



**City of Gloucester**  
**Fisheries Commission Minutes**  
Thursday, November 17, 2011- 7:00PM  
Gloucester High School  
32 Leslie O. Johnson Road

Members:

David Bergeron  
Bruce Tobey (absent)  
Sefatia Romeo Theken  
Angela Sanfilippo  
Al Cottone

Paul Vitale  
Mark Ring  
Joseph Orlando  
BG Brown  
Gus Sanfilippo

Also in attendance: Mayor Carolyn Kirk; Paul Diodati, Director- MA Div. of Marine Fisheries; several members of the public

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**1. Call to Order & Chairman's Report**

**Mr. Bergeron**, Chair of the Commission, called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and thanked everyone for coming, including the guests.

**2. Minutes of the October 20, 2011 meeting**

The Commission turned first to the minutes from the October meeting.

*MOTION:* **Ms. Sanfilippo** motioned to adopt the minutes and Ms. Romeo Theken seconded. No discussion. All in favor none opposed, motion passed unanimously.

**3. Report of Ad Hoc Committee on Commercial Fishing Dockage**

In the next order of business, the Commission turned to a discussion of the November 10, 2011 ad hoc committee meeting on Commercial Fishing Dockage. **Mr. Bergeron** circulated a short written report of the meeting. The report has been included at the end of these minutes. The major topic of discussion at this meeting was Ms. Patti Page's volunteer work to collect data and photographs of the commercial fleet currently docking in the City. The committee will meet again on Dec. 1. Mr. Bergeron thanked Ms. Page for all her hard work. He also thanked the members of the Fisheries Commission and Waterways Board for participating on the ad hoc committee.

In discussion, **Ms. Romeo Theken** noted that she had requested the formulation of an ad hoc committee on commercial dockage in the City in order to garner a more solid defense for the need for more dockage space in Gloucester. Word of mouth from the fleet is not enough when considering prospects for grants and other government support—these types of support require

reliable documentation. Ms. Romeo Theken went on to note that Patti Page has done a remarkable job with this documentation- especially in organizational the information. She has also done an excellent job of backing the inventory with visual images and film. This type of inventory on this level of detail has never been done in the community before. The Commission is very grateful to Ms. Page for all her hard work.

**Mr. Orlando** also thanked Ms. Page and noted that the photographic record she collected was especially surprising and very telling. This captures something that was essential- it clearly shows where there are shortcomings and where there are opportunities. Mr. Orlando followed by mentioning that he would like to see the photographs made available for public viewing.

**Mr. Bergeron** answered that the photographs will be made available once he project is complete. Ms. Page agreed to do a final presentation once the pictures have all been assembled.

To add to the dockage conversation, **Ms. Sanfilippo** noted that one of the main themes of the Maritime Summit held in Gloucester earlier this week was that the City has a vested interest in protecting and strengthening its current resources- mainly the fishing industry. She also suggested that given the dockage issue and the results from the summit, it may be useful for the commission to revisit Sarah Robinson's report from a few years back.

**Mr. Bergeron** agreed that it will definitely be useful for the Commission to review Sarah Robinson's report, as well as the Mt. Auburn Harbor Economic Development Plan. For now, however, the Commission's focus is to obtain an accurate and clear catalog of the commercial fishing vessels in Gloucester. At present, Div. of Marine Fisheries data shows that almost 200 boats landing in Gloucester are owned by Gloucester residents. He feels it is safe to say there are 200 commercial fishing boats that consider Gloucester their home port, but there are 400 or more boats currently landing in Gloucester in total. Acquiring data on the transient boats that are landing here and need dockage occasionally will be the more difficult task.

**Mr. Vitale** noted that some boats currently docking in Gloucester are registered in nearby towns, most of which are gillnetters and transient dragners. **Mr. Ring** added that there are many boats that do not have Gloucester as a homeport that have been tying up here for years. Ms. Page added that she feels she has enough knowledge of the fleet to accurately capture all of this information in her inventory.

**Ms. Romeo Theken** added that another much needed piece of information that is missing from this dockage inventory is how many boats came to Gloucester seeking dock space and were turned away due to a lack of space. Re-stating that this is the first inventory of its kind, Ms. Romeo- Theken suggested that the Waterways Board might be able to come up with some funding to have professionals come in and compile the data and photographs from the inventory in an official study or plan. Now that there is reliable documentation, funding is available to advance the project. Furthermore, this data should be used to facilitate cooperation on the waterfront between the industry, property owners, and the City in order to expand opportunities for all parties sharing the waterfront.

**Mr. Bergeron** informed the Commission that through the City's Community Development Department, the Commission has the capability of mapping the City's current dockage space.

Valerie Nelson, meeting attendee, noted that she has heard that some of historic dockage in the City has been lost due to a lack of maintenance. She asked if information on the historic dockage lost

would also be documented. Ms. Page responded that some of this dockage has been photographed, but not all of it. She added that additional efforts will be made to catalog this lost historic dockage.

**Mr. Vitale** added that if this inventory leads to rearranging space and boats on the waterfront, the Commission and the City need to make sure that dockage space for recreation boats is not pushed out. These recreational boats are a big source of revenue in the summer and at other times of the year. If there is no place for non-commercial vessels to dock, an important part of the City's economy will suffer. This point should be kept in mind when addressing the current dockage situation in the City. It's important not to forget that there are two parts to the fishing industry- commercial and recreational- and both parts provide jobs here in town. Coexistence needs to be the goal.

**Mr. Bergeron** agreed that this is an important consideration in this dockage inventory process. Regarding the next meeting of the ad hoc committee on commercial fishing dockage, he let everyone know that it will be held at City Hall in 3<sup>rd</sup> floor conference room on December 1.

#### **4. Mayor Carolyn Kirk, Report on Maritime Industry Summit**

**Mr. Bergeron** next turned to the Mayor and thanked her for coming, also noting that the Maritime Summit was very useful. He said he attended the whole two days and it provided the participants with much valuable information. Mayor Kirk launched into a discussion regarding some of the highlights from the Summit, which was held November 15 and 16 at the Cruiseport in Gloucester.

The origins for this Summit were in the Harbor Master Plan and the Mt. Auburn Harbor Economic Development Plan. Both of these plans have left the definition of Gloucester's maritime economy somewhat elusive. The purpose of this Summit was to bring stakeholders together to talk about what the maritime economy is here in Gloucester. 100+ people attended over the two days.

Participants attempted to address three questions:

1. What is maritime economy in Gloucester?
2. How big is it? How many jobs, how much revenue generated, etc.
3. What is Gloucester's niche? What are our strengths?

The presentations and break out groups touched on all three of these questions in different ways.

In answering the first question, several presenters discussed examples of the types of marine science being conducted both in Gloucester and in similar port cities. Answers to this question also dealt with an investigation into current options in product development related to ocean resources. One illustrative example included the production of Band-Aids with a special sea-shell- based additive that is extremely effective at cauterizing severe wounds on soldiers. These Band-Aids have been widely used in Iraq and Afghanistan and bring a high price- more than \$27 a Band-Aid.

Other examples of innovative options for the maritime economy included robotic tuna, cutting edge tidal energy techniques, tagging and tracking, engineering, and all support services that go along with these innovations. Discussions also took place regarding the practicality of all these possibilities for Gloucester. Local examples in innovation and diversity such as Neptune's Harvest were also touched upon during the summit.

Overall, a huge amount of information was presented. Meeting attendees included visitors from California, Maine, Rhode Island and Canada. There was also representation from several different sectors in Gloucester.

The second overarching question of the Summit came about due to the fact that there is no coding system associated with traditional maritime economies that would allow the City to have a clear quantifiable picture of the jobs, dollars, businesses etc. that make up the water-dependent economy. However, anecdotal information is available so one of the purposes of this Summit was to gather hard numbers on the size and scope of the maritime economy through the collection of this anecdotal information.

The Marine and Oceanographic Technology Network (MOTN), based in southeastern Massachusetts, has obtained some anecdotal information through its work as an industry organization. A recent survey they sponsored shows that in Rhode Island, Connecticut, and southeastern Massachusetts, there are 400 maritime-related businesses, employing 25,000 people and generating \$3.2 billion annually in sales.

Another indicator of the size of Gloucester and greater New England's maritime economy is the lack of offshore wind development. Although a highly contentious issue, it was noted at the Summit that Europe currently has 1,200 offshore wind turbines installed while the United States has 0. Projections given at the Summit predicted although uncertain at this time, several thousands of these turbines could be constructed off our coasts in the next 20 years. Another form of alternative energy explored was tidal buoys, which harness energy from the oceans tides. Currently there is one tidal buoy off our shores, but predictions estimate that 30,000 could be installed in the next 20 years.

Additional conversations in this topic area included the types of jobs, businesses, and investments Gloucester could be pursuing.

The third and final question that the Summit sought to answer dealt with identifying Gloucester's niche in the maritime economy. If Gloucester wants to lay claim, where is it? A clear answer to this question was not presented at this Summit, but Gloucester's strengths and weaknesses were clearly outlined. These strengths and weaknesses ranged from the very specific to more broad perspectives. One example that came from the participants of the Summit was that Gloucester needs better internet access- otherwise it will be impossible for businesses and scientific investigations to work here. On a broader scale, a topic of discussion at the Summit involved the creation of an institute that umbrellas universities, NGOs, government, the fishing industry, and private industry. Aquaculture was also an opportunity area that was widely discussed.

The Mayor went on to thank Sarah Garcia, Community Development Director for the City, for organizing the Summit.

A clear picture emerged from this Summit: the opportunity for Gloucester to diversify its maritime economy is right at the City's doorstep, it just needs to be determined what makes sense for Gloucester. Also, these are just the first steps. Much more will come of the information that was gathered as a result of this Summit.

The Mayor then turned to Valerie Nelson, keynote speaker from the Summit and asked her to add a few words.

Ms. Nelson noted that the Summit involved some very complicated and very diverse conversation. For the purposes of the Fisheries Commission, a very strong statement emerged. It was clear that Gloucester's first and central waterfront industry even into the future has to be the fishing industry. Therefore, the key question to effective development becomes how to think about new and

expanded maritime industry in relation to the fishing industry. Ms. Nelson noted that scientific research opportunities came up quite a bit, especially in the context of collaborative research. MIT and other universities attended and made it clear that the Gloucester fleet has some real potential to capitalize on the expertise they have of the ocean through collaborative research efforts. This offers great potential to strengthen the fleet with new sources of revenue.

Ms. Nelson went on to note that discussions of Neptune's Harvest and Cape Ann Fresh Catch were highlights of some of the efforts Gloucester is already taking to diversify its maritime economy with the goal of increasing opportunities for the fishing industry. These are examples of programs that have gained some substantial attention from areas outside of the City. Furthermore, the models these programs use can be applied by other businesses here in town. Ann Malloy of Neptune's harvest presented at the Summit and had some great suggestions for diversification. Cape Ann Fresh Catch was mentioned as an innovative marketing approach as a means to provide healthy food to consumers and increased revenues direct to boats.

In terms of oceans research, Ms. Nelson noted that a fisheries institute here in the City could be a very real possibility. MIT participants discussed this possibility quite a bit.

**Ms. Sanfilippo** added that the fishing industry should work to better promote itself for what it already has. First it's important to protect what's here and then it can be expanded.

**Mr. Bergeron** agreed and noted that he heard the same recommendation from all the experts at the Summit- Gloucester must first capitalize on what it has and then expand from there.

**Mr. Vitale** brought up the high cost of water and sewage bills for the town, a point that was also mentioned at the Summit. To attract any new businesses to waterfront, those rates must come down. He also noted that some businesses, including Whole Foods, may leave Gloucester because of this issue.

**Ms. Sanfilippo** noted that a desalinization plant has long been discussed as a potential technology development that would aid the City in many ways- this is still something that should be considered.

**Mr. Vitale** added that collaborative research efforts could be immensely financially beneficial for the local fleet. He talked about how research vessels cost \$25,000 a day to do research—the fishing industry could contract for less at substantial gains to the industry. This research could be fisheries related (for example, in partnership with organizations like the Gulf of Maine Research Institute) or it could be non-fisheries related. Other examples of ocean research could include pharmaceuticals, energy, etc. There are plenty of opportunities just off shore and out on deep sea trips.

Sarah Garcia added that many of the presenters from the summit are aware that the Gloucester fleet has a level of institutional knowledge that is invaluable to these ocean researchers. This institutional knowledge should be used to open up new business opportunities.

The Mayor added that the industry should be investigating areas where their work can intersect with other maritime industries. This will take some work, but it will be well worth the effort. For example, it would be worth investigating how local businesses (i.e., Varian) could be partnered with the fleet to take on new ventures in research and technology.

**Mr. Bergeron** asked what specifically the Fishing Commission could do to assist with moving forward from the Summit.

The Mayor responded that all documents and summary files from the Summit will be made available online as soon as possible. Next steps for moving forward will be included with these documents. Members of the Fisheries Commission should familiarize themselves with what was talked about at the Summit by reviewing these documents. Sarah Garcia will have the job of trying to pull something together that makes sense for next steps.

Also moving forward, the Mayor is expecting to contact the key figures at institutions such as MIT to understand the full base of their oceans work. From there, Gloucester's possible contributions to this research will be investigated. It will be important to build relationships with these institutions.

**Mr. Vitale** once again visited the point that the City's major infrastructure needs to be improved upon in order to attract these potential partners.

The Mayor agreed and noted that although the City's water/ sewer bills are high they are not the highest in the country anymore. This is an ongoing dialogue that she realizes deserves serious attention. There will definitely be opportunities for the Fisheries Commission to weigh in on the need for these improvements.

Valerie Nelson added the point that the strength of American engineering is based on the mentality of hard working people with an intuitive knowledge of how to work with the land. Gloucester has this valuable asset with years and years of accumulated knowledge about the ocean and life on the water. Given this valuable asset, it will be interesting to clarify what fishermen can bring to the table in diversifying the maritime economy and understanding the structure of these collaborative relationships. Furthermore, it might be worth it to invite the MIT ocean scientists to meet with the Fisheries Commission.

Meeting attendee Suzanne Altenburger added that across the two days of the Summit, it was made clear that a key element to progress is the need to have particular regulatory stability. Gloucester needs to decide what image it wants to present to the world. It's important to be clear about getting focused in order to attract people that can make a difference.

**Mr. Orlando** agreed with Ms. Altenburger. He added that he was concerned over the fact that the Summit did not talk about how Gloucester can improve the infrastructure of the fishing industry as to better handle the millions of pounds of fish that are landed in the community.

The Mayor responded that this was not the intent of the Summit.

**Mr. Orlando** asked why bolstering the fishing industry was not a main element of the Summit. Hosting a conference where experts discuss new avenues for economic development for the City is concerning considering the current lack of available space on the waterfront. He noted the current scarcity of waterfront dockage for commercial fishing vessels and added that he doesn't see where there could be room for these new businesses and other economic opportunities. It is important to deal with the issues right in front of the City before long term goals are considered.

The Mayor responded that she has heard these concerns and she understands where Mr. Orlando is coming from. However, this does not change the fact that the City needs to diversify its maritime economy because a diverse economy is the only way Gloucester can make the investments Mr.

Orlando brought up. The key to this diversification is to figure out how to make progress in a way that is compatible with the industries that are already in Gloucester, namely fishing. In regards to his concerns, it may make sense for the City to host a separate “Fisheries Summit” to better address the developments that are needed to support a healthy fishing industry. The two days that were scheduled for the Maritime Economy Summit were somewhat constricting considering the wide array of subjects that were to be covered. This is why it may make sense to hold a separate Fisheries Summit to better address what is needed to bring the fishing industry up to a better operating capacity. The important thing to remember is that a healthy economy will require a certain level of sharing the harbor. In this light, the dockage inventory prepared by the Fisheries Commission makes a great deal of sense for moving forward as it will show what is needed and where there are gaps.

**Ms. Romeo Theken** responded to the Mayor by adding that the fleet’s fear of loss of dockage space is still a serious concern. To them, when the City says it wants to “diversify” waterfront usage, it means the fishermen are likely to be relocated or displaced. If we are going to diversify, we need to have a plan for dockage. The industry can effectively co-exist with other waterfront institutions, but it will require that anything that is displaced must be replaced.

The Mayor agreed and noted that the reconstitution of the Fisheries Commission was intended to prevent the marginalization of the fishing industry. The key to balanced development will be to keep open communications.

**Mr. Cottone** added that it is important for the City administration to understand where Gloucester’s priorities lie. It’s clear that a healthy maritime economy in Gloucester requires a strengthened and solidified fishing industry.

Meeting attendee Damon Cummings added that from his personal experience, the best way for Gloucester to ensure that the fishing industry can capitalize on its strengths and stay as the central part of the economy will be to better advertise its availability to researchers and other related businesses. Given the development of a clear inventory of boats in the City, it would make sense to make this information publicly available and easily accessible for those who might be interested in contracting the local fleet.

**Ms. Sanfilippo** added that even though the fishing industry was not officially on the Summit agenda as its own point of discussion, every break-out group raised the point that Gloucester needs to keep strengthening and marketing the fishing industry. If fishing industry were to leave town, nothing else will work here. There are no more areas in the United States where new ports can be developed, so Gloucester is very fortunate to have one.

**Mr. Vitale** added that many attendees of the Summit were saying that the City must promote what we have and work with it. The rates that can be charged for renting boats could be immensely beneficial to the local fleet. In the same light, the capabilities of the fleet and their willingness to work collaboratively on diverse projects must be marketed and advertised so that these possibilities can be taken advantage of. Gloucester is uniquely positioned to capitalize on these collaborative research possibilities. These added revenues could also help to protect the fleet against the regulatory unknowns of the future, and also as a promotional tool for casting a better light on fishermen. He also noted how the local fleet in New Jersey was able to play a key part in the energy innovations that are going on there offshore. In the same light, it makes sense for Gloucester’s fleet to get involved in scientific advancements on our ocean so that they can make

sure that they have a financial stake in any additional fishing grounds that are lost to other industries.

The Mayor, returning to Mr. Cottone's earlier point, noted that the City is in no way going to back-off in advocating for the fishing industry. However, it is still important to build alternative capacity in order to strengthen the overall City. The purpose of this Summit was to gain a long term outlook that will provide a solid understanding of this maritime industry. Given some of the developments with rebounding fish stocks and the hope for loosened regulations, the timing should fit nicely. Also, long-range planning is important for this diverse economy to get through ups and downs.

Meeting attendee Vito Calamo addressed the Mayor and let her know that this a key time for the fishing industry. Political representatives are attempting to work with the industry to get them through these difficult times. He added that a water purification system is something the City should pursue. Additionally, he addressed the Sector regulatory system and noted that this regulatory system has resulted in a 20% loss to the industry. Now more than ever local fishermen need support.

The Mayor responded that not all planning is long-term. For example, the dockage issue is being addressed in the immediate sense.

Mr. Calamo responded that he is going to talk to Gloucester's political representation about different regulatory plans as alternatives to sectors. Any additional loss of infrastructure could mean the loss of the local fishing industry.

Marcia Hart, meeting attendee, joined the discussion and noted that she spent both days at the Summit. She explained that many of the attendees that were there from out of town were impressed by Gloucester, especially by its active harbor. So many people who aren't from here recognize the City's strengths. Many local people don't understand value of industry to the City anymore and have bought the line that it's dead and will not come back. The City and the Fisheries Commission need to do some capacity building with the community to garner support for the fishing industry. Everyone is struggling and worried about tax money, houses and schools and they want the City to pull itself up. All this provides an opportunity to market the industry as a strength to the City. She added that a Fisheries Summit would be a great opportunity to market the fishing industry and demonstrate its strength and potential. In a similar effort, recreational fishermen performed a survey to demonstrate generated income for the City and proved themselves as a valuable asset. The commercial industry could do the same. Generating local support through such efforts would mean that support for fisheries issues would become bigger than the fleet itself. She added that other major issues of the Summit included aquaculture, ocean acidification, and energy issues. Gloucester needs to determine where it wants to develop within the context of these key issues in order to ensure that they are not left behind in developing for the future.

## **5. Paul Diodati, Director Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries, Future Prospects**

Next, **Mr. Bergeron** introduced Paul Diodati, Director of the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries to the Commission and thanked him for attending. Mr. Bergeron also congratulated Mr. Diodati on his recent election as Chair to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Council. Mr. Diodati thanked the Commission for inviting him to speak. He also congratulated the Mayor on her recent re-election. He recognized the work she has done in partnership with Mayor Lang of New Bedford



to bring fisheries to the forefront of the political arena, which is long overdue considering the value of the fisheries to Massachusetts's economy. Still, he noted that political attention for the industry is not high enough. While Senator Bruce Tarr and Representative Ann Margaret Farrante do an excellent job and are well recognized as fisheries experts, these issues have never resonated enough with others in the state house.

Mr. Diodati moved next to a discussion of the changes that have come to Gloucester since he has been working with DMF. He noted the influx of tourism and tourism-related businesses and recognized the challenges this presents for the industry and public planners. He also noted that these changes have not occurred at the same level in New Bedford. Despite the challenges, this tourism industry along with the development of new industrial parks in Gloucester can be seen as positive. New opportunities for the fishing industry that can exist in cooperating with these new economic sectors.

Moving to a discussion of the current federal regulatory system, Mr. Diodati mentioned that when talking about Sectors and the new system, the failures and shortcomings of the days-at-sea program can't be forgotten. The old system was not successful at managing fish or fishermen. High mortality rates and higher overfishing categorized the days at sea program. While there is a painful transition going on under the new sector system, there is economic efficiency out there. Regarding concerns over the redistribution of wealth under this system, Mr. Diodati noted that there never has been a system in place that allowed for the majority of fishermen to make the largest profit. While building the management program that is now in effect, it was agreed that while many of the parts of the plan were not ideal, it was still the best alternative at hand. At present, it is in the industry's best interest to make this system succeed because there are no alternatives available at this time.

Mr. Diodati next discussed the value of seafood landed in Gloucester, which has increased 50-60%, in 10 years. The Commonwealth lands approximately a half a billion dollars annually—generally this figure can be multiplied 3 to 4 times to get value of industry (jobs, shore side operations, etc.). Gloucester's share alone makes up a quarter billion dollars at the low end. Much of the revenue generated in Gloucester is related to the ground-fishery.

Continuing on with a discussion of Gloucester's role in the state fishery, Mr. Diodati noted that the City sees a high number of transient boats. 75% of the boats landing in Gloucester are Massachusetts, and 25% are from other ports in the region. Recently, the City has seen an influx of Maine-registered boats landing in Gloucester due to new regulations that do not favor landing in Maine.

On the topic of recreational dockage, DMF offers a small boating infrastructure grant program designed to provide funding to communities like Gloucester for transient recreational boats. Mr. Diodati offered to speak with the Mayor about this grant at a later date. The grant is federally funded but it is administered by the state.

Moving forward, Mr. Diodati noted that the Gulf of Maine stock assessment for cod is looking poor. If the stock assessment is correct and regulations are amended accordingly, the game plan for the Massachusetts fishery must be rethought. Other stocks may offer expanded opportunities such as Georges Bank haddock and Gulf of Maine redfish. Further potential for growth in the industry could involve expanding the number of smaller boats for tuna fishing. The Massachusetts fleet is at the center of the tuna bubble and the stock on Georges Bank is expected to stay stable. The tuna fleet is

highly mobile and will land at the closest port available—Gloucester could benefit immensely from this.

Mr. Diodati next noted the recent transition of some fishermen out of the ground-fishery towards alternative types of fishing. Many ground-fishermen who also hold lobster licenses have shifted to their focus to lobstering. Regulatory “Area One” off the coast of Massachusetts is doing fairly well and is expected to stay stable. Lobster landings have gone up as a result. Smaller boats (30-45 footers) will be turning up here more often. Mr. Diodati expects this trend to continue and reminded the Commission that consolidation is not unique to the Sector system, but has been going on since the early 1990s.

**Mr. Bergeron** asked if Mr. Diodati was suggesting that ground-fishermen redirect their efforts into lobster business.

Mr. Diodati responded that he is not suggesting it, but for those who do have lobstering permits that are not in use, it may make sense to begin to shift efforts. He thinks this shift is to be expected.

**Ms. Sanfilippo** asked Mr. Diodati to speak on the efforts at the state level to market Massachusetts seafood and fishermen.

Mr. Diodati responded that the state has in fact taken on this effort and has realized the importance of it in light of the recent Globe articles on mislabeled local seafood. He is concerned that this push to ensure that seafood advertised as local is in fact local will put additional strain on the local markets and drive prices up. There is a limited supply of fresh fish, and the demand is already high at present. Additionally, Mr. Diodati took some time to explain the newly formed Seafood Marketing Commission at the Division of Marine Fisheries. This legislature created the new body under the last budget and the appointments to the commission are almost complete.

**Ms. Sanfilippo** followed that the application requirements for these seats are very stiff.

Mr. Diodati explained that the reason for the background checks, etc. is the fact that the Governor is the appointing authority for this committee. This makes thorough background checks a requirement for the application process. At this point, there are only one or two outstanding seats on the Commission. Mr. Diodati added that he is curious himself to see how the Commission agenda takes shape. The bottom line is that Massachusetts fishermen need to be better marketed to the public. This hardworking and important asset to the Commonwealth has sometimes been misrepresented as villains. The state needs to create programs and publications that demonstrate the heroic nature of this line of work. Fishermen are not villains- they make major sacrifices to provide to the nation’s food supply. The overall goal of this new legislative Commission will be to increase the price that fishermen get paid. This will be challenging and it will mean convincing consumers to pay a higher price for their seafood.

Meeting attendee Marcia Hart inquired if a study had been done regarding consumers’ willingness to pay a higher price for locally harvested seafood.

**Mr. Bergeron** responded that there had been a UMass Boston study where students found that consumers would be willing to pay \$1-\$1.50 more per pound for locally caught seafood.

**Mr. Vitale** added that it's clear from farmers markets and Cape Ann Fresh Catch that people are willing to pay more. While this seems perplexing at first, the appeal lies in supporting the local economy and promoting better health food choices.

Mr. Diodati also noted the recent meeting on the creation of a large indoor farmers market in Boston. This facility will be next to Haymarket.

**Ms. Sanfilippo** added that this market will be indoors and operational year-round. It will also include MA-caught seafood. At the recent meeting, she was quick to point out that there is plenty of MA-caught seafood to source the market in response to concerns that it may be difficult to source this seafood locally.

**Mr. Vitale** agreed that this could be an ideal venue for MA fishermen.

**Ms. Sanfilippo** added that the Massachusetts Lobster Associations should consider participating at this market.

Next, the Mayor asked Mr. Diodati if there were any laws or regulations prohibiting the City from creating a Gloucester brand.

Mr. Diodati responded that no, there is not- but that it has been tried before by such groups as the Cape Cod Hook Association unsuccessfully. The outcome tended towards animosity between gear types instead of increased profits for the region.

**Ms. Sanfilippo** added that part of the challenge faced by the Cape Cod Hook Association had to do with limited funding for promotion. The steep costs associated with marketing make these ventures difficult to maintain.

Mr. Diodati responded that this could be a potential topic for the Marketing Commission. Gloucester is an incredibly important cultural and historical port. Given these facts and the port's significance as a major fishing industry hub, it wouldn't be illogical for the state to support this type of branding. After all, Gloucester seafood is Massachusetts seafood.

Mr. Diodati went on to reiterate that fleet consolidation will continue and has been a big part of the industry for some time. Gloucester could stand to gain from this consolidation as one of the few remaining ports capable of handling larger boats for landing and offloading. He agrees with the sentiments of the Fisheries Commission in that it is just as important as ever to maintain the fishing industry related infrastructure and business that is currently in Gloucester. Balancing this asset with diverse development initiatives will be key to the port's success.

**Mr. Orlando** responded that he is interested in what Mr. Diodati has to say about the redfish and haddock stocks. The Gloucester fleet could benefit immensely if additional opportunities to harvest more of these stocks were made available.

Mr. Diodati asked what the current problem is with landing redfish.

**Mr. Orlando** answered that the market is the key issue- the price and demand for this stock is low.

Meeting attendee Vito Giacalone added that the regulatory changes for mesh size also posed problems for harvesting redfish. After the stock took a hit, it took time for them to grow back and

now that they are back, larger mesh size requirements and a lack of shore-side redfish processing facilities make it difficult to get a fair price.

**Mr. Orlando** added that redfish were caught and sold to feed soldiers overseas in the old days- suggesting that perhaps that time has come again. He reiterated that he would like to see a Summit dedicated to the fisheries, where new methods for promoting underutilized stocks like redfish could be explored.

**Mr. Bergeron** asked if it makes sense to organize a meeting on redfish specifically.

**Mr. Orlando** responded that the Summit should be on the whole fishery.

**Mr. Vitale** added that the Summit could be broader, focusing also on regulations and infrastructure.

**Mr. Orlando** added that opening closed fishing areas should also be a topic of discussion. These restrictions do not make sense under the current Sector system.

The Mayor asked if anything was currently underway to revisit the necessity of open and closed areas.

**Mr. Vitale** responded that to his knowledge, nothing is underway yet, at least not at the council level.

Before closing, Mr. Diodati mentioned the Governor's recent request to federal authorities for a renewed plan for economic assistance for fishermen. He specifically requested \$21 million. He is in talks with NOAA officials, and is expecting a quick turnaround on the request. If they respond positively, congress would work to appropriate funds.

**Mr. Ring** asked Mr. Diodati if the state has research projects underway that would require the use of local boats.

Mr. Diodati responded that there are currently some boats that the state works with sporadically, but the only vessel used on a regular basis is federally owned. The consistency in using one vessel helps to ensure consistent results.

**Mr. Ring** followed up by asking if funding will be made available to contract boats for gear removal on Stellwagen. He added that the local fleet could help with this effort.

Mr. Diodati responded that these contracts are made available to local boats all the time.

**Mr. Vitale** asked how vessels are solicited for business as part of these contracting efforts.

Mr. Diodati responded that the state puts out a request for bids on its website.

**Ms. Romeo Theken** asked if Mr. Diodati could send Mr. Bergeron this information as it becomes available to distribute to the Commission.

Mr. Diodati answered that he can, although nothing new is expected in the near future.

In a final comment, meeting attendee Valerie Nelson added that the state could assist the local fleet by helping to get a larger share of seafood profits directly to fishermen (like the Cape Ann Fresh Catch model). It doesn't seem right that so much of the profit currently goes to out of state processors and distributors.

**Mr. Bergeron** thanked Mr. Diodati for meeting with the Commission.

## **6. Agenda for the December 15, 2011 meeting**

The Commission moved next to a discussion of the agenda for next month's meeting. Mr. Orlando noted that he is concerned of talk he has heard that Jim Davis, Chairman of New Balance Shoes, Inc and recent proprietor of the Birdseye Plant, is considering buying up other substantial properties in town, many with waterfront space. He added that he thinks it would be valuable to invite Mr. Davis to meet with the Commission and discuss the potential for losing access to key dockage in the City. After discussion, the Commission decided that the best approach will be to officially invite Mr. Davis to come before the Commission next month.

**Mr. Vitale** added that he would like the Commission to speak with Mr. Davis regarding the possible negative impact of displacing boats should he acquire key waterfront properties.

**Mr. Bergeron** agreed to send Mr. Davis a formal letter inviting him to appear before the Commission.

**Ms. Romeo Theken** added that the Commission should spend some time and energy formulating pointed and focused questions for Mr. Davis before next meeting. It's important to present him with the facts regarding the possible consequences of his intentions to buy waterfront property in the City. While the City cannot stop Mr. Davis from purchasing properties if he chooses to do so, they can work with him as a partner if he decides to acquire these properties.

**Mr. Ring** added that Mr. Davis should be invited before the Commission to see if he can be of any help to the industry.

Meeting attendee Vito Giacalone added that the acquisition of private waterfront property by non-industry businesses is not necessarily a negative thing. The important element is that the City works with these businesses to ensure access to dockage. Additionally, preference could be given for those bids or proposals that agree to accommodate waterfront dockage at their shore-side properties. This will be the City's best chance at preserving long-term commercial dockage with the intent of supporting viable shore-side businesses. There is also a potential to have this dockage space deeded to the City. **Mr. Bergeron** agreed that creating incentives for bids and proposals for waterfront property is a good idea.

In a follow-up discussion, **Mr. Orlando** asked if there is a law that allows the City to take dockage by eminent domain if the business is not using it. Meeting attendee Damon Cummings answered that no, there is no such law. Trespassing becomes an issue when accessing the dockage from the privately owned property. Access is the main issue. He also added that the land in the harbor that is exposed at low tide is technically Massachusetts state property. Meeting attendee Phil Cusimano added that boats simply cannot drop anchor at these docks, they would need a permit to do so.

Meeting attendee Valerie Nelson asked if the City consider eminent domain on old freezer properties that are no longer in use. Meeting attendee Sarah Garcia of the City's Community

Development Department answered that there can be discussions about these questions and the answers can be presented to the Commission.

**Ms. Romeo-Theken** returned to a discussion of next month's agenda. She noted that the Commission should address innovative options for moving around current dockage uses to avoid displacement and increase access to currently available areas. Next month's agenda should also include considerations for Fisheries Commission recommendations for the two open seats on the Waterways Board. The Commission has a vested interest in nominating someone from the fishing community to sit on this board. She also added that it would be useful to invite the Harbor Master to a future Fisheries Commission meeting.

Returning to the issue of dockage in the City, Phil Cusimano added that acquiring dockage from certain companies around town involves homeland security issues in a final comment.

Agenda for December 17, 2011 Meeting:

- Invite Jim Davis of New Balance, Inc to meet with the Commission
- Report of Dec. 1 Ad Hoc Commercial Dockage Committee meeting and options for discussions with waterfront property owners.
- Discussion of Fisheries Commission nominations for the open seats on the Waterways Board.

## **7. Adjournment**

**Ms. Sanfilippo** motioned to adjourn the meeting. **Ms. Romeo-Theken** seconded. All in favor, none opposed. Meeting adjourned at 9:03pm.

## ATTACHMENTS

### **Ad Hoc Committee on Commercial Fishing Dockage**

November 10, 2011 Meeting Report

The committee met in the Third Floor Conference Room at City Hall beginning at 7:10 p.m. Present were Joe Orlando, Sefatia Romeo Theken, David Bergeron, Patti Page, and one citizen, Damon Cummings. Committee members absent were Mark Ring, Vito Calomo, and Peter Bent.

The committee discussed the Commission assignment and committee goal. The committee spent most of the meeting discussing the data available, the data gaps and how to fill them.

Patti Page presented the results of her volunteer research. Lists of boats were obtained from the Harbormaster and the State Fish Pier. She displayed a slide show on her laptop showing photographs of all commercial vessels docked in the harbor. The photographic record was used to supplement the lists in constructing a catalogue of the vessels. The slide show also provided a good view of how property owners are being creative to insert floats and accommodate vessels.

Patti presented the preliminary catalogue of about 216 commercial vessels on two spreadsheets sorted by vessel names and by location. A small number of the vessels on the list so far are transient. Some of these transient vessels do business and dock in Gloucester much more often than others. It was agreed that there are more transient vessels not yet catalogued and these need to be included in the database, and some kind of survey will be needed to assess how often and how much dockage space and time the transient commercial fishing fleet will require. The committee agreed to define commercial vessels for this study to include charter boats and whale watch boats as well as commercial fishing vessels. There was a short discussion with no conclusion on how to segregate exclusively recreational vessels from primarily recreational vessels that may rarely sell their catch. However, the committee did agree that the Commission assignment included an inventory of recreational vessels that dock in the harbor as well. We need to map all dockage in order to create an effective plan for everyone that is viable for the commercial fishing fleet.

The committee also discussed the need to collect the names and contact information of fishing vessels that want to come to Gloucester Harbor but which cannot find dockage space. Committee members were aware of at least 20 vessels fishing for tuna that made inquiries to come here this past season but which did not even though they were willing to pay up to 4 times more money than other boats to dock here. Some of the vessels that want to come here are substantial and we need a list. It was felt that this list should be overseen under the authority of the Fisheries Commission.

Next the committee looked at a map of Gloucester Harbor showing all dockage spaces. Patti has obtained equipment from Community Development that will allow her to photograph vessels and record their GPS location for insertion in the digital version of the map. The map could be put on the web. The committee briefly discussed the possibility that it may be possible for property owners to update the map on line to indicate when slips are available for visiting vessels. Fishermen coming to Gloucester would use the website where the interactive map is displayed in order to find available dockage. The City would only provide the website map as a public service and would not function as a broker. The idea was tabled for further discussion later.

The committee members present agreed the preliminary data substantiates the need for a formal study. It is clear that a survey of property owners is needed to complete the inventory as well. The volunteer effort will succeed in documenting the great majority of vessels, but the committee felt strongly that once the preliminary search is completed, a work plan should be established to hire a consultant with appropriate experience and credentials to complete the study and provide a report in which all stakeholders will have confidence. This study should be conducted under the oversight of the Fisheries Commission through the Community Development Department.

#### Next Meeting

The ad hoc committee will meet next on Thursday, December 1 at 7:00 p.m. in the Third Floor Conference Room at City Hall. Patti will continue to work on the data and have a more complete product to share at that time. Members expressed their great appreciation for the substantial volunteer work Patti is putting into the project. The meeting ended at 9:10 p.m.