

Maine Commercial  
Fishing Safety Council

Janine Drouin, Chair

Curtis Haycock, Vice Chair

Ann Backus, Secretary

Members:

Kris Boehmer

John Drouin

Peter Gasperini

Marc McCole

John McMillan

Parker Poole

## Commercial Fishing Safety Council

Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting, March 17, 2022

Minutes accepted by vote of the CFSC members, June 16, 2022

Council members present: Ann Backus, Kris Boehmer, Janine and John Drouin, Curtis Haycock

DMR staff present: Sgt. Mark Murry, Jeff Nichols

Absent: John McMillan, Marc McCole

I. Welcome – Janine Drouin, chairperson

II. Minutes of December 16, 2021, unanimously accepted

III. Council Membership – Janine/Curtis/Mark

John Drouin has been accepted as the representative from the LAC.

Parker Poole was approved and accepted as the “harvester” member.

Peter Gasperini was approved and accepted as the “diver” member (urchin, scallop)

Marc McCole has not been attending; Kris will ask Marc if he intends to continue on the Council.

IV. Update on survey to licensees – Mark and Jeff

The Commissioner has approved the survey and also approved the use of the DMR.Gov delivery system for sending the survey to licensees. Notices

about the survey will be provided to Maine Lobstermen’s Community Alliance (publication-Landings), the MLA, and the Fishermen’s Association.

Additional discussion included: How to reach out to Zone Council members at meetings: verbal announcements, written notice? With respect to the discussion re ‘should we involve the Zone Councils in discussions of safety concerns for their industry’ it was decided that this would broaden the survey considerably and also require permission to get a slot on the agendas of the Zone Councils. The Commissioner has to “Ok” any announcement that is going to be made at the Zone Council meetings. It was decided that the Zone Councils should not be in the equation at the present time, and that we will go to the Zone Councils when we have results.

The Council members agreed to add a question to the survey re “What fishery are you in?” The survey deadline will be listed as April 30, 2022.

[Question for Mark: did we decide to have a letter sent to the Zone Council meetings asking them to mention the survey?]

A notice will be provided to Landings for the April issue. [Note: It was published on page 22 on the same page as To Your Health.]

The members present agreed to remove the names of all Council members from the survey announcement because we did not have consent to publish names from each member due to inability to reach all members.

An additional discussion centered around helping to ensure that fishermen do not see completing this CFSC survey as a “punishment.” That is, some may be concerned that answering the survey might result in new regulations or new gear/safety requirements.

## V. Initiatives

### A. Health Fairs on the Coast

Ann Backus mentioned that health screening fairs have been scheduled for Long Island and Chebeague Island for April 7 and 9, respectively. These will be organized by the nursing program at the University of Southern Maine – the group that usually does the screenings at the Fishermen’s Forums. Ann asked if the CFSC thought additional screenings along the coast would be beneficial to the fishing communities. Council members made suggestions regarding the use of nursing programs at UME Augusta, Husson College (Bangor), UME Machias, and Washington County Community College (Note: WCCC does not have a nursing program)

### B. Could the Council host/organize something in lieu of Fishermen’s Forum - our own webinars?

John McMillan has reached out to Mark Murry re the possibility of hosting a Safety Symposium at the Maine Maritime Academy. Council members expressed interest and had questions. Mark will follow-up with John. This would be an in-person meeting.

There may be other ZOOM or Teams webinars that we could plan.

### C. Digging deeper into the casualty database.

Members expressed an interest in finding out more about the medico and medevac casualties in Maine, especially with respect to deaths. They also mentioned exploring sinkings in terms of when (month) cause, persons overboard, and deaths. Ann offered to be in touch with the NIOSH staff who offered to extract this information for Maine from their large incident database. This topic was carried forward from the December quarterly meeting. Ann Backus will follow-up with Samantha Case who has access to the CFID database.

An additional topic of concern was the potential impact that formalizing daylight saving as the standard time might have on fishing regulations and safety. We could explore whether there are more incidences at daybreak.

## VI. New Business

### A. Whale regulations

New regulations such as trawling up (new, higher minimum number of traps per trawl) might be a safety issue if boat stability cannot handle the larger number of traps; new line markings (not a safety issue); new 1700 lb weak insertion points in every end line – those are going to part if get “anchored in.”

Concerns voiced included: Rope marking and adding weak insertion points is time consuming; we are already at 20 traps per trawl in Machias; Canadian fishermen may drop their trawls on top of ours; patrol boats may inadvertently break fishermen’s lines. Regulations may not specify more rope, but fishermen are dealing with the regulations by adding more rope which means more rope on deck and more opportunity to get caught in rope. The irony that saving whales may result in losing more fishermen was mentioned.

Bottom line: We need to stay awake to the impact and consequences of the new whale take reduction regulations.

B. Wind Turbines

The Council will want to stay on top of this as an emerging issue.

VII. Next meetings: Working Group Meetings: April 21, May 19. Quarterly meeting June 16, 2022.

Workgroup meetings were held on April 21 and May 19. During these meetings we reviewed the survey results and discussed updates on the health fairs and data gathering initiatives. Note: As these workgroup meetings are informal and not required by law, no formal minutes of the meetings are prepared.

VIII. The meeting of March 17, 2022 was adjourned shortly after 5:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Backus

June 9, 2022