



Secretary's Office

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The Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association (RISAA) Board of Directors meets monthly. In order to keep all members apprised of Board business I will report here when appropriate. It is important to note that not all business will be reported here since there are often issues dealing with individual members and privacy will always be protected. Also, some Board business that doesn't result in any action won't be printed.

RISAA Board of Directors December 22, 2020 Meeting Summary

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Year End Reports

- By **Peter O'Biso**, Treasurer
 - RI Saltwater Anglers Association
 - RI Saltwater Anglers Foundation
 - RI Saltwater Anglers Foundation Scholarship Fund
 - RISAA Investments
- By **Stephen Medeiros**, as Executive Director
 - Membership Report
 - N. E. Saltwater Fishing Show
 - Newsletter
- By **Richard Hittinger**, 1st VP, Budget Director
 - A subcommittee was formed to formulate a budget for 2021 and 2022 due to loss of funds from our 2020 & 2021 Fishing Shows and COVID.

OLD BUSINESS

• Annual Banquet

The Board voted for the person who will received the 2020 Member of the Year. The person will be acknowledged at the online Awards Ceremony on February 1.

• Committee's Email Groups

Steve Medeiros informed the board that he has successfully moved 19 committee email groups from YahooGroups (which has closed permanently) to "groups.io". All members were notified and all groups are already functioning.

• Charter Trips Committee

Peter O'Biso who is a member of the Charter Trips Committee advised the board that the committee had still not made a decision on if (or how) they can conduct the charter trips raffles via current virtual meetings. He explained there were many problems to overcome. The committee will meet again in January.

• Recreational Angler Electronic Reporting Project

Dave Monti updated the Board on the progress of the Angler Report project. He expects progress to proceed quickly starting in January. RISAA members will be sought for various panels and focus groups.

Not only would the app provide fisheries managers with information on fish species sought and caught, but it would be an app that participating anglers could use to keep track of their own fishing history.

RISAA will bring anglers together to get opinions of what type of information they would like to see built into the app. and what would make an angler want to use it.

NEW BUSINESS

• New Regulations - Circle Hooks

Rich Hittinger discussed the fact that new regulations mandating the use of circle hooks when fishing with bait for striped bass has created a problem for anglers who troll with tube & worm (which are many). The Board agrees with all striped bass regulations and also with the circle hook requirement, but the prohibition on "tube & worm" (where a live worm is used) should not be part of the bait rule. Trolling tubes aren't made with circle hooks.

After discussion the Board agreed with this and authorized that RISAA sign on to a letter (with several other national angler organizations) to the ASMFC Striped Bass Management Board requesting an exemption be allowed for tube & worm fishing.

• Fisheries Advisory Board

Rich Hittinger represents RISAA/recreational anglers, along with Rick Bellavance (charter boats), on the Fisheries Advisory Board (FAB). The remainder of the FAB are all commercial fishing interests. The FAB is working on mitigation with Ørsted on the South Fork Wind Farm which will be located atop Cox Ledge.

The Ørsted initial impact report indicated a negative impact to commercial fishing which should get financial consideration, but it had nothing to indicate a negative impact to recreational fishing. After pushing the issue, a new report showed that there was *more impact* to recreational fishing than to commercial fishing, and therefore funds should be allocated to recreational fishing issues (such as artificial reefs, etc). More research needs to be done.

• Aquaculture Applications

Roger Tellier, who also serves as a recreational representative on the RIMFC Shellfish Advisory Board, explained to the Board about proposed changes that would send aquaculture applications at the start of the permit process rather than toward the end. The RISAA Board receives approximately 50 applications every year to review to see if it would interfere with known recreational fishing areas.

• Committee Annual Reports

All RISAA committees had submitted their 2021 Budget Requests at last month's meeting. Only two were left, and both were approved.

- Charities Committee
- Merchandise Committee