

Maine Commercial  
Fishing Safety Council

Janine Drouin, Chair

Parker Poole, Vice Chair

Ann Backus, Secretary

Members:

Kris Boehmer

John Drouin

Zac Gower

Curtis Haycock

John McMillan

Rob Odlin

Mark Murry, DMR staff

Jeff Nichols, DMR staff

## Commercial Fishing Safety Council

Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting, September 18, 2024

Via Teams 6:00 pm-8:00 pm

Present: Ann Backus, Kris Boehmer, Janine Drouin, John Drouin, Zac Gower, Rob Odlin, John McMillan, Parker Poole, and DMR staff: Sgt. Mark Murry, Jeff Nichols

Absent: Curtis Haycock

Public: Brian Smith (USCG NNE), Joyce Joynes (USCG NNE), Lia Morris (Island Institute), and Noah Oppenheim (Homarus Strategies, LLC)

I. Welcome –Janine Drouin, Chair

Janine welcomed the CFSC members and guests were introduced

II. Presentation of Minutes of June 19, 2024

The minutes for the September quarterly meeting were approved.

III. Update from the Commissioner or Deputy Commissioner

The update which was optional, was tabled because neither the Commissioner nor the Deputy was present. Mark Murry reported that Deputy Commissioner Mendelson said that there were no safety issues regarding wind energy that needed to be discussed or brought forward to the Commissioner at this time.

We learned that the DMR has awarded Sgt. Mark Murry the Man-of-the Year management award. Congratulations Sgt. Murry.

IV. Discussion of draft Annual Report to Commissioner Keliher

There was an extended discussion regarding what would be included in the annual report. Topics mentioned included the need to educate around monitoring of Channel 16 by fishermen, the upcoming “best practices” report due from the National Commercial fishing Advisory Committee, the research on safety concerns and related guidance of ropeless fishing currently underway, a request for financial support from DMR for education materials for the Fishermen’s Forum 2025, and a web presence for the CFSC on the DMR website.

Jeff suggested that we would need to organize the materials and work on the list of resources that we wanted to include on the potential CFSC website.

The final content for the annual report is to include 1) accomplishments, namely education around monitoring Channel 16 (Commercial Fisheries News article by Ann Backus), workshop on damage control kits including a raffle with 2 DCK kits sponsored by DMR, and 2) recommendations including connecting at least one fishery showing readiness to trainers (Safety, CPR and First Aid), a CFSC web presence featuring vetted safety resources, and a major effort to educate around the importance of having fishermen monitor Channel 16.

#### V. Discussion of draft of request for website presence on DMR platform.

It was decided that a specific request for a web presence featuring safety videos and resources would be included as an addendum to the annual report to the Commissioner. Members would contribute to a list of safety videos and links to third party fishing safety websites, and there would be a process for updates.

#### VI. Discussion of Potential Projects for 2024

- A. Proactive education around the importance of Channel 16
  - 1. Commercial Fisheries News article under FISH SAFE heading in September 2024 issue
  - 2. Request that the Commissioner send a Memorandum to DMR Advisory Councils and Zone Councils about the importance of monitoring Channel 16 (to be included in the annual report to the Commissioner)
- B. Fishermen's Forum Booth and Seminar/Workshop for 2025
  - 1. The discussion included mention of a workshop presentation by a Channel 16 content expert (suggested by Brian), a presentation by a colleague of John McMillan's, topics around fishing alone, and discussion of the availability and content of the soon-to-be-released Best Practice Guide of the National Commercial Fishing Safety Council which is accessible at [dco.uscg.mil/NCFSAC](https://dco.uscg.mil/NCFSAC).
  - 2. Brian and John McMillan were tasked with contacting their colleagues; John M, Mark Murry and Ann were tasked with securing raffle items, and Ann was tasked with completing the applications to the FORUM organizers re quarterly CFSC meeting, vendor booth, and CFSC workshop on Channel 16.
- C. Reaching out to small harbor summer festivals in 2025 to encourage them to include fishing safety activities in their festivals.

#### VII. Update on Wind Energy – recent BOEM meeting (standing agenda item)

Deputy Commissioner Mendelson conveyed through Mark that there were no safety issues to discuss at the present time.

#### VIII. New Business

- A. Safety Issues related to electric boats and shore-side infrastructure – Noah Oppenheim, Homarus Strategies, LLC, and Lia Morris, Island Institute

Noah Oppenheim outlined the feasibility of shore-side infrastructure as follows:

1. The feasibility is considered high.
2. The first hybrid commercial vessel (Transfluid-firm) was launched in Sitka, AK this year. Scandinavia launched its first 10 years ago; Atlantic Canada is working toward electric boats; UK is building-up infrastructure around Plymouth, UK.
3. Fuel savings especially on day boat: ROI = 7 years; 50-70% fuel reduction.
4. Likely to be of interest in recreational fleet (100-200 hp class outboards, 8—100 kwh battery banks).
5. How to site charging infrastructure is a major issue - fishermen will demand safety, cost effectiveness, and reliability.
6. There is no plan in place to deal with mishaps: 10x fewer fires than with internal combustion engines; thermal runaway is hard to knock-down; planning with firefighters is NECESSARY.
7. Need to have safety at the table.
8. TO CFSC: think about how to provide advice to electric boat industry

KRIS; Even though electric boats are less risky than internal combustion engines, the problem of getting the fire off the boat is a major problem.

NOAH: Early adopters will be likely to start with hybrid retrofits. We need studies.

PARKER: The FV Three Girls, a 90 ft vessel, was on fire outside the boundary line; the fire reflashed overnight. Harbormaster said don't bring a boat on fire in here again.

ANN: Washington County Disaster Preparedness brought this issue forward; county governments are under-resourced to deal with this type of disaster.

B. Other new business - None

#### IX. Next Meetings

- A. Working group, Wednesday, October 16, 2024; November 20, 2024 only if needed.
- B. December quarterly meeting moved to Wednesday, December 11, 2024 via Teams

#### V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.

A. Damage Control Kit Raffle - Two damage control kits were provided for the workshop raffle by the DMR. One raffle winner was Janine and John Drouin's son, the other was a fisherman from Stonington, CT

B. It was brought up at this time by John McMillan that fishermen are not paying attention to the Channel 16 and are not aware of when fellow fishermen are in trouble.

Kris Boehmer suggested we use the information from the Near-Miss study to help bring attention to the need to pay attention to Channel 16. Parker Poole agreed. It was suggested that captains include an orientation to Channel 16 during new crew member orientation. Kris mentioned that the importance of Channel 16 could be mentioned on a future CFSC website.

Other comments include

- Ports and waterways study mentioned issues of cruise ship traffic vis a vis the wind farm arrays.
- Communication around safety is critical; consider recommending to the Commissioner that fishermen must monitor Channel 16.
- FPSS and MacMillan Offshore and other trainers should stress the value and importance of Channel 16 during safety trainings.

#### VI. Update on Wind Energy – recent BOEM meeting (standing agenda item) – Ann Backus

- A. Ann Backus summarized the report on the most recent BOEM public meeting.
- B. The USCG will continue to be active cooperating partners with BOEM.
- C. Meredith Mendelson, DMR Deputy Commissioner and head of the DMR Bureau of Policy and Management, will continue to represent DMR.
- D. Searsport was announced as the navigation hub for the Gulf of Maine wind farm.
- E. The windfarm research array is an opportunity: The array brings up environmental, fishing resource issues, safety issues and others. Communication about these issues is important; we need to stay on top of the issues.

#### VII. Discussion of Potential Projects for 2024 – Janine Drouin

- A. Communication is a major issue: Parker suggested a you tube video on the importance of communication and Channel 16 citing that New Zealand made videos of the crossing of a bar to educate their fishermen. Can we get photos and communication examples? Janine suggested we make a recommendation that DMR

add this content to their website. Jeff Nichols suggested using social media; Kris suggested we get the “wind people” as sponsors of a website.

- B. Re a Council Website: Jeff suggested we recommend that the Council have a website presence, stating that we need to have our work “out there.” He recommended taking small steps and making a well-defined, highly specific request, possibly engage a third party. Kris added that the National Fishing Vessel Safety Council is also looking into ways to reach fishermen.

The DMR website has been in existence for many years and still is underutilized according to Jeff. DMR also uses Facebook, Instagram, X and .gov delivery to reach fishermen.

- C. List of Instructional Videos: We could develop a list of instructional videos and prepare a handout with QR codes for each video. Dan Orchard offered that The Fishing Partnership Support Services (FPSS) has a suicide prevention handout. Janine mentioned the work of Monique Coombs on substance use disorders. Other ideas for instruction include fatigue, sleep deprivation (like driving drunk), CO/CO2 and wet exhaust placement, more education on near-miss, high water alarms, bilge alarms, towing high.
- D. Apprenticeship program vs lottery for the scallop industry: Janine suggested that an apprenticeship program would benefit scallopers because it would require pre-licensure education for scallopers re towing high and other hazards. The scallop council has apparently discussed and not endorsed an apprenticeship program.
- E. Current recommendations for the Commissioner include unmarked aquaculture pens, communication/Channel 16, and website.

#### VIII. Other business

We held working group meetings on April 17, and May 15, 2024 from 7:00- 8:00 pm.

#### IX. New Business

Kris Boehmer announced that the next National Fishing Safety Advisory Council meeting will be held in Jacksonville, April 8-12. Kris can report on this meeting in future CFSC meetings.

#### X. Adjournment

It was moved and seconded that we adjourn. 2:30 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Backus, Secretary  
June 12, 2024