

**Oyster Task Force Meeting
Tuesday, February 2, 2016, 1:00pm
2021 Lakeshore Dr.
New Orleans, LA 70122**

Meeting called to order at 1:02pm

Allison West called roll:

Voting Members Present:

Wilbert Collins
Dan Coulon
Byron Encalade
Jakov Jurisic
Mitch Jurisich
Brad Robin
Brandt LaFrance
Al Sunseri
John Tesvich
Sam Slavich
Peter Vujnovich
Willie Daisy

Non-Voting Members Present:

Mark Schexnayder
Gordon Leblanc in for Lance Broussard
Captain Chad Hebert
Karl Morgan

Voting Members Absent:

Shane Bagala
Leo Dyson

John Tesvich welcomed Senator Norby Chabert and guests to the meeting

Motion to approve January 5, 2016 meeting minutes by Al Sunseri, 2nd Peter Vujnovich

Motion to approve February 2, 2016 meeting agenda by Jakov Jurisic, 2nd by Peter Vujnovich

Motion to move agenda item 'K. Oyster Lease Moratorium Lifting Committee Report' before 'A- Public Private Oyster Grounds Committee Report' by Mitch, 2nd Al Sunseri, motion carries

Allison West presented the Oyster Task Force with the financial report and tag sales:
December Oyster Tag Sales- 192,444
Oyster Task Force Financial Report:
The remaining FY2016 fund balance as of 1/27/16 is 344,092

Motion to accept the financial report by Wilbert Collin, 2nd by Dan Coulon. Motion carries.

Oyster Lease Moratorium Lifting Committee Report:

Cole Garrett addressed the TF with the OLMLC's recommendations and draft legislation edits

These edits are outlined in detail in the OLMLC 1/26/2016 meeting notes and recommendations that are attached

Andy Wilson stated that private landowners will need more time to be able to execute leases and some may not be reported by the February 1, 2016 cut off date

John Tesvich suggested Andy Wilson work with Cole Garrett to wordsmith the legislation to reflect those changes

Senator Norby Chabert stated that he looks forward to working with the Task Force on these issues

Al Sunseri made a motion to accept the OLMLC's recommendations and legislation as it stands and has been presented, 2nd by Dan Coulon

Amended- Phase 3- Right of First Refusal for Lessees under Private Leases- "For any water bottom claimed by a private person that is under a private oyster lease recorded in the public records of the parish where it is located by February 1, 2016, the private lessee of that water bottom at the time of implementation of phase 3 shall have the right of first refusal for a new state lease on any water bottom claimed by the state within the area of the existing private oyster lease under this phase."

Al Sunseri made a motion to accept the amended legislation and recommendations, 2nd by Dan Coulon. Motion carries.

Public and Private Oyster Grounds Committee Report:

Seed Ground Permit renewal- it was a recommendation of the committee to extend the permit program, with a cap of 700 permits, set permit fee at \$500, and set up a section to allow for an apprenticeship program.

Motion to accept the committee recommendations by Al Sunseri, 2nd by Dan Coulon

Jakov Jurisic suggested that a stipulation be put in place to mandate anyone applying for the apprentice program have a clear record of previous violations

Al Sunseri amended the motion on the table to accept the recommendations of Committee, stating that the Task Force allow the WLF Commission to set the permit cap upon recommendation of the Oyster Task Force, 2nd by Peter Vujnovich. Motion carries

Willie Daisy amended the motion on the table, to authorize LDWF to set the fee for the Seed Ground Permit apprenticeship program, amount not to exceed \$250, 2nd by Jakov Jurisic. Motion carries with one opposed

Peter Vujnovich amended the previous motion to dedicate the Seed Grounds Permit/ apprenticeship funds to the Oyster Development Account, 2nd by Willie Daisy. Motion carries with one opposed

Mitch Jurisich presented the TF with committee's proposed recommendations on gear restrictions:

1. Allow 2 'active dredges'
2. Maximum 54 inch tooth bar (22-23 teeth per dredge)
3. Minimal 2 1/4 tooth spacing
4. No diving boards
5. 175 pound weight limit per dredge

Jakov Jurisic made a motion to accept the above recommendations of the committee, 2nd by Wilbert Collins. Motion carries

Patrick Banks stated that the Department is still reviewing the 'redline' and are currently trying to calculate lease acreage and cultch plants that fall within the proposed areas

Enforcement Report:

Captain Chad Hebert presented the Enforcement Report, stating that in the last couple of weeks there have been 5 polluted cases, 2 theft cases, 1 closed-season case, seized 62 full sacks and 15 mini sacks that were returned to the water. Currently investigating: 7 subjects that were found to be fishing in polluted areas, and the complaints being made in Terrebonne and Lafourche areas of illegal hours, theft, and fishing in polluted areas.

Legislative Report:

Mark Schexnayder reminded the Task Force of the new national requirement that will require completing harvesters training every 5 years, must meet the NSSP requirements

Jakov Jurisich asked Mark Schexnayder to submit draft legislation in regards to this training requirement

Jakov Jurisic made a motion to authorize LDWF to draft legislation regarding the harvesters training requirement, if this cannot be accomplished through regulatory process 2nd by Peter Vujnovich. Motion carries

Al Sunseri requested seeing a list of the states that require harvesters training by law

Al Sunseri made a motion to omit the term “dredge” and replace it with “scraper” when used in the 2016 proposed legislation, 2nd by Jakov Jurisic. Motion carries

Jakov Jurisic suggested bringing back the Oyster Strike Force and using the permit fee to fund

John Tesvich suggested that Jakov Jurisic set up a Legislative Committee meeting to deal with the severance tax and usage of the dedicated funds in the Oyster Development Account

Cole Garrett volunteered to provide draft legislative language on the usage of the Seed Ground Development Account when the Legislative Committee meets

Cole Garrett reminded the Task Force that severance taxes couldn't be taken up this year

Research Committee:

No Report at this time

Coastal Restoration Report:

Dan Coulon made a motion to send a welcome letter inviting the newly elected LDWF Secretary and the new CPRA, secretary to invite to meeting, 2nd Sam Slavich, motion carries

Marketing Report:

Allison West updated the Task Force on the Tempt Films Oyster documentary

Karen Profita made an announcement that the Seafood and Promotions Board will meet on February 10 in Baton Rouge for 1pm at the Welcome Center. On March 29 LSPB has reserved the Rotunda at the Capital with a table for each species, May 21-24 is the National Restaurant Association, the Seafood Board will have a booth and they have some extra spots for anyone interested

Al Sunseri gave a report on the DC 'Walk on the Hill', this will be the 22nd year that GOIC and the OTF have participated

John Tesvich appointed Al Sunseri to chair a committee designated to the Washington DC events and 'Walk the Hill' and suggested that this committee should try and meet for discussion before April 2016

Health Report:

Gordon Leblanc stated that areas 2,3, and 4 were sampled today and hopes to have results by Friday

Sustainability Report:

No report at this time

Professionalism Report:

Tuesday, March 1, 2016 is the Louisiana Fisheries Forward Summit at the Pontchartrain Center in Kenner, LA from 1:00- 4:00PM

Aquaculture Report:

No report at this time

Steven Beck updated the TF on oyster and water quality sampling related to the Bonnet Carre Spillway opening

Al Sunseri requested that Gordon Leblanc and Dr. Supan send the TF information on water quality and sampling moving forward

Upcoming meetings:

Tuesday, February 16, 2016 at 10:00am the Oyster Task Force Legislative Committee will meet in New Orleans and then to follow, there will be a full Oyster Task Force meeting at 1:00pm, also in New Orleans.

Motion to adjourn by Wilbert Collins, 2nd by Brad Robin. Motion carries.

Meeting adjourned at 3:39pm