



ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RECREATIONAL FISHING FUNDING **MINUTES OF APRIL 21, 2015**



Location: Senate Hearing Room, 2nd Floor, Legislative Hall, Dover
Div. of Fish & Wildlife: Phone: 302-739-9914, Fax: 302-739-6157

ADVISORY COUNCIL

Bernie Pankowski, Chairman
David Russell, Vice Chair
Eric Burnley, Sr.
Bill Baker, Sr.
Floyd Morton III
Ronald Horton
Sen. Gerald W. Hocker
Rep. Ronald E. Gray (*Absent*)

DIVISION OF FISH & WILDLIFE

John Clark
Stewart Michels
Larry Horan
David Saveikis, Director

PUBLIC

3 Attendees

Agenda Item 1. Opening remarks

Chairman Pankowski called the meeting to order at 7:07 PM. **Chairman Pankowski** asked all Council members to introduce themselves as Sen. Gerald W. Hocker is a newly-appointed member attending the meeting.

Agenda Item 2. Approval of minutes from April 10, 2014 meeting

A motion passed and Council approved the April 2014 meeting minutes.

Agenda Item 3. Update on current and future project funds

Mr. Clark briefed the Council on the funds the DFW receives from the General Fishing License and from the Federal Aid in Sportfish Restoration Program. The DFW will receive approximately \$4.9 million in 2015 from the two funds (at a 1:3 state:federal match). The General Fishing License funds have been steady and the Federal Aid apportionment will increase in 2015 after dropping for three consecutive years. DFW has budgeted approximately \$3.6 million for recurring expenses, leaving approximately \$1.3 million available this year for new development projects that include building new and upgrading or reconstructing older fisheries access areas. Since recurring projects usually have unspent funds, DFW has accrued approximately \$3.7 million for such development projects in 2015.

Agenda Item 4. Update on current and approved construction projects

Mr. Horan reviewed ongoing and planned construction projects. A review was provided on the plan to rebuild the ramp and install a courtesy dock at Millsboro Pond, which was the only pond where the Council supported the installation of a courtesy dock as it could be done economically as part of the boat ramp replacement. The planned reconstruction and improvement of the Phillips Landing boat ramps at a cost of approximately \$900,000, which has been delayed until later this year due to the discovery of an artifact at the reconstruction site requiring

further archeological survey. The proposed fishing pier at Dobbinsville in the City of New Castle received strong support from the New Castle City Council, but is still in the planning stages. Five fishing access area parking lots were repaved in 2014 and additional parking lots will be repaved in 2015. Lights were installed in 2015 and are in operation at the Seaford Fishing Access Area. The floating docks at the Rosedale Beach boat ramp were damaged by ice during the winter and new replacement docks are scheduled to be installed in June 2015. DNREC is working with DelDOT on the replacement of the Hearns Pond dam, which will include building a new boat ramp on the pond. The Milton Fishing Pier and Fishing Foot Bridge are scheduled for new deck installation this spring. The City of Wilmington has indicated it supports rebuilding the 7th Street boat ramp, which could be funded with oil spill penalty funds.

Agenda Item 5. Potential construction projects and acquisitions

Mr. Horan DFW is planning to construct a one lane boat ramp boat ramp in Little Creek where DNREC plans to use Bond Bill funding to dredge the Little River; boat ramp construction may be relatively expensive due to the unconsolidated soils.

Agenda Item 6. Follow up from previous meeting

Mr. Horan discussed the cost of options to provide public access to Fleetwood Pond in response to the Council's previous request. The option of building a road to the pond with a parking lot and ramp at the pond is estimated to cost about \$800,000. The option of building a parking lot next to the existing road and a path from the lot to the pond suitable for carrying kayaks and other light boats to the pond is estimated to cost about \$300,000. The Council passed a motion asking DFW to continue to explore options to provide access to Fleetwood Pond.

Mr. Clark discussed in response to the Council's previous request developing a fish tagging program for anglers in Delaware similar to the popular Virginia Game Fish Tagging Program that involves up to 200 trained

anglers participating in the program each year to tag specified fish species. Data from the program has been useful for tracking the movements of species such as tautog and the program has increased angler engagement in fisheries management. The estimated cost of running a version of this program in Delaware is \$35,000 per year. The Council approved a motion requesting that DFW present a plan at the November Council meeting for starting a tagging program in 2016.

Agenda Item 7. Public comments

A question was asked about the Leipsic property acquisition that was discussed at the April 2014 meeting. **Mr. Clark** explained that the property was purchased for less than the \$500,000 limit set by the Council at the April 2014 meeting. The property will eventually be used for docking the R/V First State vessel used for fish surveys critical to managing Delaware's tidal fisheries.

The Council discussed the closure of the Division of Parks and Recreation's Cape Henlopen Fishing Pier, recommending that the DFW help Parks identify ways to repair and reopen the pier.

Agenda Item 8. Ending remarks and adjournment

Chairman Pankowski stated the next meeting is tentatively planned for November 2015.

Meeting adjourned at 9:13 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

John Clark
Recording Secretary

