

LOUISIANA SHRIMP TASK FORCE

MINUTES

January 27, 2010

ROBERT BARHAM  
CHAIRMAN

LOUISIANA ROOM  
LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE & FISHERIES  
2000 QUAIL DRIVE  
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA

## AGENDA

- I. Call to order
- II. Roll Call
- III. Approval of 1.06.10 Minutes
- IV. Update on Shrimp Harvester Panel Meeting
- V. Review of Draft Shrimp Task Force Legislation
- VI. Agency Updates
- VII. Set Next Meeting Date
- VIII. Public Comment
- IX. Adjourn Meeting

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING

OF

## THE LOUISIANA SHRIMP TASK FORCE

Wednesday, January 27, 2010 1:30 PM

Randy Pausina, Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries, presiding.

Mr. Pausina called roll.

### Present

Dr. Mike Strain – Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry  
Cathy Breaux – Louisiana Workforce Commission  
Stacie Deblieux – Louisiana Attorney General’s Office  
Amy Courtney sitting in for David Guilbeau – Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals

Danny Babin – Representative of Shrimp Processor Advisory Panel  
Clint Guidry – Representative of Shrimp Harvester Advisory Panel  
Ewell Smith – LA Seafood Marketing and Promotion Board  
Dr. John Finley – LSU Department of Food Science  
Mark Schexnayder – Louisiana Sea Grant  
Kelsey Short – Louisiana Department of Economic Development

### Absent

Jody Montelaro - Governor’s Office  
Kris Van Orsdel - Louisiana Recovery Authority

**Dr. John Finley moved to approve the minutes from the previous meeting January 6, 2010. Motion seconded by Dr. Mike Strain. Motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Pausina explained that the letter mentioned in motion five from the previous meeting has been sent and the letter mentioned in motion six has been signed by LDWF Secretary Barham and is ready to go out.

Dr. Carrie Castille informed the Task Force that House Bill 551 from Representative Mills created the Seafood Safety Task Force (SSTF). The SSTF was charged to develop menu language for restaurants to identify Chinese seafood and inform the consumer and to investigate possible contaminants in all imported seafood. She said the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has accepted the request to be on the SSTF. Dr. Castile said she will try to avoid overlap in the issues discussed by this Task Force and the SSTF. She also mentioned the report that resulted from an inquiry from Representative Melancon.

Danny Babin expressed concern that consumers would only be warned about Chinese seafood. He asked that other countries be included because of concerns over trans-shipment and loopholes.

Dr. Castille replied that she would recommend this to the SSTF. She also mentioned that the FDA has been very forthcoming with information.

Mr. Pausina stated that he'd like to avoid crossover between this Task Force and the SSTF.

Dr. Castille stated that the SSTF has been charged with four tasks having to do with imported seafood.

Mark Schexnayder asked if the criteria are the same as for domestic seafood.

Dr. Strain said that they must be as or more stringent than domestic criteria.

Clint Guidry stated that due to their late meeting notice a quorum was not present but he outlined what was discussed at the Shrimp Harvesters Advisory Panel meeting this morning. He said that Lance Nacio would like the state to develop a program which would allow fishermen to have experimental gear licenses so they may optimize their equipment both for more efficient catch and less environmental impact. The AP feels that LDWF is managing the fishery fairly well but might want to consider special latitude openings. At their next meeting, the AP hopes to have a presentation about tri-poly phosphates. The anti-dumping settlement with Thailand was discussed. Mr. Guidry asked if the Secretary could appoint alternate members to the AP and said that their future meetings will take place on the mornings of the Shrimp Task Force meetings.

Mr. Pausina stated that equal representation of harvesters went into the make-up of the AP and he would discuss this request with the Secretary and Jody Montelaro.

Mr. Babin said that it is difficult for the Processor's Advisory Panel to meet and have a quorum. He would like the Task Force to know that they do meet, however, not formally at LDWF headquarters because there are not many processors in Louisiana and they are located all over the state which makes it difficult to form a quorum.

Mr. Guidry said the Processor's Advisory Panel meetings are not open to the public unlike the Harvester AP meetings which he understands is a concern to some people. He agrees that something needs to be worked out.

Mr. Babin questioned whether the intent was for the AP's to have a public meeting prior to every Task Force meeting. Also, he suggested that conference calls as a group or to meet as long as quorum can be formed, He requested that this information be clarified.

Mr. Pausina said he would get some clarity on this later and turn to legal personnel for guidance on the issue.

Dr. Finley requested that the minutes from those future meetings become available to the public.

Mr. Babin said he wanted to know if the Processor's AP had to meet formally or could they simply meet through conference calls and submit minutes as Dr. Finley suggested.

Mr. Schexnayder asked if the Harvester's AP plans to meet at 9:30 am the mornings when the Task Force meets at 1:30pm.

Mr. Guidry replied yes.

Mr. Schexnayder asked if it would be possible for Eddie Hayes to meet with them as well.

Mr. Hayes replied that he would be happy to meet with the Harvester's AP.

Mr. Pausina called the Task Force's attention to a draft bill that would create a new Shrimp Task Force (STF) based upon the current Oyster Task Force (OTF). He also reviewed the recommendations the Harvester's AP had for the document.

Mr. Babin suggested a revision to the member makeup of the new STF. His suggestion would include three harvesters (two of which would be selected from a list of members nominated by the Louisiana Shrimp Association), three processors, and one dock.

Mr. Pausina asked Mr. Guidry if he agreed with Mr. Babin's recommendations.

Mr. Guidry replied that he was in agreement.

Mr. Babin asked what was meant about funds for the OTF being administered jointly.

Ewell Smith explained that the OTF addresses marketing and industry related issues and they are overseen by the Louisiana Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board (LSPMB) and LDWF.

Mr. Guidry asked about the Shrimp Trade Petition account funds. He wanted to know if the remaining money in the account will be available for use under the new bill.

John Roussel replied that it is only the balance of the funds that will be used.

Dr. Strain said that there will be quorum issues if Mr. Babin's request is adopted. He then asked if the state representatives on the OTF are voting members.

Mr. Roussel replied that they are not voting members.

Dr. Strain asked how to solve the issue he mentioned.

Mr. Schexnayder suggested a change in the quorum requirement.

Mr. Guidry suggested making allowances for alternate members in the draft bill.

Mr. Pausina suggested making four out of seven shrimp industry members a quorum and adding language for alternates.

Mr. Babin questioned language in the bill concerning the Shrimp Trade Petition Account and asked if the 2003 petition needed to be updated.

Mr. Hayes replied that an ad hoc committee submitted that petition, not the Southern Shrimp Alliance (SSA).

Mr. Pausina noted that all discussed changes will be available for review. He then asked if those present would give agency updates.

Cathy Breaux said that she had met with Dr. Castille and will continue to work with Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA). She said she will provide a summary of work done.

Mr. Pausina requested a brief report for the next meeting.

Mr. Schexnayder said he was promised a report soon and would provide an update soon.

Dr. Strain said that he would be going to Washington DC next week to meet with Agriculture Commissioners and work with members of Congress. Among other issues are those of menu labeling or other voluntary compliance such as a window placard that restaurants could display.

Stacie Deblieux said information about the SSA will be made available to any who ask for it. She also mentioned being contacted by a writer for information on the LA seafood industry in an upcoming article in a magazine that will feature Louisiana shrimp as a specialty item not a commodity.

Mr. Guidry asked if the information about the SSA could be presented to the Task Force.

Ms. Deblieux explained that it is quite lengthy and would be easier for individuals to peruse on their own time.

Mr. Smith said the LSPMB is working with LSU food science to develop standards and he will be bringing information about that to the next meeting of the Task Force. He added that he recently met with Robert Cerda concerning crop insurance for other fisheries including shrimp and that Louisiana shrimp were recently cooked for US troops soon to be deployed overseas.

Mr. Babin said that on behalf of the American Shrimp Processors Association (ASPA) and Louisiana processors they have filed a sunset review and appeal for both the harvesters and processors together. He also asked when will we see more details on 'certified Louisiana shrimp'.

Dr. Castille said that an MOU between all applicable agencies over food protection and legislation in the upcoming session is needed. They are looking at specific standards for shrimp products from two groups. They have a pilot program for certified product ready to roll-out. The Department of Agriculture inspectors and others are ready but current law stands in the way. She also stated that whatever standards are decided upon must be ones the industry can meet.

Mr. Guidry asked if the legislation will be up for this session.

Dr. Castille replied that it would.

Ms. Deblieux advised that when you have a bill about requirements you need to include language allowing the LA Attorney General's Office to become involved as per Fair Trade Practices. She suggested that new legislation include language giving the Attorney General's Office (AG) powers concerning injunctions, injunction relief and cease and desist orders.

Dr. Strain asked if Ms. Deblieux could draft a memo detailing that language.

Ms. Deblieux replied that yes, she would do so.

Mr. Babin inquired about SSA returning funds to the state about 1.5 to 2 years ago and wants to know more about this and requested an explanation now or at the next meeting. He asked if the money from SSA will be returned to the state and if the SSA still had it.

Mr. Pausina replied that they are trying to trace the money.

Mr. Smith said that the SSA has the money.

Mr. Guidry said that this is an important issue and the AG was supposed to present this information and wants to know if they can go after this money.

Ms. Deblieux said that there are two issues: what happened - where the money is and can they go after or pursue it now.

Mr. Guidry mentioned a meeting the Governor had with Mazetta concerning the industry and that he'd like to find out the details about it. He added that something this important needs to be discussed.

Dr. Strain said that he'd met with the man for about an hour. who met with the Governor and did not talk about that meeting but did have a discussion with him. During the discussion Dr. Strain asked what he thought would help the shrimpers. The man replied that a fuel subsidy and better products were his suggested solutions for the problems with the industry. Another issue Dr. Strain raised was disappearing crop insurance.

Mr. Pausina suggested the next meeting date of the Task Force be February 24<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 pm which members agreed to.

Dr. Strain said that all legislation must be pre-filed by March 19<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Pausina called for public comment.

Mr. Hayes asked Dr. Strain to contact him about work that's already been done in Washington DC, including contacts that may be useful. He stressed that he is happy to discuss anything that may be helpful. Mr. Hayes met with LSA about the sunset review and hopes to have an expedited process.

**Mr. Schexnayder moved to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Mr. Babin. Motion carried unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 3:10 PM.