

Shellfish Advisory Council
Meeting Agenda
June 10, 2025, from 9:30 AM - 12:30 PM
Ellsworth or Virtual via [Microsoft Teams](#)

Call to order – Mike Pinkham

09:30-09:31

The meeting was called to order by Mike Pinkham

Roll call – William Fearn

09:31-09:35

A roll call was conducted by William Fearn. All members were present except David Wilson, who was unable to attend.

Adoption of minutes from last meeting – Mike Pinkham

09:35-09:40

Motion: Moved by Joan McDonald to adopt the minutes from the previous meeting.

Seconded: Ron Parritt

Discussion: None

Vote: Motion carried unanimously.

New Officers – William Fearn

09:40-09:45

1. Mike Pinkham - Chair
2. Marissa McMahan – Vice Chair

William Fearn announced the new Council officers. Mike Pinkham was confirmed as Chair, and Marissa McMahan was confirmed as Vice Chair.

Marine Patrol Update – Marine Patrol

09:45-09:55

Lieutenant Troy Dow, Division Commander, provided an update on shellfish enforcement. Approximately one-third of all citations this year have been shellfish-related. Marine Patrol Division II is currently down three officers and is in the process of hiring. One new officer has been hired in the Steuben area.

The Lamoine office is under construction, and a larger patrol boat is being built. The low number of licenses issued remains a concern. Student licenses are typically issued to individuals aged 14–16, depending on flat activity among other factors, but practices vary by town. Incentivizing safety may help attract younger participants.

Dana Morse asked whether the decline in student licenses was due to a lack of resources or income potential. The group discussed current mentoring programs and opportunities to improve youth engagement. Tora Johnson proposed that Marine Patrol participate in safety initiatives, including outreach related to occupational injury prevention. Lt. Dow expressed support for collaboration.

Resources such as the free Drill Conductors Course were highlighted as tools to increase safety awareness. The possibility of linking this training to reduced license fees was also discussed.

New ShAC Members – Mike Pinkham

09:55-10:05

1. Tora Johnson – Public Seat
2. Graham Platner – Shellfish Aquaculture Seat
3. Chris Cline – Municipal Wastewater Seat

Chair Mike Pinkham introduced the following new members: Tora Johnson (Public Seat), Graham Platner (Shellfish Aquaculture Seat), and Chris Cline (Municipal Wastewater Seat). Each new member provided a brief introduction and background to the group.

Biotoxin Update – Bryant Lewis

10:05-10:10

Bryant Lewis from DMR presented an update on biotoxin activity. Toxins have been detected in mussels from Southern Maine since late April. Unusually, toxins have also been detected in American oysters for the first time in several years.

Dana Morse asked whether algal species composition in Area 100-A differed from previous years. Bryant responded that no unusual species have been observed to date.

Limited Retail Harvester Certificate – Kohl Kanwit

10:10-10:40

Kohl Kanwit provided an overview of the Limited Retail Harvester Certificate. A parent Retail Seafood license is required. Licensees must create a dealer login. Oyster sales are limited to two hours unless ice is used, which extends the time to eighteen hours. All shellfish must follow sanitation regulations. These sales are permitted at farmers' markets and from vehicles, but not from homes during Vibrio season.

A member of the public asked if vehicles must be registered under both the dealer and limited retail licenses. Kohl Kanwit confirmed that vehicles must be registered under both licenses and that multiple licenses for vehicle registrations are allowed.

Review and Finalization of 2025 Priorities – Council Discussion

10:40-11:00

William Fearn led a review of the priority list compiled from industry members across the state. Dana Morse noted the lack of safety-related priorities. Amanda Lyons recommended that the Council incorporate initiatives focused on youth engagement, including mentorship and education. Marissa McMahan supported a full review of the priority list. Tora Johnson suggested better organization by category and emphasized the need for safety related priorities.

The group agreed that a comprehensive review and reorganization of the priorities would be beneficial.

DMR Closure Hotline Decision – Bryant Lewis

11:00-11:25

Bryant Lewis discussed updates to the GovDelivery system and the increasing complexity of closure communications due to condition-based management strategies. The existing hotline has become difficult to maintain and often causes confusion. The group discussed the idea of closing the Hotline altogether.

Joan McDonald reported that while some harvesters still use the hotline, most rely on other sources. Dan Sylvain noted recent infractions caused by confusing updates and emphasized the difficulty in contacting wardens, who often do not carry agency-provided cell phones.

Suggestions included improving clarity in notices, labeling emails clearly with the word "closure," breaking regions into smaller areas, and possibly transitioning to text-based notifications. Tora Johnson pointed out the need to consider literacy and technology limitations among users. More discussion is needed on this topic.

Work plan

11:25-11:55

1. Shellfish Economic Study – GMRI

No updates were provided.

2. Priorities Review

William Fearn asked the group to discuss their priorities for the year. The committee will review the Municipal Shellfish Management priority list, conduct their own research and define their new priority list at the next meeting.

3. Modernizing Laws and Rules Governing Municipal Programs

The Council discussed the Modernization of Laws and Rules. William Fearn outlined the Council's ability to participate in rule and law changes. Graham Platner emphasized the need to reduce redundancy and clarify differences between wild harvest and aquaculture regulations. Tora Johnson asked about the process to initiate legal changes. Lewis Pinkham, in a public capacity, explained that ShAC can research issues, propose legislation, and support it through testimony. The Council may form focus groups that utilize DMR support to advance this work.

4. Green Crab Composting Facilities

Mike Pinkham introduced the topic. Amanda Lyons identified funding and transportation as major barriers. Tora Johnson mentioned potential food market initiatives. Marissa McMahan noted that green crabs have additional existing markets (e.g., dog food, bait), but the supply chain is fragmented. Green Crab Week will be held June 20–29, and a vendor-based expo is planned in Massachusetts. Marissa McMahan offered to share information on this event.

5. Committees

Regional Shellfish Meetings – Tora Johnson

Tora Johnson proposed rebranding these meetings to attract a broader audience. The group agreed that ShAC's involvement could increase turnout. October and November were identified as optimal timing, and evening meetings (6–7 PM) were recommended based on past success. Potential locations include regions served by Marissa McMahan and Jeff Auger. The Council discussed the topic and decided that a change in title and oversight is warranted to achieve maximum participation. Lewis Pinkham, stated that Downeast fisheries had meetings from 6-7 PM, and the turnout was great.

Softshell Seed Stock – Jeff Auger

Jeff Auger reported on the Seed Committee's activities. The committee lacks a DMR representative and would like to include a DMR Nearshore Marine Resources staff member. Ben Wahle volunteered to join. William Fearn confirmed that members of the public may be invited to join the committee. Amanda Lyons asked about seed pricing compared to other states. Jeff Auger noted that certification requirements affect costs. Marissa McMahan reported that the committee is currently surveying municipalities and suggested that annual transplant reports could help identify seed sourcing needs. This data is forthcoming. Transplant information could help determine the source of the seed. The annual report could be a great resource.

Municipal Shellfish Conservation Warden Training Committee – William Fearn

William Fearn reminded the group to revisit this topic in future meetings.

Public input

11:55-12:10

William Fearn reminded the council and attendees that agenda items come from the public and encouraged everyone to submit agenda ideas to the chair, vice chair and secretary. Tora Johnson proposed an agenda item focused on safety and exploring partnerships with Marine Patrol, Sheriff's Departments, and Wardens to improve relationships and support systems.

Other business

12:10-12:20

Kohl Kanwit proposed a future agenda item on warden training and mechanisms for revoking or suspending state licenses for repeat offenders of municipal shellfish ordinances. A committee could be formed, potentially including a Marine Patrol representative. Lewis Pinkham referenced Chapter 6671, Section 7, which may already provide a pathway for such enforcement. Public comments supported increased penalties for frequent violations.

Adjourn

12:30-12:30

Motion: Moved by Ron Parritt to adjourn the meeting.

Seconded: Amanda Lyons

Vote: Motion carried unanimously.