was done so as the Harbor of Refuge is a high recreation area? V/C Couture continued that a 2017 application brought before CRMC for a year-round site same as this applicant's was strongly object to by the RI Anglers Association and that application what ultimately denied. Lastly, V/C Couture questioned what happens between May and October with regard to research and gear?

5. Joe Hart (Narragansett Harbor Commission Secretary): Sect. Hart, an avid boater who has sailed upon Narragansett Bay for 50 years plus had questions based upon NOAA charting and personal knowledge of that area. Sect. Hart asked for exact lat/lon coordinates and if there was a diagram depicting the location of this proposed site? Sect. Hart was concerned that the immediate area that surrounds this proposed site is marked on NOAA charting as an anchorage area as well as a cable area. Also questioned were the approaches the URI R/V Endeavor may use to its berth depending on wind, tide, currents and weather and it seem that this proposed site could be in an approach or exit lane used by the R/V Endeavor? Also questioned by Sect. Hart is Saunderstown Yacht Club's use of the area for both moorings and youth sailing? Lastly, Sect. Hart questioned the 15-year lease and if it was reviewed periodically? B. Goetch stated that the lease is reviewed annually, and any complaints would be notated.
6. Jeff Berry (Narragansett Harbor Commission Member): Member Berry questioned the exact markings on the corners and the interior lines with reference size and spacing?
7. John Thompson (Narragansett Harbor Commission Member): Member Thompson asked the applicant how exactly they are familiar with the waters of that area? Member Thompson referred to the adverse weather that is sometimes frequent there in the winter month especially the Nor'easters and Southeaster's the waters have a long fetch to the proposed site. Member Thompson lastly referred that a winter storm could bring damaged to tackle being used and perhaps ending the season for this aquaculture site.
8. Jill Sabo (Narragansett Harbor Commission Liaison): Liaison Sabo's only question was that if there was a winter storm and an abundance of kelp comes to shore, who would be responsible? B. Goetch stated that the applicant / lessee would be notified and that they would have 30 days to remove / clean-up.
9. Ana Gerber Williams (RI DEM Marine Fisheries): A. Williams stated the RI DEM has no concerns and is in support.
10. Alicia Wilson (Army Corps of Engineers): A. Wilson stated that NOAA would require information on the types / amounts of vessels that would be used at the site. A. Wilson also added that NOAA may want the number (#) of buoys to be reduced and exact length / width / depth of all lines. Lastly, A. Wilson stated that all scientific equipment would have to be permitted by the

Army Corp of Engineers. A. Cygler's only response was that they hope to use local fisherman / quahoggers for their vessels. As of now, the applicant only possesses a 15' skiff.

11. Thor Johnson (resident of Saunderstown): T. Johnson who stated that he lives near the Saunderstown Yacht Club (SYC) is a swimmer who uses the area between SYC and URI's GSO as his swimming lanes. T. Johnson questioned the type and amount of fish / marine life that may now be attracted to that area once an aquaculture farm is in place? A. Cygler stated that all kelp would be removed at the end of the season and the kelp produced is sugar kelp which is found all around Narragansett Bay. B. Goetch added that all kelp would grown at 7' below the surface.

12. Peter Randall (Resident of Saunderstown): P. Randall stated that he resides directly opposite the proposed aquaculture site and asked the following questions:

- a. Why this particular location?
- b. Why a 15-year permit?
- c. Is it or will be a multi-species use site?
- d. Depth of all gear?
- e. Size & color of all buoys?
- f. What type of scientific equipment?
- g. What is the exact mission?
- h. Is the lease transferable?
- i. Did notification of this Preliminary Determination (PD) meet the required timetable?
- j. Why a longer season?
- k. R/V Endeavor uses these waters in the proposed site as their approach lane.
- l. Fetch from both the NE and SE during winter storms can be disastrous.

B. Goetch stated that Commissions were notified of the PD and nearby residents were not as they are not true abutters. A. Cygler stated that it was her intent to notify all nearby residents.

13. Peter Ruggiero (Attorney for Lynn & Steve Moran): Atty. Ruggiero stated that he represents the Moran as they are residents of Searidge Dr, property that is opposite the proposed site and who have a pending application before CRMC for a boating facility (CRMC #2020-11-067). Atty. Ruggiero asked for a continuance on this hearing for 30 days and to slow down this process as his clients just found out about the hearing less than 24 hrs. prior. B. Goetch commented that his office will accept comments for 1 week and that the entire process could take 6 – 9 months for final decision.

14. Frank Ingari (Resident of Saunderstown): F. Ingari stated that this proposed site and surrounding area is highly recreational with sailing, powerboating, and swimming. F. Ingari added the high number of commercial vessels that pass thru especially on their way to Quonset and was concerned of the set and drift of the equipment into the waterway channels due to weather. F. Ingari also questioned if he lease is transferred, what could change? Lastly, F. Ingari asked that if approved that all gear be removed in the off months. A. Cygler responded by stating that

there will be further review of all navigation needs along with her plans mandates a 5-year review of all operations.

15. Gary Dorfman (Resident of Saunderstown): G. Dorfman asked the NHMC if they were to give a letter of opinion with regard to this application citing objections and/or concurring's? V/C Couture advised G. Dorfman that the NHMC's is just an advisory board to the Narragansett Town Council and that the NMHC will offer no comment at this time. G. Dorfman asked A. Cygler if she filed a conflict-of-interest document as she is affiliated with URI who could be beneficial by approval of this application? Lastly, G. Dorfman asked A. Cygler if she was affiliated with a denial of an aquaculture farm at Napatree Point in Westerly, RI? A. Cygler stated first, she did file a conflict-of-interest document as she know she could wear two hats: one as an aquaculture farmer and one as a member of URI's GSO program. A. Cygler lastly stated that she was not affiliated with the Napatree Point application, yet the person who was is application for that site is now an advisor for this location in Narragansett Bay.
16. Robin Johanson (Resident of Saunderstown): R. Johanson asked about the Educational attachment to this commercial application as well as why is the proposed area so big? R. Johanson asked if anyone has evidence (photo's, notes, video's) of the recreational use adding that this area is heavily used by the SYC and windsurfers who launch at URI's Bay Campus? Lastly, R. Johanson did not approve of how the educational aspect is being tagged to a commercial venture.
17. Rob Calise (Resident of Saunderstown): R. Calise asked about the exact lat/lon as there seemed to be discrepancies in plotting the coordinates? R. Calise questioned why the site could not be closer to Dutch Island? B. Goetch replied by stating that this proposed location is the same as a previous location that was submitted in application and eventually denied.
18. John Soucy (Resident of North Kingstown): J. Soucy stated that he is the Vice-Commodore of the SYC and questioned SYC's mention in the applicant's application? J. Soucy stated that SYC was never contacted by the applicant and referring to SYC as a launching site was never consulted nor approved.
19. Lynne Hale (Resident of Saunderstown): L. Hale asked how questions can directed to CRMC during this application period? B. Goetch an provided email address to her.
20. Patrick Canavan (Resident of Kingston): P. Canavan stated that he is the Commodore of the SYC is also concerned how SYC was referenced in the application without any contact by the applicant nor approval by SYC. P. Canavan stated that the site location as well as the surrounding area is heavily used by SYC and neighboring Saunderstown residents. P. Canavan lastly mentioned that SYC's mooring season runs from April 1st to November 1st.

21. William Yando (sp.?) (Resident of Saunderstown): W. Yando questioned the type of Kelp and is it unique to RI? W. Yando added that he has watched the Endeavor approach her berth many times and this proposed site is directly in the patch of her approach. W. Yando asked if there is a business plan on file and if a bond will be posted with the State of RI? Lastly, W. Yando describe this area as heavily used by recreationalists. B. Goetch replied that a \$20,000 bond would need to be secured and if there were any environmental issues, it would be a violation CRMC's Assent approval. B. Goetch lastly replied that the species of kelp sought is native to RI.
22. Amanda Peterson (Resident of North Kingstown): A. Peterson asked how everyone is to be updated during this application process? B. Goetch stated that everyone should email CRMC.
23. Julia Sharpe (Resident of Saunderstown): J. Sharpe questioned why the site in this application is the exact Polygram as the previous denial? J. Sharpe continue by asking if CRMC would allow modifications and/or expansions?
24. Dawn & Broderick Crawford (Residents of Saunderstown): The Crawford's asked if the months of operation can be altered as well as removing all buoys in the off months? The Crawford's continued by stating that everyone is underestimating recreational use of this area and approving this application will cause recreational use to suffer. The Crawford's continued that the visual aspect of the proposed buoys is a priority and lastly, they questioned why this proposed site has to be in most narrow of a spot between Jamestown/Dutch Island and the mainland?
25. Rob Shields (Resident of Saunderstown): R. Shields questioned the applicant after the describe themselves as "novice" in aquaculture? R. Shields continued to add that this area where the proposed site is to be, is a high-traffic area with regard to boating. R. Shields who described this area as "the tenderloin of Narragansett Bay" questioned the applicant if they utterly understand the fetch of the NE and SE storms and what havoc they can produce?

At 2123 hrs, V/C Couture citing no more visible public comment to be had, closed discussion on CRMC #2021-01-038 upon final comments from the applicant and CRMC. B. Goetch stated there will no further comment from CRMC at this time and any further questions, can be directed to CRMC. Applicant A. Cygler thanked everyone for their consideration, advice and will await any further comment.

End of Attachment B