

CITY OF GLOUCESTER FISHERIES COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

THURSDAY, JUNE 16, 2011

The Gloucester Fisheries Commission met on Thursday, June 16, 2011 in the Council Conference Room, First Floor, City Hall, 9 Dale Avenue, Gloucester. Commission members present were Angela Sanfilippo, Joe Orlando, Mark Ring, Bruce Tobey, David Bergeron, Al Cottone and Paul Vitale. Members Sefatia Romeo Thekan and Gus Sanfilippo were unable to attend. Mayor Carolyn Kirk attended and led the first section of the meeting. Several citizens were also in attendance.

1. Opening Remarks by Mayor Carolyn Kirk

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Carolyn Kirk at 7:05 p.m. She said the meeting marked the reconstitution of the Fisheries Commission. She reviewed her involvement in fishing industry issues since taking office and expressed her hopes for how the revitalized Commission would assist the Mayor and the City's fishing industry. She said that as Mayor she would look to the Commission for advice and feedback on fisheries matters. She also hoped that the Commission would host events when dignitaries and public officials come to Gloucester regarding matters pertaining to the fishing industry.

The Mayor led a brief discussion of the statutory parameters pertaining to the membership and make up of the Commission. The statute allows for 13 members, but filling this number is not a requirement. Nevertheless, there are four vacancies that may be filled by additional members. The statute seeks to ensure that members bring varying fishing industry perspectives to the Commission but does not require that any member or members formally represent any organizations.

The Mayor quickly turned to her views on the future. She said that the findings of the Harbor Economic Development Plan indicate that fish landings and related economic opportunities will increase dramatically over the next 5 years, and the City needs to

prepare to benefit and foster fishing industry business growth. She distributed a presentation entitled, “Gloucester’s Role in the Rebuilt, Sustainable Groundfishery of the (Near) Future”, given to the Economic Development Assessment Team, U.S. Department of Commerce, by Sarah P. Robinson, JD, SJD on May 3, 2011. The presentation is attached and incorporated into these minutes. The Mayor said that the City must work towards taking full advantage of the opportunities outlined in this presentation, and Fisheries Commission leadership is needed to meet this challenge.

Before proceeding Mayor Kirk asked past Mayor Bruce Tobey to make some remarks. Mr. Tobey expressed support of the vision for the work of the Commission that the Mayor laid out in her remarks, a consultative body to engage economic opportunities. He said that much has changed in the fishing industry since he was mayor. There is a high degree of unity among fishermen today. He said that he is enthusiastic about the reconstituted Fisheries Commission and is looking forward to working with the group.

2. Election of the Chair

Mayor Kirk nominated David Bergeron as Commission Chair. Angela Sanfilippo and Bruce Tobey seconded. The Mayor expressed her reasons for nominating Mr. Bergeron. She called the vote. Unanimous, Mr. Bergeron was elected.

3. Remarks by the Chair and members

Mr. Bergeron expressed his thanks to the Mayor for her confidence. He said that he was honored by her nomination and the support of both mayors. He said he felt humble to be named chair of such an auspicious and accomplished assembly of Commissioners. He said as chair he would seek ways to allow the rich diverse talents on the Commission and in Gloucester’s wider community to come together and work collaboratively to produce something greater than the sum of our individual contributions. He said he believes the Commission should add value to what industry is already doing by working on issues and opportunities that fishing industry organizations have not had the resources to engage. In order to do this, the Commission must be disciplined and strategic. We must use tools available to us especially in the social sciences to gather all the facts and data and use them to guide our decisions. He said methods exist to allow community participation in our fact finding and consultative work. We should use these tools. He encouraged the Commission to look to the Harbor Economic Development Plan as a place to start work because the City has some resources to support implementation of the plan, and the Commission lacks resources at this time. The Harbor Economic Plan cites the importance of addressing commercial fishermen’s concerns about current and future dockage. A project should be launched to find a solution. Above all, we need a long-term business plan for Gloucester’s fishing industry.

Mr. Bergeron then asked each Commission member to comment on their hopes for the Fisheries Commission. Angela Sanfilippo said the reconstituted Fisheries Commission is confirmation that the City knows the fishing industry is alive and well. She said the Fisheries Commission should educate the people of Gloucester about our fishing

industry. She said there are too many people in our own community that do not know the facts about the industry and the fisheries that support it. We have a great many different fisheries and together they support an industry with great potential. She said that two groundfish sectors and the Gloucester Fishing Community Preservation Fund (The “Permit Bank”) cumulatively own 27 million pounds of groundfish quota (9 million pounds is owned by the permit bank). And Bruce Tobey added, “And it’s our bank!” Joe Orlando said that the Fisheries Commission brings a uniquely Gloucester focus on the industry and this is very important to protecting the fishing industry of our City. He said the commercial fishing vessel dockage issue is very important and needs to be addressed. He said we need to encourage new investment. He also sees a great need to address the pre-treatment of waste water to encourage processing in the City. Many members agreed with the importance of encouraging more local fish processing as we are allowed to land more fish. Joe further emphasized the synergy between tourism and commercial fishing. He said tourists want to see the boats and the processing of fish. Mark Ring said he is a strong believer in diversity. He said the board needs a gillnetter and a shore-side property owner/fish processor. Bruce Tobey said he worked 7 summers in the old de-hyde plant, and he regrets Gloucester youth today cannot obtain such work/life experience early in their careers. He said we need to rebut the argument that the industry is dead with hard numbers of fishing as a “local” industry – not owned outside or traded on Wall Street. He asked, what does that business plan look like? What are the expenses and revenues? He suggested we seek MBA student volunteers to help us put it together. Al Cottone agreed. He said we need to educate the public...educate Gloucester. He said there are no jobs for kids down on the wharves like when he was young and all the kids got jobs in the summer. Paul Vitale said that the Commission should not jump on regulations. Fishing industry organizations are already handling the regulations. Paul said he is worried about port infrastructure like the railways and Rose’s Marine.

The group had a general discussion about the need to encourage marketing to counteract misinformation promoted by some powerful, high profile, national organizations. Bruce Tobey asked what could be a better more recognized brand than “Gloucester Fish”. Angela Sanfilippo pointed out that the Gloucester Fishermen’s Wives Association (GFWA) “community supported fishery” (CSF) project has brought in \$1.5 million to Gloucester over the past year and half, paid higher prices to fishermen for their catch, and created 12 jobs. GFWA got more than a thousand subscribers to the CSF project in the first year.

The Chair thanked citizens in the audience for taking the time to attend the meeting and invited them to comment. Citizens unanimously expressed enthusiasm for the ideas discussed by members of the reconstituted Fisheries Commission. One citizen, Damon Cummings, said pre-treatment is very important to increased fish processing. He said investment in pre-treatment is needed, but he believes follow through on such investment had not been made because many people have thought that processing could be done more efficiently elsewhere like in Boston or New York City. He does not believe that viewpoint to be correct and it should be studied. Another person suggested that emerging off-shore energy projects are likely to displace even more of the fishing industry towards

Gloucester from other ports. Others said that the Fisheries Commission may be the most important board in the City because the economic stakes are so high and the board is made up of the right kind of experts in the fishing industry, especially the commercial fishermen on the board.

Angela Sanfilippo suggested that before we set an agenda we should invite Gloucester fishing organizations to come before the Commission to brief us on their work and activities. Bergeron said we should also ask the organizations to tell us how the Fisheries Commission could help them.

4. Discussion of Commission plans and agenda

David Bergeron then turned the discussion towards how to channel our hopes and ideas into agenda. He said two specific initiatives had been mentioned in members' opening remarks that could focus our next agenda, the vessel dockage issue and the proposal to invite local organizations to speak before the Commission. What should be on our next agenda? Bergeron said the dockage issue seems important as a component to any plan going forward. Do we want to start with that or invite organizations to make presentations? The presentation by organizations is the beginning of our long-term planning process. Bruce Tobey asked what the approach is to doing long-term planning. David Bergeron said he believes the Commission should engage an external consultant to lead a community strategic planning process. This strategic plan should contain goals with measureable objectives and include activities needed to achieve the goals and objectives with assignments of who would do the activities and their anticipated timeline for completion. Joe Orlando asked the Mayor if resources are available to support such work. Mayor Kirk said that she does not see resources in the City to support staffing the Commission except for providing a staff person to record minutes of future Commission meetings. But she said she believes resources are available to support some ad hoc projects to help initialize the work of the Commission.

We need to get word out to the community about the Commission and the work we are beginning. Bruce Tobey volunteered to work with David Bergeron to write a My View column for the newspaper. There was no objection to this idea. What is the agenda of the next meeting?

The group brainstormed a list of organizations to invite. The group decided that we can invite these and other groups to our next meeting. Joe Orlando said we should include the Chamber of Commerce. Mayor Kirk said that Bob Gillis at the Cape Ann Savings Bank has been working with waterfront property owners for some time and has an informal group. It was agreed that Angela would work with David to pull together an invitation list, and the groups would be invited to speak at the next meeting.

5. Next meeting

Bergeron said that he has been discussing the notion of a standing Commission meeting on the 3rd Thursday of each month. He asked if the members were comfortable with that

day as a standing meeting day. The group was agreeable and the next meeting was set for Thursday, July 21, 2011.

6. Adjournment

The Chair asked for a motion to adjourn. Motion to adjourn was made by Mayor Kirk and seconded by Paul Vitale. Unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
David Bergeron

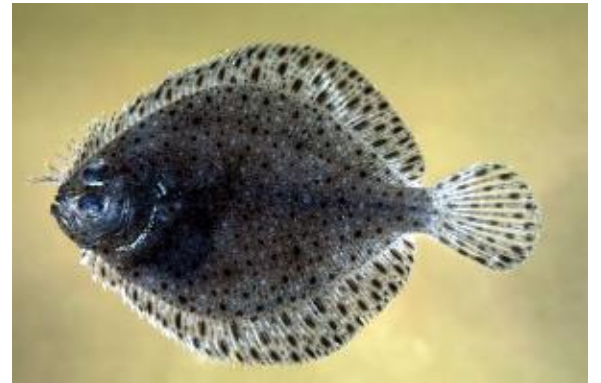
Gloucester's role in the rebuilt, sustainable groundfishery of the (near) future

Presentation to the Economic Development Assessment Team,
US Dept of Commerce
The Gloucester House
Gloucester, MA
May 3, 2011

Sarah P. Robinson, JD, SJD
Critical Inquiries Research
www.criticalinquiries.net

What is the NE groundfish fishery?

- 13 species, 20 stocks (joint management plan)
- Includes cod, haddock, and flounders
- Combined range of the stocks extends (approx) north to Atlantic Canada, south to Virginia, and west to the 200 mile boundary of the US EEZ
- A “multispecies” fishery: stocks co-locate at times & are caught together at times
- An historic fishery: some stocks (cod!) commercially fished since early 1600s



12 of the 13 NE groundfish species currently managed by the northeast multispecies management plan. (Not to scale.) Images courtesy NOAA Fisheries. © S Robinson 2011

What is stock rebuilding?

- Federal law requires that “overfished” stocks be rebuilt in no more than 10 years (barring certain statutory exceptions)
- An “overfished” stock is one determined to be at a stock size less than $\frac{1}{2}$ the size that yields maximum sustainable yield, over long term
- A “rebuilt” stock is one determined to be at a stock size equal to/greater than the size that yields maximum sustainable yield, over long term
- NE groundfish rebuilding plans now in place were adopted in 2004, 2006, (one adjusted in 2010)

What is NE groundfish rebuilding timetable?

- 7 stocks expected to be rebuilt in 2014
 - one is rebuilt/nearly rebuilt now (GOM cod)
- 1 stock expected to be rebuilt in 2016
- 3 stocks expected to be rebuilt in 2017
- 2 stocks expected to be rebuilt in 2020s
- 2 stocks expected to be rebuilt in 2050s
 - One is nearly rebuilt now (redfish)
- 2 stocks for which status/rebuilding plan unable to be calculated

- 2 stocks, scheduled for 2014 rebuilding, are rebuilt (2000, 2006)
- 1 stock, scheduled for 2014 rebuilding, reassessed in 2010 and determined to be fully rebuilt (in fact, at 215% of rebuilding goal)

What will a rebuilt fishery look like?

Based on present estimates, when all stocks are rebuilt, allowable catch of the groundfish stocks will be almost **four and a half times (447%)** groundfish stock landings in fishing year 2009 (most recent year for which data available).

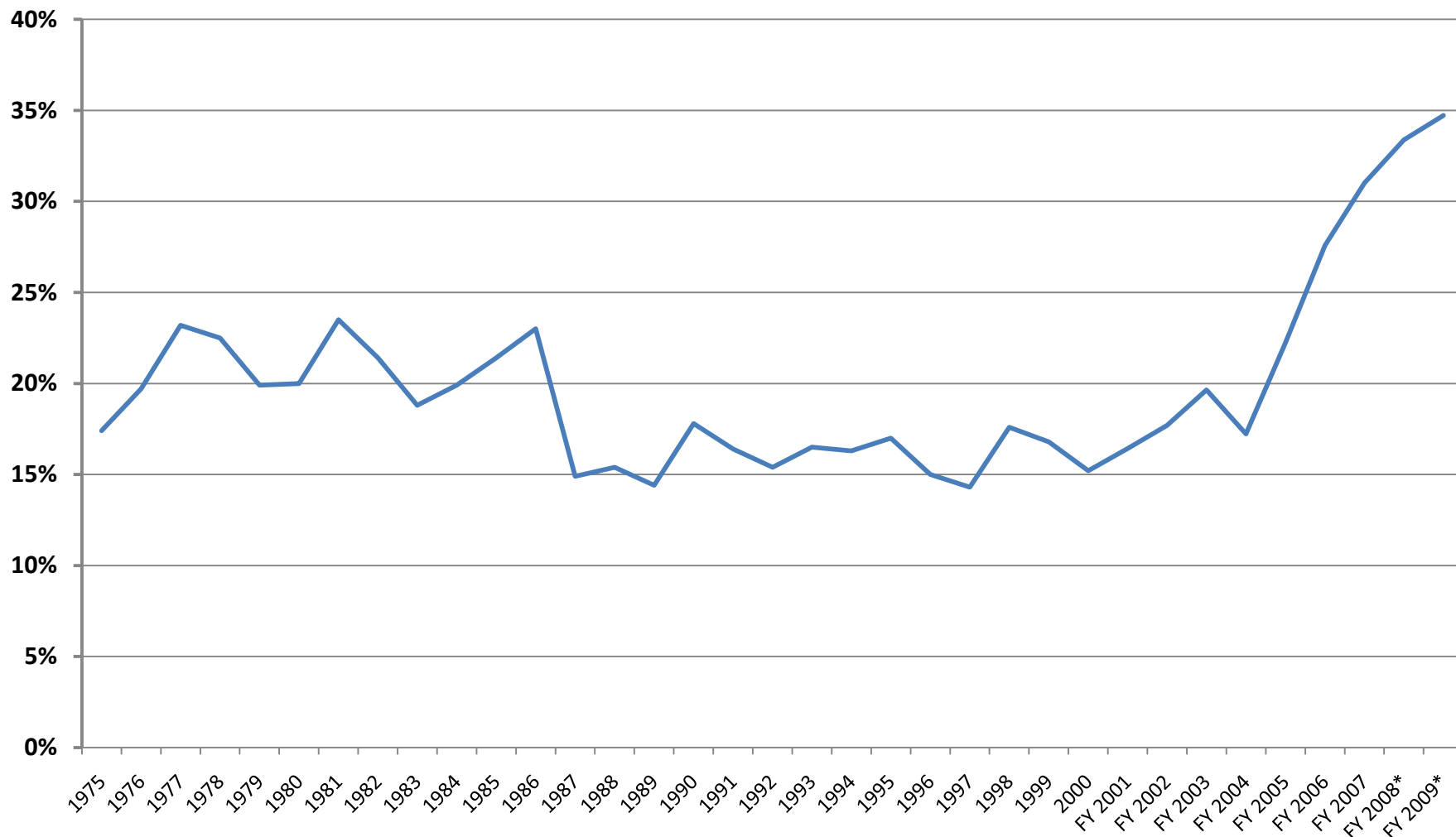
Landings in fishing year 2009: **66.2 m lbs**

Likely combined annual catch limit of groundfish stocks when stocks rebuilt: **296 m lbs***

** A conservative (precautionary) estimate assuming ABCs based on fishing at 75% Fmsy, and an ACL set at 95% of ABC*

What does/could rebuilding mean for
Gloucester?

Gloucester groundfish landings as percent of all NE groundfish landings, 1975-2009 (average is 20%, low is 14%, high is 35%*)



ACTUAL GROUND FISH LANDINGS IN GLOUCESTER, RECENT YEARS

Fishing Year 2009*

23 million pounds

Fishing Year 2007

18.8 million pounds

POTENTIAL GROUND FISH LANDINGS IN GLOUCESTER (when groundfish stocks rebuilt)

20% of estimated total allowable groundfish catch
(Gloucester average 1975-2009)

59.2 million pounds
(260% increase from 2009)

35% of estimated total allowable groundfish catch
(Gloucester high, 1975-2009)

91.8 million pounds
(400% increase from 2009)

14% of estimated total allowable groundfish catch
(Gloucester low, 1975-2009)

41.4 million pounds
(180% increase from 2009)

Some points to bear in mind:

- Groundfish stocks not the only stocks landed in Gloucester! Also: lobster, monkfish, herring, mackerel, scallop, whiting, dogfish, skates, others
- BUT: From 1975 to 2004 (years analyzed so far), revenues from Gloucester-landed groundfish stocks ranged from **78%** of total ex-vessel revenues in Gloucester (1984) to **42%** of total ex-vessel revenues in Gloucester (2000); the average from 1975 to 2004 was **61%** (using 2002 dollars).

Gloucester is a **full service, hub port** for the fishing industry in the northeast region

- Many vessels landing fish in Gloucester are based in Gloucester and Cape Ann; others, however, based in ports north & south of Gl.
- Some non-resident vessels tie up for certain periods of the year in Gloucester (convenient location near Gulf of Maine & Georges Bank)
- Gloucester has dockage, vessel haul-out facilities, gear shops, fuel, ice, bait, seafood auction, some (few) fish processors/buyers (“infrastructure”)
- ‘Spoke’ ports rely on Glouc to go fishing; Gl relies on spoke ports to help maintain Gl infrastructure

Final points

(Robinson & Gloucester Community Panel, 2003,2005):

- Significant rebuilding potential for groundfish
- Being ready for a rebuilt (& rebuilding) groundfish fishery requires maintaining Gloucester as a full service, hub port for the region (& for Gloucester!)
- Maintaining a full service, hub port requires attention to the shoreside commercial fishing infrastructure that enables commercial fishing
 - dockage, vessel haul-out facilities, gear shops, fuel, ice, bait, seafood auction, fish processors/buyers, opportunities for 'value-added' fish products, etc.

This presentation is based on:

- Robinson & Gloucester Community Panel, A Study of Gloucester's Commercial Fishing Infrastructure (2003)
- Robinson & Gloucester Community Panel, Commercial Fishing Industry Needs on Gloucester Harbor, Now and in the Future (2005)
- Robinson, Structures & Strategies of NE Ground-fishing Businesses in Gloucester, MA (2007)
- Ongoing dissertation research, "Rebuilding Groundfisheries in New England, 1993-2010: The Practice, Not the Theory" (legal anthropology)
- Analyses use landings data, stock assessments, and rebuilding plans made available by NOAA Fisheries and the New England Fishery Management Council

See www.criticalinquiries.net or www.gloucesterfisheriesproject.net