



**City of Gloucester
Fisheries Commission Minutes**

Thursday, December 15, 2011- 7:00PM
Sawyer Free Library
Friends Room
2 Dale Avenue

Members:

David Bergeron	Paul Vitale (absent)
Bruce Tobey	Mark Ring (absent)
Sefatia Romeo Theken	Joseph Orlando
Angela Sanfilippo	BG Brown
Al Cottone	Gus Sanfilippo

Also in attendance: Sheree DeLorenzo, Proprietor of Cruiseport Gloucester, LLC and Lead Manager for the Birdseye Project; Patti Page, National Marine Fisheries Service & member on the Ad Hoc Committee on Commercial Dockage; several members of the public

1. Call to Order & Chairman's Report

Mr. Bergeron, Chair of the Commission, called the meeting to order at 7:08pm and thanked everyone for coming, including the guests.

In opening remarks, **Mr. Bergeron** circulated a press packet from BASE Gloucester and noted the press packet will also be made available with these minutes on the City's website. The BASE press packet is included with these minutes at Attachment 1.

2. Minutes of the November 17, 2011 meeting

The Commission next moved to the minutes of the November 17, 2011 meeting. There was no discussion on the minutes.

MOTION: Ms. Sanfilippo moved to adopt the meeting minutes, **Mr. Orlando** seconded. All in favor, none opposed. Motion passes unanimously.

3. Report of Ad Hoc Committee on Commercial Fishing Dockage

Next, an update was provided on the status and accomplishments of the Ad Hoc Committee on Commercial Fishing Dockage. The Ad Hoc Committee meeting was held on December 1, 2011 and included further presentation of Ms. Patti Page's work on documenting commercial vessels and dockage space in the City. **Mr. Bergeron** distributed a written report of the December 1st committee meeting, which is attached to these minutes as Attachment 2.

Before Ms. Page presented before the Commission, Mr. Bergeron noted some changes to the composition of the Ad Hoc Committee. For personal reasons, Vito Calamo has asked to step aside and will no longer be on the Committee. Phil Cusumano, a member of the Waterways Board, will be taking Mr. Calamo's place. Also, Patti Page will be made a formal member of the Committee. (She was previously on the Committee as a stand-in for Ms. Romeo-Theken) Chairs from both Commissions (Fisheries & Waterways) are also formal members of the Ad Hoc Committee.

Ms. Page presented a portion of her work to the Commission. She has documented quite a bit of information on the boats and dockage, both in spreadsheets and with photos. All of her work will be made available on the website upon completion.

In rough numbers there are approximately 240 commercial vessels in Gloucester's inner harbor. Included in this count are whale watching vessels, a pilot boat, two schooners, a tug boat and commercial fishing boats. Vessel names and other data points were gathered from various sources, including Coast Guard records. It's important to note that thus far, this inventory only includes the inner harbor. It does not include vessels docked in the river or moored outside the inner harbor.

Ms. Page displayed a slideshow of the photos of vessels in alphabetical order, noting owners and whether vessels were transient or Gloucester-based. She has several other data points on her spreadsheet including gear type, length, and docking location. She noted that many former Portland Maine boats have come to Gloucester recently. She also noted that any vessels included in her documentation that the Committee feels are not commercial can be taken off the list if needed.

The Commission thanked Ms. Page for all her hard work and for showing a portion of her presentation. She added that it's important to note that not all vessels have been included in this documentation, and that it is still a work in progress. Approximately 180 vessels have been photographed to date.

Mr. Bergeron noted that Ms. Page still needs the help of local fishermen/ Fisheries Commission members to fill in some of the blanks in the documentation. He also added that this type of intensive survey has not been done before.

Ms. Page added that the recreational boating sector has not been included yet in this project. She noted that this will be a big undertaking, but that data from the City Assessor's Office on excise taxes collected for recreational vessels may be of help in documenting the vessels and their dockage locations.

Finally, Ms. Page added that documenting transient vessels will be the most difficult part of this project. Identifying and cataloging these vessels has not been systematically attempted yet. As part of the documentation process for these transient vessels, the Committee should confirm the boats that are currently on a waiting list to secure dockage in Gloucester and follow up with them to confirm that they are in fact still waiting for this space.

Once all of the data points have been collected, a business plan should be put in place that outlines what is needed, how much it will cost, and how to move forward.

Ms. Romeo-Theken also thanked Ms. Page for her efforts. She added that with these facts and hard numbers, the City is in a much better position to seek funding for development on the waterfront.

Mr. Bergeron told the Commission that as next steps, the Ad Hoc Committee has recommended that a survey be conducted consisting of two parts. First, a survey of the boats currently docking in Gloucester should be conducted to see what their needs and future prospects are. Second, a similar survey should be conducted among transient boats that do occasional business in Gloucester to detail their current needs and find out what can be done to entice them to stay in Gloucester and do more business here. The Commission was in support of implementing such a survey.

Mr. Orlando asked Ms. Page if her documentation includes those vessels that were out of water on railways at the time of the data collection. Ms. Page responded that some vessels may be missing and that she needs assistance from active fishermen to fill in gaps. The photos are definitely not complete. She did, however, look at Rose's and Gloucester Marine Railways for dry docked vessels when collecting this information.

Mr. Bergeron noted that as a future step, the Commission would like to have Ms. Page's work documented in an official study of the City's Community Development Department, conducted by a qualified research consultant. He asked Sarah Garcia, Community Development Director, if funds could be made available for such a study. Ms Garcia responded that the City does have some funding set aside for such a project, and that the project would have to follow applicable bidding regulations.

Mr. Tobey asked if it was necessary to have this work done by an outside consultant. Ms. Garcia responded that hiring a consultant was not required. Mr. Tobey followed that it might be useful to have a local person who is invested and familiar with the industry formalize this plan. Ms. Garcia said some scoping could be done to try to find a local candidate for this work. Tony Gross, chairman of the Waterways Board, asked Mr. Tobey if he was referring to having City staff conduct this study. Mr. Tobey responded not necessarily, but that could be a possibility, especially considering that using staff would not cost the City any additional funding. Ms. Garcia responded that all of these options could be investigated further.

Meeting attendee Sunny Robinson added that a collaborative research approach could be taken when drafting this project plan. She thought the Commission should consider if there is a fisherman who could be helpful in doing the survey who could use the additional income and would have an inlet to the industry, make it a natural fit. She also added that there should be two components to this survey- both an open ended question addressing current needs of commercial vessels as well as a pre-formulated check list of anticipated needs. The Commission should take the time to anticipate what some of the key needs of these vessels are at present. **Mr. Bergeron** responded that this checklist is something that the Committee can work on.

Meeting attendee Vito Giacolone asked Ms. Page's work has focused on any particular kind of vessels docking in the City and added that fish dealers could be of some help with identifying the vessels that land fish in the City. He also asked if there is going to be a particular focus on fishing dockage for the purposes of the plan.

Mr. Bergeron responded that the focus is on commercial fishing vessels and dockage, although information on other types of vessels and dockage will be essential for planning purposes.

Ms. Sanfilippo asked if lobster boats were also included as commercial fishing boats.

Ms. Page responded that they were. She added that her spreadsheet can be sorted by any of the data points collected, including dockage location, gear type, etc. Working with the Community

Development Department, all of this information can eventually be entered into an interactive map and made available on the City's website. This map could enable users to click on any dockage space in the City and see a picture of the vessel that docks there, as well as basic info on that vessel.

Returning to a discussion of the study, **Ms. Romeo-Theken** noted that the Commission may have an interest in hiring a private firm to oversee the work. That way, there would be no questions about bias or issues involving divisions within the industry.

Mr. Tobey responded that he sees Ms. Romeo-Theken's point, but noted that City Planning staff could also be used for this purpose. Additionally, as noted, these planners are already paid for. While this does not need to be decided at this point in time, he added that once complete, the City needs to own full rights to the data and report.

Mr. Bergeron suggested that Ms. Page, Ms. Garcia and himself get together to figure out these details. He assured the Commission that the final result will be that all parties will have confidence in the credibility of study.

Mr. Orlando added that for the purposes of this plan, "Commercial Fishing Vessels" should be divided by category to better address the unique needs of each vessel type. Ms. Page responded that the boats can be sorted by length and gear type (dragger, lobster, gillnet, etc.). **Ms. Romeo Theken** added that the findings of the proposed two part survey will also get to these unique needs.

Waterways Board Chair Tony Gross added that the Fisheries Commission needs to develop a clear picture of what they hope to achieve with this study. It's important that the Fisheries Commission tell the Ad Hoc Committee what they are looking for to ensure that the proper questions are being answered. **Mr. Bergeron** agreed.

Meeting attendee Suzanne Altenburger added that for planning purposes, the Commission should keep in mind that looking to the future, vessel size will be longer and thinner. This should be taken into account when evaluating dockage needs for the City.

4. Presentation by Sheree DeLorenzo

At the November meeting, the Commission agreed that they would like to have the opportunity to meet with Jim Davis, owner of New Balance shoes to discuss his recent acquisition of key properties on the Gloucester waterfront. A letter of invitation was sent to Mr. Davis. Ms. Sheree DeLorenzo, his business partner and manager of Gloucester properties, responded and agreed to meet with the Commission. Mr. Bergeron introduced Sheree DeLorenzo and thanked her for attending the meeting.

Ms. DeLorenzo began by thanking Ms. Page for all her work cataloging the waterfront. As someone who works with commercial fishermen every day, Ms. DeLorenzo noted the importance of such a documentation effort. She then launched into a discussion of the properties she manages in Gloucester. Cruiseport Gloucester is a function facility that serves as a space for meetings, weddings, conferences, etc. Attached to the Cruiseport is the Seaport Grille, a full-service restaurant. Next door, Ms. DeLorenzo manages the Gloucester Marine Terminal, a complete marine dockage terminal. She next explained that she and Jim Davis are full partners in his businesses, and that she is the lead on any of his Gloucester projects. Therefore, when anyone contacts Mr. Davis regarding his Gloucester projects, they will most likely be directed to Ms. DeLorenzo.

Mr. Davis also recently acquired 417 Main Street, formally a processing plant for slimy eels. The property was purchased, decontaminated, and rehabbed with new pilings. Through this site, Ms. DeLorenzo regularly works with Roses Marine and the State fish Pier to accommodate vessel overflow and switch out vessels when necessary. The purchase and sale for 80 Commercial Street is currently in process. This property, formally owned by Atlantic Fish, serves as a full-fledged dock for commercial fishing. The property needs a lot of work and will take time to develop into a fully functioning facility. The dockage space is currently being used to flip vessels for the fish auction.

Ms. DeLorenzo next discussed her commitment to the City of Gloucester and the fishing industry. She mentioned how much she enjoys living here, appreciates and values the working waterfront, and said she will do her part to ensure that her businesses stay integrated with the fishing community. She will support the fishermen 100% with dockage, and noted that every piece of dockage she has will go to fishermen. She also agreed to work with Ms. Page to stay updated on the current status of dockage in the City.

Moving next to a discussion of Cruiseships, Ms. DeLorenzo noted how they have become an important part of the economy of Gloucester. Tourists that come from these cruiseships shop in the City and dine at local restaurants. The economy of this City involves both the fishing industry and tourism- the two are not mutually exclusive. The two economic sectors need to work together. Last year alone, 14 large ships came in to Gloucester along with 8 smaller cruise ships. As the coordinator for these ships, Ms. DeLorenzo noted that the groundwork involved in bringing these ships to Gloucester (especially the big ones) can be very involved. Moving forward, the success of both the fishing industry and the tourism industry in Gloucester will require open communication between stakeholders from both sectors.

Mr. Orlando asked Ms. DeLorenzo to address some of the rumors that have been circulating regarding the potential purchase of additional properties on the waterfront or in surrounding areas. He added that the industry is concerned over the potential loss of dockage if she were to acquire more property on the waterfront. He's also concerned about the future- if she is thinking of leasing any of these properties or selling them down the line, what will happen to the dockage space then?

Ms. DeLorenzo responded that she regularly talks with the fishermen that utilize her dockage space to ensure that their needs are being met. At one of her recently purchased properties, she has installed "cages"- or fenced off pens for storage of fishing gear in the winter. She also said that she is always very open about her intentions for these properties. If the Fisheries Commission wants to know her plans, they will be the first to know. Also, as mentioned, dockage will not be removed or lost. Many of the properties purchased were bought for the intention of providing dockage for the commercial fleet.

Mr. Orlando responded that part of his concern comes from the fact that little-to-no financial benefit comes to private property owners for making their dockage space available to commercial fishermen.

Ms. DeLorenzo responded that she is taking a financial hit in making her dockage available to fishermen, but she does it anyways.

Ms. Romeo-Theken added that all fishermen in the City share this concern, not just draggers. The role of the Fisheries Commission should be to dispel some of the rumors and present the facts. Changes on the waterfront will inevitably happen, and the industry needs to learn to work with

these changes. Much dockage has been lost in recent years. In response, the fleet is asking what they can do to ensure that your private business thrives along with the working waterfront. It's also important for these private businesses to remember that outsiders are drawn to Gloucester for our heritage, for the fishing industry. Success will only come with cooperation. She is also glad to hear of the efforts Ms. DeLorenzo has taken to support the industry, including the cages/ storage spaces, especially in winter when outdoor storage is not available.

In response to his earlier comments, Ms. DeLorenzo invited **Mr. Orlando** to speak with some of the fishermen she works with. She's never raised their rent, checks in with them regularly to ensure their needs are met, and always prioritizes their safety above all else.

Mr. Tobey asked Ms. DeLorenzo what her vision is for the recently purchased properties, especially the waterside. He also asked if there is a timeline associated with developing the property.

She responded that there have been some issues with a compliance on purchase and sale—the previous owners were obligated to install a certain number of pilings and never did, so the agreement has been held up. To move forward with installing these required pilings for safety's sake, she is asking the City for a three year time frame to install them. Permitting becomes an issue in that there are restrictions from the City on how many pilings can be installed in a certain time frame. Once the dockage is made safe, she is talking with Vito Giacolone to make additional dockage available for vessels unloading at the new BASE Gloucester facility. At this point, the building itself has been condemned. She is working closely with North Atlantic Fish and their lawyers to figure out how to move forward.

In a follow up question, **Mr. Tobey** asked if the building would have to come down.

Ms. DeLorenzo responded that the main concern is the roof, which was hastily repaired recently and will need to be completely redone once the property is purchased.

Mr. Tobey asked again what the long term vision is for the property.

Ms. DeLorenzo responded that at this point in the process, she is still unsure. Possibilities include a loading area for trucks shipping seafood out of the City, or a processing plant.

Ms. Romeo-Theken inquired about the boats that currently tie off at these facilities. Ms. DeLorenzo responded that they can stay there. However, compliance issues with the pilings will need to be addressed.

Ms. Romeo-Theken offered the services of the Fisheries Commission if they could be of assistance in working with these compliance issues.

Meeting attendee Phil Cusumano asked if all the properties purchased and managed by Ms. DeLorenzo are DPA properties.

Ms. DeLorenzo responded with a list of properties currently owned or under agreement. They are: 417 Main Street, The Cruiseport, The Birdseye plant (which is currently zoned for marine industrial use and is slated to stay that way), 80 Commercial Street, and 21R Fort Square.

Ms. Romeo-Theken asked if she has plans to buy a property on Eastern Ave, behind the industrial park.

Ms. DeLorenzo responded that no, she is not. She also noted that she is unsure of where some of these rumors come from. Her purpose in appearing before the Fisheries Commission was to dispel these rumors. She's always willing to announce purchase and sale agreements. At present, she is not ready to take on any additional new properties.

Mr. Orlando asked if she had approached any other property owners on the Fort. She responded that she had not. She also noted a mailing that had been sent to Fort residents asking if they were willing to sell their properties. The mailing was falsely attributed to her. She had nothing to do with it, and went door to door in the neighborhood to clear up the misunderstanding.

Ms. DeLorenzo thanked the Commission for inviting her to present. **Mr. Bergeron** thanked her for coming.

5. Update on status of Gulf of Maine cod

In the next order of business, the Commission moved to a discussion of the recent stock assessment findings of Gulf of Maine cod. Meeting attendee Vito Giacolone provided the Commission with an update.

He explained that under the Magnuson law, the Regional Councils originally had the authority to set catch limits. However, back in 2006 this authority shifted to a body called the SSC- the Science and Statistic Committee. This Committee includes scientists from the NOAA Northeast Fisheries Science Center at Woods Hole. Local groups of fishermen and other industry stakeholders may also attend meetings of this Committee, but only as spectators.

South African stock assessment expert Doug Butterworth was hired by industry and was also a participating member of the recent GoM cod stock assessment team. Before findings were published from the raw data for this recent stock assessment, teams of scientists from the Science Center brought the numbers to several cod fishing communities to get their feedback. From this raw data alone, there was little to no indication that the assessment would have such negative results. Originally the feedback from the raw data was positive, and the fishermen from these communities agreed.

When the GoM cod working group was finished with the raw data and published its findings, the results were disastrous. Numbers for the entire spawning biomass for this stock were equal to the total allowable catch for the stock. In other words, the numbers indicate that if fishermen were to fish Gulf of Maine cod at the current mortality level in the next fishing year, not a single fish will be left by the end of the year. It is clear to most stakeholders that these numbers are far from accurate.

The limits of this data and the shortcomings of the methods used to conduct stock assessments have made themselves clear. Hopefully, given the importance of this stock to the entire region and its economy, these shortcomings will result in much needed changes to the legislation. Congress and the law are trying to pretend that we can predict and control what is produced by nature and rebuild all stocks to maximum at the same time. This is simply impossible. Regarding the assessment, the law would indicate that the catch limit for this stock needs to be set at zero. Common sense and other sources indicate that although there has been a decline in the abundance of this stock since 2008, it is no where near the results of this assessment.

Moving forward, there is only one step left in the assessment process before catch limits are set. The SSC will take another look at the results of the assessment and will be forced to give a

recommendation for the total allowable catch (TAC). There is a potential that the SSC could come out with the finding that TAC should be set at zero, effectively shutting down the fishery. However, the high level of importance of this stock assessment has meant that there has been substantial involvement from upper-level management at NOAA and from the environmental firms. Everyone is thoroughly alarmed by the results of this assessment. The assessment has created a “perfect storm” of a legal mess and has demonstrated that the science is not that precise. Mr. Giacolone expressed his belief that flexibility in the application of the law will most likely follow. He is confident that the results of this assessment will necessitate some major changes. However, there is still a level of uncertainty involved and the next few months will definitely be daunting.

The meeting of the Science and Statistics Committee is slated for January, but industry stakeholders are trying to postpone the meeting so that additional information can be gathered and presented before a TAC is set.

Mr. Giacolone also noted that this type of impasse was to be expected at some point under the Magnuson-Stevens rebuilding timeframes, which are unrealistic. He also added that there is plenty of data and alternative collection methods that are not used by NOAA but could be helpful, especially in this sort of situation.

Mr. Bergeron added that it would be nice if the law would stop pretending that nature can simultaneously produce maximum biomass for all stocks and force the science to go along. The law is in conflict with nature, so good policy cannot come from it. It institutionalizes the disconnect. Perhaps this cod assessment will present a crisis big enough to force a remedy.

Mr. Orlando attended the post-SARC (Stock Assessment Review Committee) meeting with Mr. Giacolone and spoke to his own experience of how far off the assessment is. He added that in the past 2 or 3 weeks, he has intentionally been avoiding cod but has still managed to catch 20,000 lbs- all while trying not to. He doesn't understand how the assessment numbers could be so terribly far-off from his experiences on the water.

Mr. Cottone also attended the meeting and noted that all the attendees—scientists and environmentalists included—were confident that no harm would be done to the stock if fishing at current levels was allowed to continue in the new fishing year.

Mr. Orlando added that even Peter Shelley—an outspoken environmentalist lawyer from the Conservation Law Foundation—admitted that something is wrong with these numbers.

Mr. Cottone noted that there needs to be a change in the way the numbers are interpreted.

Mr. Orlando mentioned that the fishing gear and methods are to blame for the poor assessment. NOAA's methods are unreliable and inconsistent.

Mr. Giacolone made an important distinction regarding NOAA trawl surveys and traditional fishing methods: fishermen hunt fish, moving around using their experience and knowledge to get the best results. On the contrary, NOAA randomly drops net and trawls, often without the skills or knowledge to ensure that they are towing correctly. If there are no fish in the area they trawl, the assessment will be poor. Also, with the change in research vessel used to collect data, NOAA stopped using fishing industry dependent data for their assessments. They used to apply a figure called “catch per unit effort” which related to the industry's catch and what fishermen were experiencing on the water. Now, however, because of the change, this figure is no longer included

in the assessment process. Useful back-up data does exist; they just need to start integrating it – but this takes time. Timing is the main issue at this point. If the SSC meeting does take place in January, regulators’ hands will be tied by the law.

Mr. Bergeron asked if the environmental lobby is supporting a delay to this January meeting.

Mr. Giacolone responded that all sides are in agreement, but no one knows what to do at present. The process is at standstill.

Ms. Sanfilippo noted she is concerned over the regulators having the last word. They could make some very detrimental decisions to the industry with these assessment findings.

Mr. Orlando noted that even the Environmental Defense Fund is in agreement with the fishing industry that these numbers are off.

Ms. Page asked Mr. Giacolone when the Magnuson law was changed to give the SSC authority to set Catch Limits. Mr. Giacolone responded that this change was made with the 2006 reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. The rationale is that the science should not be subject to the politics of the Regional Councils. Ms. Page asked if there is industry representation on the SSC, and Mr. Giacolone responded that no, there is not. Ms. Page asked if Observer data is used in these assessments, and Mr. Giacolone responded that they do, but not for the abundance statistic. Observer data is used to determine age and other secondary data points.

Mr. Bergeron thanked Mr. Giacolone for attending the meeting and providing the Commission with this information.

6. Commission goals: a fisheries summit?

Moving to a discussion of the Commission’s long-term goals, the group returned to the idea of hosting a fisheries summit in Gloucester. This summit would focus on fisheries industry issues and explore opportunities for new growth and development. Opportunity areas that have come up in discussion at past Fisheries Commission meetings could be focus points of the summit, including such topics as Georges Bank haddock and redfish processing and marketing opportunities. Experts on different opportunity areas could come in to present and plan in collaboration with the Fisheries Commission. Marketing Gloucester seafood and fishermen could also be a major topic at this summit.

Mr. Bergeron suggested that the summit could be structured around economic opportunities for the industry.

Mr. Orlando suggested that this summit could go even further and discuss the current obstacles that stand in the way of Gloucester expanding to a more fully functional working waterfront community. Topics for discussion could include the development of a pre-treatment plant, processing facilities, promoting underutilized species, and protecting available space on the waterfront for development.

Mr. Tobey asked Mr. Bergeron to clarify what the overall vision and structure will be for this summit. **Mr. Bergeron** reiterated that he would like to create a list of opportunity areas, especially economic opportunities for the fleet, and bring experts together with the industry to plan for future development. He envisions the structure will be much like the recent Maritime Economy Summit, with a series of presentations and break-out groups.

Ms. Romeo- Theken noted that similar series of meetings were held by the City in the nineties, ultimately leading to the beginnings of the Seafood Festival. These meetings, which took place all over the City, were funded with Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant funding.

Ms. Sanfilippo added that while it is a good idea to hold a summit, many of the ideas from the similar meetings in the nineties were not acted upon.

Mr. Bergeron responded that this is why focusing specific opportunities and developing action steps as part of a new summit would be helpful.

Ms. Romeo Theken thinks this type of summit can be done; the City just needs to locate funding.

Ms. Sanfilippo added that while this type of planning can be useful, bigger and often insurmountable challenges often arise that make such plans obsolete. For example, a bad stock assessment could make all planning from such a summit meaningless. If held, a summit should try to address how to deal with these unknowns.

Mr. Orlando added that a summit could help to bring industry stakeholders together, adding power to a shared voice. This type of cooperation and unity could give the industry stronger footing when addressing issues like the recent cod assessment.

Ms. Romeo-Theken remarked that the summit could provide the public with more information about Gloucester and its working waterfront. It could demonstrate to the rest of the world that the fleet has survived hard times and is still viable. The summit could be recognition of the fishermen, their hard work and sacrifice.

Mr. Bergeron noted that the development of a seafood festival should be a topic of discussion at this summit.

Mr. Brown added that developing new and improved marketing strategies should be a major focus of this summit. Over the past ten years, all fishing-related expenses have gone up, but the price fishermen get for their catch has remained the same. The bottom line is that fishermen need to get a better price for their product, and better marketing is the way to accomplish this. Options like forming cooperatives could also be explored.

Meeting attendee Marcia Hart noted that the findings and plans from the last series of meetings in the nineties should be carefully reviewed when preparing for this summit. It's important to understand why things did not move forward the last time around. The starting point for this new summit should not cover what has already been learned. It's also important to make sure that results come from this summit.

Sarah Garcia added that part of the marketing piece of this summit could involve outreaching to local grocery store chains and food retailers to find out what it would take to get them to start locally sourcing seafood. The recent Globe articles on mislabeled and imported seafood would give the local fleet traction in this area.

Mr. Tobey added that local universities with business schools could be approached to help in developing marketing and brand development strategies. The business school program at Suffolk University has offered this type of assistance to the City in the past. He also added that Mr. Bergeron should appoint a working subgroup to map out a plan for this summit.

Mr. Cottone brought up the Rhode Island based Trace and Trust program, which assigns a barcode to fish and can tell a consumer or buyer where & when the fish was caught and by what vessel. Gloucester should investigate the possibility of implementing such a program. The people that run Trace and Trust should be invited to present at the summit.

Vito Giacolone added to Mr. Cottone's point and noted that all fish is already traceable until it gets to the processing side. When landed at auction, every fish can be tracked by vessel. Vessel trip reports can also provide this sort of information. The tracing link is broken at processing side when fish is mixed with fish from other boats.

Additionally, Mr. Giacolone added that Gloucester needs to add processing jobs and facilities to the community. Currently Gloucester is essentially an unloading terminal. Trucks come to the City to pick up fish and ship out for processing. Added value could be seen if more fish was kept in Gloucester and processed here.

Ms. Romeo-Theken added that too few restaurants are selling local seafood. This is an urgent issue that needs addressing.

Suzanne Altenburger added that when planning for the summit, the Commission should consider events in the past where the industry did not have a strong enough place to speak from. Other points to consider include what the industry has to offer to the public, and how to convince the public that fishermen are "the good guys." Also, the fact that the boats themselves are incredibly inefficient is a vital issue that needs to be addressed. Consumers that buy into the local movement will become disinterested when they learn the impact that these boats have on the environment.

Sheree DeLorenzo added that the MA restaurant industry should be engaged to figure out how to locally source more seafood. "Farm to table" initiatives are taking off and can provide key marketing opportunities to the local fleet. All Gloucester restaurants should be selling Gloucester seafood. Ms. DeLorenzo is happy to come back to the Commission and discuss strategies as a restaurateur. It should be a major focus of the Commission.

Ms. Romeo-Theken noted some recent personal experiences where local restaurants were mislabeling poor quality seafood as Gloucester seafood. This type of mislabeling has serious negative ramifications for the fleet.

Mr. Bergeron formally appointed **Ms. Sanfilippo**, **Mr. Brown**, and **Mr. Tobey** along with Sarah Garcia to a working subgroup for the development of the summit. Their task is to define the purpose and goals of this summit as well as to develop a proposed plan for the event. The committee will report back to the Commission at the January meeting.

7. Agenda for the January 19, 2012 meeting

The next Fisheries Commission meeting will be held on January 19, 2012 in the Friends Room at the Sawyer Free Library. Agenda will be reports on the dockage study and fisheries summit.

8. Adjournment

MOTION: **Mr. Tobey** motioned to adjourn the meeting, **Mr. Orlando** seconded. All in favor, none opposed, motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:52pm.

ATTACHMENTS



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dec. 5, 2011

**NEW BEDFORD AND BOSTON SEAFOOD DISPLAY
AUCTION LAUNCHES GLOUCESTER FACILITY**

**AUCTION TO BE KNOWN AS BUYERS & SELLERS EXCHANGE
OF NEW ENGLAND (BASE)**

LOCAL FACILITIES WILL BE CALLED:

BASE New Bedford, BASE Boston, BASE Gloucester

NEW BEDFORD, Mass. – On Wednesday, December 7, 2011, the seafood display auctions in New Bedford and Boston, and their existing seafood offloading facility in Gloucester will re-launch as BASE New England, a group of seafood display locations that will allow buyers worldwide to purchase New England fish electronically via the daily BASE online auction. BASE New England merges the seafood marketplaces in New England's three largest ports, New Bedford, Boston, and Gloucester, into one auction.

The organization integrates operations of the existing display auction facilities in New Bedford and Boston and adds a display facility in Gloucester. The group of organizations uses the Buyers and Sellers Exchange (BASE) software, developed by the New Bedford auction in the 1990s and updated continuously since then, to let buyers anywhere view prices and place bids remotely.

BASE New England is owned by brothers Richie and Raymond Canastra, who started the Whaling City Seafood Display Auction in New Bedford and the Boston Seafood Display Auction. Those locations will be renamed BASE New Bedford and BASE Boston. The new location, BASE Gloucester, will be owned and operated

by Chris, Vito Jr., Nick and Marc Giacalone, who are well known to many existing clients of the New Bedford and Boston auctions, as they have operated the auctions' affiliated Gloucester unloading facility since 2008.

The heart of BASE New England is the Buyers and Sellers Exchange, an electronic fish auction system developed by the Canastras which provides real-time prices and opens bidding to buyers anywhere via the internet.

BASE New England will help ensure that buyers, most typically seafood distributors, have access to a steady supply of seafood. Anyone involved in buying, selling or processing seafood, regardless of where they live or work, can connect to the auctions through BASE.

"It's as though (buyers) have waterfront property themselves," said Raymond Canastra of BASE. "They have access to the fish just as if they were on the waterfront."

Fish sold at BASE New England auctions are predominately landed by New England boats and include species like scallops, cod, haddock, flounder, and pollock. BASE New England communicates with boats at sea through email; the boats tell BASE when they expect to arrive and the amount of fish onboard.

The boats unload their catch at the auctions (some seafood arrives by truck) and the fish are sorted based on weight, species, quality, and other factors, then iced and stored in auction coolers.

The online auction is held at 6 a.m., Monday through Friday. Seafood that has been displayed in the facilities in New England's three major ports, New Bedford, Boston, and Gloucester, can be bought at the same time, on the same auction screen.

Seafood is placed on the auction one species and market class at a time, with fish from all three locations available at once. A buyer can mix and match lots from the three display facilities in a single successful bid.

Before the auctions start, graders are able to examine the fish in the various locations to assess quality for prospective buyers. The system is an electronic "count up" auction system, the winning buyer can purchase up to 15,000 pounds of seafood from New Bedford, Boston, and Gloucester all with the same bid. Sellers have several seconds to accept or reject each bid.

Most of the auction's fish sells within 90 minutes. BASE New England also operates a scallop auction at 9 a.m.

An open house for customers, journalists, government officials, and friends will be held on Wednesday, December 7 from noon to 5 p.m. Refreshments will be served.

The first auction at BASE Gloucester will take place on Thursday, December 8 at 6 a.m.

BASE Gloucester
37 Rogers Street
Gloucester, Massachusetts 01930
Phone: 978-281-7700
Fax: 978-281-7701.



History of BASE

In 1996, brothers Richie and Raymond Canastra attended the European Seafood Show in Brussels, Belgium, where they learned about an electronic fish auction platform made by Icelandic company R.S.F. They later spent a month in Iceland tailoring the software to the needs of the U.S. market.

In 1997, the Canastras purchased the system from R.S.F. and launched The Buyers and Sellers Exchange, the company that operates the electronic auction system BASE. The system, which was the first electronic seafood display platform in the United States, processed more than 12 million pounds of seafood in 1997 and almost 16 million pounds in 1998, by which time buyers from as far as South Carolina were using the system.



History of Whaling City Seafood Display Auction

The roots of the Whaling City Seafood Display Auction, BASE New Bedford's predecessor, stretch to the late 1980s, when Fairhaven natives Richie and Raymond Canastra started a scallop offloading business on the New Bedford waterfront.

The brothers named their business RCC Foods Inc., and expanded into offloading groundfish boats — the type that land New England species like cod, haddock, pollock, and flounder. The company also expanded into fish cutting and processing, and eventually employed 150 staff.

The company's early success came partly from strong relationships Raymond built with members of New Bedford's fishing community during the 14 years he worked as a commercial fisherman.

In 1994, the Canastras launched Whaling City Seafood Display Auction after the closure of New Bedford's city-owned fish auction.

Whaling City operates a display auction, a format that was common in Europe but relatively new to the United States in the 1990s. Fish graders can view the catch and buyers can bid on fish at daily auctions.

In 1997, the Canastras launched the Buyers and Sellers Exchange (BASE), an electronic auction platform that lets buyers place bids remotely.

On a typical day, Whaling City auctions several hundred thousand pounds of fish and as much as 100,000 pounds of scallops.

The company expanded in 2008 with a new fish auction at the Marine Industrial Park in Boston's seafood processing district.

This week, the Canastras announced the creation of BASE New England, which uses the BASE computer system to integrate operations of existing fish display auctions in New Bedford and Boston — now called BASE New Bedford and BASE Boston — and a new display facility, in Gloucester.

The Gloucester operation, called BASE Gloucester, will be owned and operated by Chris, Vito Jr., and Nick Giacalone, with advice from their father, longtime Gloucester fisherman Vito Giacalone, Sr.



History of Fisherman's Wharf

The Fisherman's Wharf building sits on a peninsula on Harbor Cove in Gloucester and had been owned by a group of Sicilian immigrants since at least the early 1950s. The building operated as a fishing co-op, where fishermen unloaded their catch and loaded fuel and supplies. The owners built a new steel structure at the site after the building was destroyed by fire in 1998.

Vito Giacalone, a Gloucester fisherman, purchased part ownership of the property in 2003, by which time the wharf was largely vacant. He acquired full ownership in 2007, and started working on a plan to rebuild a thriving fish business at the site.

Vito enlisted help from his sons, who in 2008 started a fish unloading company, which supplied the Boston Seafood Display Auction.

This week, the Fisherman's Wharf building transforms once again. On Wednesday, the Giacalone family and Richie and Raymond Canastra, owners of Whaling City Seafood Display Auction in New Bedford, will open a fish display facility at the site called BASE Gloucester. Fish displayed at BASE Gloucester will be sold through the Buyers and Sellers Exchange of New England auction, held every weekday. Giacalone's sons will continue operating their fish offloading business under a new name, Fisherman's Wharf Gloucester.



Vito Giacalone, Sr.

Longtime Gloucester fisherman, Vito Giacalone, Sr., will help manage BASE Gloucester, a new fish display facility that launches this week. Fish displayed at BASE Gloucester will be sold through the Buyers and Sellers Exchange of New England auction, held every weekday. He also owns the property on Harbor Cove in Gloucester where the facility will operate.

Vito's roots in the fishing industry run deep. His grandfather, a Sicilian immigrant, and his father fished from Gloucester. Vito, 52, started fishing when he was in high school. He spent a few years working as a house builder, but returned to fishing in 2000.

In 2003, Vito purchased part of the Fisherman's Wharf building on Harbor Cove, a building that had been owned by Sicilian immigrants and had long been a fish offloading facility. He acquired complete ownership of the building in 2007. In 2008, his sons Chris, Vito Jr., and Nick, began a fish offloading business at the site.

Vito's sons will continue to operate their fish offloading business, which has been renamed Fisherman's Wharf Gloucester.

Vito also works to promote the commercial fishing industry as government affairs officer at Gloucester-based advocacy group Northeast Seafood Coalition.



Raymond Canastra

Raymond Canastra, 53, is co-owner of the Whaling City Seafood Display Auction and part owner of BASE New England, an organization that runs fish auctions in New Bedford, Gloucester and Boston.

Ray was born in New Bedford, Mass., and grew up in the nearby town of Fairhaven, attending local schools.

Ray, who now lives in Rochester, Mass., learned about the fishing industry through childhood friends, whose fathers owned fishing boats based in New Bedford.

But Ray's early interest was football, and he played in college until sidelined by an injury. He left school and, at the urging of a friend's father, joined the Fish Lumpers Union in New Bedford, a job that involved offloading fishing boats.

While working, Ray started helping fishing boat crews fix their gear. He helped out for free, hoping to someday land a more-lucrative job on a fishing boat. He kept a seabag packed, and was ready to go if offered a job.

Ray's break came when he was offered a job fishing for scallops on the vessel Poseidon. Canastra fished on the vessel for five years, and was later a boat captain.

After fishing for 14 years, Ray started a fish unloading business called RCC Foods with a few partners, including his brother, Richie. Later, the business expanded to include 150 employees, a fish cutting and processing facility, and an auction in Boston. On December 7, 2011, the company launched BASE New England.



Richie Canastra

Richie Canastra, 50, of Dartmouth, Mass., is co-owner of the Whaling City Seafood Display Auction and part-owner of regional fish auction organization BASE New England.

Richie started his career working as a snack food salesman for The Bachman Company in Reading, PA. At the age of 25, he purchased from Bachman the rights to be the sole wholesaler for the company in southeastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

In the late 1980s, he started a fish offloading business with his brother Raymond, who had worked for 14 years as a New Bedford fisherman.

The brothers later started Whaling City Seafood Display Auction in New Bedford, and on December 7, 2011 launched BASE New England, which runs seafood auctions in New Bedford, Gloucester and Boston.

Richie is also active as a leader in the fishing industry. He is the Vice Chair of the New Bedford Harbor Development Commission, the South Coast representative on the Massachusetts Seaport Advisory Council, the Chairman of the Board of Saving Seafood, a founding member of the (New Bedford) Mayor's Ocean and Fishery Council, the Treasurer of the Northeast Seafood Coalition, and a groundfish advisor to the New England Fisheries Management Council. Earlier this year Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick appointed him a Commissioner of the Massachusetts Seafood Marketing Council.

Richie is also a private pilot, and volunteers with Angel Flight Northeast, a nonprofit group that flies medical patients to hospitals for treatment.



Chris Giacalone, 28, attended Salem State University. He worked as an electrician prior to joining his brothers in co-managing the Gloucester offloading operations for the Canastra's Boston Seafood Display Auction (BSDA).

Vito Giacalone Jr., 26, attended Mt. Ida College and Salem State University. He operated as an independent landscaping contractor and fished on the family owned trawler, Jenny G, before joining his brothers to co-manage the Gloucester offloading operations for the BSDA.

Nick Giacalone, 24, attended Endicott College before coming to work to help complete the refitting of the family fishing vessel, Jenny G. He later fished on the vessel until joining his brothers to co-manage the Gloucester offloading operations for the BSDA.

Marc Giacalone, 19, is currently attending Endicott College and working part time at Fisherman's Wharf Gloucester while completing college.

Fisheries Commission Ad Hoc Committee on Commercial Fishing Dockage

December 1, 2011 Meeting Report

The committee met in the Third Floor Conference Room at City Hall beginning at 7:00 p.m. Present were committee members Mark Ring, David Bergeron, Peter Bent, Vito Calomo, Patti Page, Anthony Gross, and two citizens also attended.

The committee reviewed progress of Patti Page's research. She has documented 248 commercial fishing vessels docking in the harbor. All but fewer than a dozen of these boats are commercial fishing vessels. Two spreadsheets were presented, one sorted by vessel name and one sorted by location docked. Committee members took copies of the spreadsheets and will get back to Patti with missing information. It was decided that another column should be added to the spreadsheet to record "dock amenities" such as access to electricity that vessels may need.

The committee also viewed Ms. Page's impressive slide presentation of the vessels. The photographs of the commercial fishing vessels working in the harbor are arranged in alphabetical order for easy comparison with the alphabetical list. The committee agreed that the photographic record of the commercial fishing vessels should be made available on the Fisheries Commission website.

Data gaps were discussed. It would be valuable at some point to extend this project to document commercial fishing vessels docking elsewhere in Gloucester, but the project will be limited to Gloucester Harbor for the time being. The committee agreed it insufficient to merely document commercial fishing vessels. Other commercial boats working in the harbor belong on the list and these vessels already included in Ms. Page's work will be retained. Moreover, the committee agreed that recreational vessels in the harbor should be included as well. A comprehensive picture of dockage usage is needed for a strong plan. The committee looked at the waiting list from the Harbormaster's office. We have not yet obtained information on the waiting list at the State Fish Pier. Some vessels are probably on both.

There is still work needed to document transient vessels that do business in Gloucester Harbor but do not stay. We have found 248 vessels, but about 400 vessels sell fish in Gloucester according to DMF. A portion of these vessels dock temporarily in spaces they can find – some jump around using spaces available while resident vessels are away. Many vessels come to unload fish, purchase ice or fuel and leave. Gloucester may be able to capture more revenues from such vessels to support infrastructure businesses if we encourage a larger portion of transient vessels to dock here for longer periods. We need to find out the scope of transient vessels and what would encourage them to do this.

Committee Recommendation to the Commission

The Ad Hoc Committee recommends that the Fisheries Commission prioritize an assessment of the needs of vessels that home port in Gloucester as well as transient vessels to support a plan to bring more business to Gloucester Harbor from these vessels already doing some business here.

The committee decided to allow more time for ongoing data collection before scheduling another meeting.