



**CITY OF GLOUCESTER**  
**FISHERIES COMMISSION MINUTES**  
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2013; 7:00 PM  
THIRD FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM  
CITY HALL  
9 DALE AVENUE

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Members:

Mark Ring, Chair	Joseph Orlando [absent]
Al Cottone, Vice Chair [absent]	BG Brown
Sefatia Theken, City Council	Angela Sanfilippo
Greg Verga, City Council [absent]	Scott Swicker
Paul Vitale [Absent]	

Also in attendance: Sarah Garcia; Lise Breen, Sunny Robinson, Russell Sherman, Patti Page, Valerie Nelson, and from the Gulf of Maine Research Institute: Kyle Foley, Jen Levin, Jonathan Peros, James Benson.

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**1. Call to Order**

Meeting called to order at 7:13 PM by Chair Ring.

**2. Gulf of Maine Certification Program, GMRI**

**Jen Levin:** makes introduction.

**Kyle Foley:** explains what GMRI does. It is a nonprofit, neutral non advocacy organization from Portland with three focuses: research, education, and community. She elaborates on the seafood team saying they bring together different parts of the industry and supply chain to promote economic and ecological sustainability. The culinary partners program run by James Benson focuses on underutilized species and at least 20% of seafood on the menu has to come from the Gulf of Maine. The Hanniford brand program that Jen works with is a collaborative marketing program to engage the whole supply chain. The Gulf of Maine Responsibly Harvested is retraceable back to the Gulf of Maine, harvesting as well as processing. There are ten species on the verified species list so far and the group is prioritizing the list in the coming year.

**BG Brown:** questions if the label demands a higher price for use of it.

**Kyle Foley:** explains that the goal is for that to happen, but they're still working on it.

**Sarah Garcia:** asks how many products move through the label.

**Kyle Foley:** doesn't know the pound value, but says it's around \$40 million over two and a half years.

**Mark Ring:** questions if people have to use the label exclusively or can still have other products.

**Kyle Foley:** answers that yes they can have other products, make it clear when it's a GMRI label.

**Angela Sanfillipo:** questions if the label clarifies Canadian or US waters.

**Sefatia Thekan:** questions if it works with fishing vessels directly, if retailers reach all the way to Boston, and don't all fishing vessels go through Maine so how is it known to truly be from Maine.

**Kyle Foley:** says yes it clarifies and no, the goal is to build the market and differentiate the product so they're working with the shore side forward supply chain. They reach down to the Northcoast and Gordan, and third party auditing makes sure that everything is landed and processed in Maine. Mentions talk in Gloucester of a regional brand, Gulf of Maine has to differentiate itself to compete since it's small and working together will improve volume and capacity.

**Sefatia Thekan:** questions if they have asked around locally for more retailers or processors to join.

**Kyle Foley:** answers that they're currently talking to several locals; processors pay about .5% of their sales to customers of their species under the label to fund the program.

**BG Brown:** compares GMRI to Whole Foods, the fishermen never saw the money from the higher prices.

**Kyle Foley:** agrees that the goal is to raise the value of the seafood, but differentiation comes first.

**Sefatia Thekan:** questions the relevance of this presentation to Gloucester.

**Sarah Garcia:** elaborates that she invited them because they have staff, facility, and capacity so is there a way to put them to work that would be helpful.

**Sefatia Thekan:** says GMRI must get local first, and then come back when they're contracted.

**Scot Swicker:** asks how many restaurants are involved.

**Kyle Foley:** answers that mostly ones in Maine, but some universities are as well.

**Russell Sherman:** says these are the processes killing people, they're getting pushed out.

**Angela Sanfillipo:** brings up that it costs a fisherman the same amount of money no matter what type of fish.

**Sarah Garcia:** adds that to say responsibly harvested it has to be responsibly done all the way through and fishermen should get paid for the higher priced fish.

**Angela Sanfillipo:** says the fresh catch program's goal is to make up the difference to allow people to survive in the market; all fish take the same hard work and commitment.

**Jen Levin:** says involved retailers are enthusiastic and consumers want the product. They're going to use side by side research with labeled and unlabeled fish to see the affect on consumers. GMRI won't mention anybody who's just talking with them, only those who have already signed up, just came to give information, not to sell anything.

**BG Brown:** asks about guidelines for the fishermen who supply the fish.

**Kyle Foley:** answers that there aren't any at the vessel level, but the goal is to tell a positive story.

**Mark Ring:** questions why they don't go from the boats to the restaurant.

**Kyle Foley:** says that restaurants are leaders in getting people to try fish and create serious demand.

**Valerie Nelson:** questions the values that help Gloucester, says GMRI supports the management system and won't change anything about the factory set up.

**Kyle Foley:** responds that GMRI isn't meant to compete with programs dealing with equity issues, but on a broader scale of raising value for large amounts of fish.

**Patti Page:** says there's value in some fish species, but why pay for the certification if it doesn't provide more money for who's selling it. Questions the point when you could just say it's from Maine.

**Jen Levin:** answers that there's competition in the global market place and a lot of companies think the third party traceability is more important than a first person report. It will bring the industry together with a shared identity, lobster is important because it's a part of the story.

**Sefatia Thekan** says this seems like a repeat, but if it works out then great.

**Mark Ring:** asks if they included the Halifax boats.

**Jen Levin:** answers that they needed something enforceable, they're interested in things that have worked or not worked before.

**Lise Breen:** asks if a time period has been set for how long they have to increase volumes before raising prices.

**Jen Levin:** declines giving a yes or no, says it seems inappropriate since the brand is their credibility.

### 3. Gloucester Harbor Community Development Corporation (GHCDC)

**Sunny Robinson:** introduces herself as the clerk of the Gloucester Harbor Community Development Organization and introduces the organization itself. Says they're a nonprofit that wants to improve the productivity of the harbor and can be a bridge or link between the private and public sector.

**Russel Sherman:** elaborates that they're a multi-faceted board and could be useful for getting funding.

**Sunny Robinson:** adds that they're an approved 501(3)(c) but don't have a number yet. Gives the example that if Gloucester took part with GMRI they would want some piece of the branding to come directly back here, and the CDC could help with that, with a processor or something. No guarantee for resources, but it's simply an additional resource to the community. There's been discussion of a fisheries institute, an innovation center, and a test kitchen among other theoretical ideas. There are no current projects since the group doesn't have their number yet. The CDC is going for grants and ideas and want people's feedback. Questions if the CDC or the fisheries committee should host a wider meeting of the commercial fishing fleet.

**Mark Ring:** says the CDC should host it.

**Sarah Garcia:** cautions regarding confusion of duplicate efforts.

**Sefatia Thekan:** advises the CDC makes a quick presentation to the city council and waterways, as well as becoming a helpful tool for people trying to apply for grants.

**Sunny Robinson:** says they are already talking to the mayor, and can bring in new layers of assistance.

**Valerie Nelson:** asks what their role in the test kitchen would be; managing it or just getting financing. Also asks if there's any particular programs the CDC has been looking at.

**Sunny Robinson:** answers either role could happen, they aren't far enough along to pursue a project.

#### **4. The Groundfish Port Recovery and Revitalization Plan**

**Sarah Garcia:** gives an update on the port recovery plan. We are gathering information on the strategies both short and long term that can help sustain the port. Many here attended the November workshop. With Urban Harbors Institute, we are drafting the specific list of projects from the community. Many of the projects will need funding sources. This plan is for state funding, but will include projects that have greater needs. Some recommendations might not be financial. For example, MassPort and the Coast Guard jointly convene a loose monthly port operators meeting and find it very helpful. In Gloucester it might be fishing interests, boatyards, cruiseport, coast guard, harbormaster etc.

#### **5. Approval of minutes from October 17, 2013**

Unanimous vote to approve the minutes from October 17, 2013.

**Motion to Adjourn by Scott Swicker, seconded by Sefatia Thekan at 9:06**