



Rhode Island Marine Fisheries Council

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RIMFC: Molly Moran-Ogren, *Chair*; Coral Aiello; David Bethoney, Ph.D.; Andy Dangelo; Katie Eagan; Melva Treviño Peña, Ph.D.; Mike Roderick; Russell Sylvestre; Greg Vespe

MEETING SUMMARY

October 20, 2025

Chairperson: Molly Ogren

Council members: Ms. Eagan absent

Division of Marine Fisheries: S. Olszewski, J. Livermore, J. Lake, N. Costa, E. Schneider, C. Parkins, P. Duhamel

DEM Legal: Joe LoBianco

Division of Law Enforcement: Officer Josh Beuth

1. Approval of the agenda: Ms. Ogren inquired to any objections to approving the agenda or if there were any requests for modifications. Hearing no objections or requests for modifications from the Council members, the agenda was approved by consent.
2. Approval of minutes from last meeting on April 7, 2025: Ms. Ogren inquired to any objections to approving the minutes, or if there were any requests for modifications. Hearing none, the minutes were approved by consent.
3. Public comments regarding any other matters not on agenda: No comments were made.
4. Proposed regulations publicly noticed:
 - a. Electronic Negative Reporting Due Dates: Ms. Ogren inquired to any objections to recommending adoption of the proposed rule as noticed by consent. Hearing none, the Council recommended adoption of the proposed rule as noticed, by consent.
 - b. Reporting Requirements Upon Issuance (transfer) of a New License with Sale of a Vessel and/or Gear: Ms. Ogren inquired to any objections to recommending adoption of this proposed rule as noticed by consent. Hearing none, the Council recommended adoption of the proposed rule as noticed, by consent.
 - c. Prioritization Categories for the Issuance of New Licenses – Update with Revised Licensing Structure: Ms. Ogren inquired to any objections to recommending adoption of this proposed rule as noticed by consent. Hearing none, the Council recommended adoption of the proposed rule as noticed, by consent.
 - d. Clarification of Restricted Finfish Species: Ms. Ogren inquired to any objections to recommending adoption of this proposed rule as noticed by consent. Hearing none, the Council recommended adoption of the proposed rule as noticed, by consent.

- e. Lobster Trap Tag Transfer Application Period for State Vessels: No motion was made on this matter. The Division recommended not adopting the proposed rule at this time due to possible inconsistency with the ASMFC Fisheries Management Plan (FMP). The Division will look to re-notice the item in 2026 and ensure consistency with the FMP.
 - f. Horseshoe Crab Closure at New and Full Moons: Ms. Ogren inquired to any objections to recommending adoption of this proposed rule as noticed by consent. Hearing none, the Council recommended adoption of the proposed rule as noticed, by consent.
 - g. Biomedical Horseshoe Crab Harvest in Coastal Salt Ponds/Little Narr. Bay: Motion made by Mr. Vespe to recommend adoption of the proposed rule to prohibit biomedical horseshoe crab harvest in all coastal salt ponds and Little Narragansett Bay as noticed; 2nd by Mr. Dangelo. The motion passed 7-0.
 - h. Exit:Entry Ratio for the Unlimited Finfish Endorsement: Motion made by Mr. Vespe to recommend adoption of an exit:entry ratio of 2:1 (status quo) for the Unlimited Finfish Endorsement; 2nd by Dr. Bethoney. The motion passed 5-2 (Mr. Dangelo and Mr. Roderick opposed).
 - i. Commercial Green Crab License: Motion made by Dr. Bethoney to recommend adoption of the proposed rule to provide for a commercial green crab license as noticed; 2nd by Ms. Eagan. The motion passed 4-3 (Mr. Roderick, Mr. Dangelo, and Mr. Sylvestre opposed).
 - j. Jonah Crab Claw Possession Allowance:
 - Motion 1: Motion made by Mr. Sylvestre to recommend status quo; 2nd by Dr. Bethoney. The motion failed 2-4-1 (Mr. Roderick, Dr. Bethoney, Dr. Treviño Peña, and Ms. Aiello opposed; Mr. Dangelo recused)
 - Motion 2: Motion made by Dr. Bethoney to maintain status quo at this time and bring development of a Jonah crab claw possession limit and minimum size to the Spring regulatory cycle to solicit public comment on further defining the bycatch fishery; 2nd by Dr. Treviño Peña. The motion passed 6-1 (Mr. Sylvestre opposed)
 - k. Summer Flounder Exemption Certificate Expiration and Renewal: Motion made by Mr. Roderick to require the next renewal cycle in ten years (2035) rather than five years as noticed; 2nd by Mr. Dangelo. The motion passed 6-1 (Mr. Vespe opposed).
 - l. Summer Flounder Exemption Certificate Transfer Application Period After Sale of Vessel: Motion made by Mr. Vespe to recommend adoption of the proposed rule as noticed; 2nd by Mr. Roderick. The motion passed 7-0.
5. Bissell Cove/Fox Island Shellfish Management Area oyster harvest moratorium expiration: Motion made by Dr. Bethoney to recommend adoption of the proposed rule to allow the oyster harvest prohibition to expire on November 15, 2025 as recommended by the SAP; 2nd by Ms. Aiello. The motion passed 7-0.
 6. Quonochontaug Pond Shellfish Management Area oyster harvest moratorium expiration: Motion made by Mr. Vespe to recommend extending the oyster harvest prohibition until December 31, 2029 as recommended by the SAP; 2nd by Mr. Sylvestre. The motion passed 7-0.

7. Old business: The Division provided

- Division task from the September 2024 Council meeting to examine unintended consequences of transitioning from the Dockside Sales endorsement to the Direct Sales Dealer License: Mr. Olszewski offered that there were no unintended consequences, and that the transition from the Dockside Sales endorsement to the Direct Sales Dealer License was virtually seamless. He offered that many of the Dockside Sale Endorsement holders are federal dealers and were already reporting electronically.
- Division task from the April 2025 Council meeting that the ASMFC management regions for Cobia be reevaluated: Ms. Costa offered that a change to the current regions would have to go through ASMFC, and that data in Rhode Island, and the northern states, is very limited and did not support a northern region during the last addendum.
- Response to the Council regarding public comments made at the April 2025 Council meeting regarding the minimum size for black sea bass: Mr. Olszewski offered that the FMP does not allow for Conservation Equivalency for the commercial fishery and that any increase in minimum size would therefore not result in an increase in quota.

Mr. Vespe offered that he would like the Division to stay aware of FMP proposals where RI is part of a broader east coast region that could negatively impact RI, such that RI would not be included in broader regions which could limit management decisions applicable to RI.

- Response to the Council regarding public comments made at the April 2025 Council meeting regarding the management of commercial striped bass: Ms. Costa offered that a proposal was made to mimic how the state of New York manages their commercial fishery with an ITQ. Ms. Costa noted that a proposal for an ITQ system was discussed at the most recent public workshop and in general, stakeholders expressed interest but did not feel it was ready for 2026 implementation and should be continued to be developed.

8. Any other matters:

- Chair Ogren offered that proposed policy changes for the Council was provided to the SAP and that the proposed policy would be in the Council's ePacket for the next meeting on November 5, and that the Council members should review the proposed changes to be prepared for the next meeting.
- A public comment was offered that the prohibition of striped bass by gill net is discriminatory.

9. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 8:03pm.

Note: This document represents a meeting summary of the actions taken and/or future actions that will be addressed at subsequent meetings. The full video recording of the meeting is available at the Division of Marine Fisheries YouTube channel [here](#).