



Town of Barnstable

Shellfish Committee

1189 Phinneys Lane, Centerville MA 02632

**SHELLFISH COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
DATE: September 9, 2026
TIME: 6:00-8:00 PM**

Shellfish Committee Members present: Douglas Crook, Robert Lancaster, Jim Weiler, Bill Cherepon, Gloriann Hurwitz

Shellfish Committee Members absent: Jacob Angelo, Patricia Farinha, Paul Hendricks, Timothy Hamel

General Public present: Bruce Blackman, Kris Clark, Fergus O'Connor, Jill Anne Nawoichik, John Madden, Lynn Kraus

Town Staff present: Amy Croteau, Shellfish Constable; Derek Lawson, Director, Marine and Environmental Affairs Nina Z. Coleman, Director of Natural Resources, Mary Anne Burke, MEA Administrative Staff

Chairman Crook called the meeting to order at 6:15 PM, on September 9, 2026 meeting of the Shellfish Committee. Chairman Crook read a notice at the beginning of the meeting:

NOTICE OF RECORDING "Please note that tonight's meeting is recorded and broadcast on the Town of Barnstable's Government Access Channel and, in accordance with MGL Chapter 30A, s. 20, I must inquire whether anyone is taping this meeting and to please make their presence known."

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Approve Meeting Minutes: August 12, 2026, minutes.

Bob Lancaster made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 12, 2026, meeting. Bill Cherepon seconded the motion for approval. There was a unanimous vote to approve the minutes.

2. Chairman's Comments: None

3. Natural Resources Report / Correspondence:

a. Growing Area Updates & Monthly Propagation Report

Constable Croteau gave an update on growing area maps noting that we have two (2) seasonal closures: in Barnstable Harbor water quality pending will reopen December 15th. This affects those people that still go to Scudder. Due to the fact, we won't be meeting until after October 1st, we have the pending opening of Cotuit Narrows – hopeful to open on October 1st(pending water quality testing).

Constable Croteau gave an update on monthly propagation report submitted by Shellfish Biologist Liz Lewis. They've hired two new seasonals, one from Sandy Neck and one from Town of Yarmouth shellfish program.

Andrew, one of our seasonals, left for full-time work. Down one person and two full-time technicians. Grateful to have the help of volunteers at the Handy Point propagation area, and they were able to open that area a week ahead of Labor Day. They've continued to move oysters out of the propagation areas and into the field. The first plantings of quahogs in North Bay have been successful - put 750,000 quahogs underneath nets. They've been maintaining all nets in the field and pulling ones that are large enough to avoid predation but need to be thinned out better to allow for better growth. There is one final "Learn to Shellfish" class for the season on September 12th. They held two in mid-August. Received lots of requests for more razor clam classes and an oystering class. They're putting together an annual propagation report. Constable Croteau asked that this annual propagation report be moved to the December 2026 meeting.

Year to date shellfish permits data numbers were presented.

Trash treasure hunt took place on Tuesday, 9/8/26. They were able to remove more gear, a lot of which had been tagged by Mark Begley in areas outside of Spring Creek area. Another trash treasure hunt is scheduled for 9/10/26.

Constable Croteau plans to share information for the October meeting regarding Manila clams. They are evolving in prevalence; at next month's meeting she will elaborate on the efforts of the Center for Coastal Studies.

4. New Business:

a. Discussion on 2027 Shellfish Permit Fees

Presentation led by Derek Lawson, Director of Marine and Environmental Affairs, and Nina Z. Coleman, Director of Natural Resources, presenting the FY 2027 Cost of Services Analysis. The Town Council has asked all departments to review fees to explore reducing any general fund contributions. They are here tonight to present what they are proposing for calendar year 2027 and look forward to hearing your comments.

A 2026 cost of services analysis was conducted by the Finance Department. The cost of services is the term used to portray what it costs to have the program. We would like to break our shellfish program up into three categories:

1. Recreational
2. Commercial
3. Aquaculture

The term general fund refers to taxpayer money. Revolving fund refer to an account that takes in the user fees.

Recreational fees for shellfishing:

1. Recreation: is all your propagation, and all the efforts that it takes to grow the shellfish, to buy the seed, to grow the shellfish, for our staff to be out at the landings - check in shellfish. It also includes all the outreach, which has been expanding every year to the point now where they're doing outreach into the school system to teach younger folks how to shellfish. This would also include costs for vehicles, gas, paper administration fees for herself, for Director Lawson, and administrative support professionals.

For our recreational permits, we make approximately \$188,000 a year in fees from our recreational permits. Our costs are over half a million. That leaves us at a deficit, (amount of money that the taxpayers are contributing to this program) as \$355,000.

If we were to try to get to net zero, which was the exercise that we are asked to do, we would have to raise our fees to 190%. This is a starting point. This is a way for everybody to understand.

2. Commercial is another program that encompasses staff, vehicles, boats, and administrative costs. We receive about \$24,500 in commercial fees. Our expenses are around \$60,000. Most of that lies in salary. That leaves us at a deficit of \$35,000, almost \$36,000. If we were to get to net zero, we'd have to go up 150% in fees. Commercial costs have nothing to do with propagation costs. You'll see that there is no propagation costs going into this cost of service for the commercial shellfish program. This is just managing, enforcement and administration of that program.
3. Aquaculture. Aquaculture is \$25 per acre from home rule. The revenue is about \$4,000 a year is brought in from 157 acres. Costs are around \$84,500. There's a lot of compliance checks that we need to do. It's a little less enforcement and more compliance. All your Vibrio checks, all your gear checks, all your boundary compliance checks, all the transfers take a lot of effort and time – administration - overhead. Most of that is salary. So, if we were to come up to net zero, we'd have to go up 2,000%.

Q&A and discussion held.

Director Coleman mentioned that we have this meeting and next meeting, to hopefully come to a fee proposal that would then be submitted to the Town Manager. At that point, the Town Manager would hold another public hearing for review. We will have this meeting and at least the next meeting to discuss this. Director Coleman stated that the date to submit fees in by October 16th, 2026.

Recreational resident Shellfish Permit fee Our recreational resident fee, right now we're at \$45.00 for residents and \$30.00 for seniors. Comparison chart regarding the other fisheries - the other municipalities: e.g. Sandwich, Gloucester, Edgartown and Wellfleet. There's some information on this as well about how much is produced by those different communities. We discussed this and we're kind of somewhere between \$60 and \$70. Would like the shellfish committee to discuss that. \$70.00 would be at the highest point with Wellfleet. We're on par with Wellfleet in terms of oysters and quahogs available for the recreational public.

For senior permits we'd like to increase this to \$40 from \$30.00.

Veteran is going to be the same as resident. Veteran, it would be \$60 from \$45.00, and a senior veteran would be \$ 40.00 from \$30.00.

Then, nonresident, currently is \$170.00. The last time we increased this was in 2024. In 2027 would be \$200.00

The decision has been made by looking at our numbers over time with trends.

Questions for Nina: Bruce Blackman: The additional fees - what does it do to benefit the shellfishermen?

Director Coleman: the benefit will do two things. First, regarding recreational shellfishing, it's going to start absorbing the increased cost. Since Covid the cost of seed has gone up. Also, the cost of gear has gone up since Covid. Additionally, and more importantly, it's going to chip away at this deficit that we're running.

Question for Nina: Gloriann Hurwitz "I think if we're very careful with communication, because I'm not sure people understand that as part of the recreational fee, they're getting quahogs that the town propagates and make sure it's available to them. I think if we're clear communication, then I think the fee is reasonable."

Question for Nina: J. J. Madden. "I am, generally against this because the price of seed, the price of everything has gone up, and now we're just piling on the (commercial) fishermen more so like their price of equipment, their price of fuel, their price of everything has gone up also. Just by increasing the fees, now you're making it even more unobtainable for them. And there is the possibility that by charging more you could really turn a lot of people away. Now their revenue is going to be less than it was before."

COMMERCIAL FEES

We are running in a deficit. The taxpayer is subsidizing this program. Taxpayers are paying roughly \$36,000 a year for the commercial shellfish program. What we came up with was to stay with our two prices, which are \$550 for commercial master, and senior is \$350.

We were trying to figure out a way to pro-rate. There are commercial guys and gals that are going after multiple species. Then there's other folks that are, doing it now and then ... we were looking to figure out a way to make those two a little of a different fee. After much discussion, we came up with a per species harvest fee: quahogs, soft shells, razors, scallops and mussels, each of those, if you would select those, you would add another \$100 per species. We recognize that things get hot at different times. This wouldn't be a decision that you would have to make on the 1st of January. One could decide that they wanted to add or do it online and add that \$100 species to their permit. In addition, we would have \$100 quahog dredging fee.

For senior commercial it would be \$350 plus \$50 for each species selected or \$50 for the quahog dredging option.

AQUACULTURE:

We're down \$80,000. That's taxpayer subsidized. The way to get to net zero and the starting point for this discussion is \$500 per acre. That lands you right on that number. There would be an administrative and inspection fee again, for all the compliance and administration that it takes to run the program.

Q&A: J. J. Maden "As a current commercial fisherman, everything costs more now: fuel, gear, whatever is just more, you know, exponentially more expensive. Now you want to add more fees on top of us also for like, so you're saying for the \$100 per species, so you're going to charge people \$100 for quahogs - twice if they rake them, and then once if they dredge them. Concern is that you're punishing people who are more active in fishery - by charging them more. That seems kind of counterproductive - and the people that are more active are generally the people that this is their only job."

Corey Hendericks: Regarding the aquaculture fees- I understand not wanting to use the taxpayers' dollars. I would request if it's going to go up that high like that, we have some sort of leeway, like have that payment due in the middle of the summer. Asked if it is possible there's ways to get more net zero? As opposed to charging more, maybe cutting costs differently? Also, request also to have some leeway in paying these fees?

Director Coleman: as staff members were required to look at both the revenue and cost cutting.

Director Lawson: This has been a challenge from Barnstable's Town Council and Town Manager to try to reduce these costs from the general fund. These are our proposed fees. This is a starting point. We're listening to all the comments made here tonight, and we will be discussing these again during the next meeting.

Request to have more people have the chance to say something before, you know, we make a vote on it next meeting.

The timeline is specifically designed to have two discussions on this. The September, the October meeting, we're going to have to have some sort of decision making. Because our fees schedule is due October 16th, which is right after the October meeting. If there's any additional materials please email me if there's other materials that you want me to bring to the next meeting.

The time frame is the calendar fee proposals from the directors are due October 16th. Then mid-November, there is a Town Manager public hearing, where presentation of the fees is submitted along with logic and potentially the endorsement from the Shellfish Committee. At that time, the Town Manager takes all into consideration in November - usually waits 30 days so he can get additional comments. There's going to be plenty of opportunities for comments: this meeting, next meeting, and then the public hearing with the Town Manager.

The Town also has the SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program). Folks on SNAP can get a free permit. Director Coleman always wants to have the opportunity for somebody who couldn't afford the \$70 resident fee to be able to have a resident shellfishing permit.

We will put these documents online with a direct line to the recording of this meeting which will be provided. It will be important to put a historical perspective on this- the costs have been absorbed by the tax papers; and now it is time to fix this.

Chairman Crook mentioned that once the commercial industry finds out about this and the aquaculture industry finds out about this, there's going to be some feedback. We understand that, you know, there are costs involved for the town to look over the program. There are 50 commercial shell fisherman and women and whacking those 50 guys/ gals and for a couple hundred bucks more, whereas, you know, you're looking at a recreational program with 3,000 people. From what I'm hearing, there's going to be quite a bit of feedback about the commercial and aquaculture. Sending out an email out to all commercial and aquaculture shell fishermen and women is a good idea. Post it for the recreational people as well to get a fair warning. This is a jump in all categories.

4. Upcoming (and old) Proposed Coastal Projects

- a. Hearing for the renewal of the aquaculture license for site ng005 for Corey Hendricks, 214 Bearses Way, Hyannis, MA 02601 for a period of 10 years. Public hearing 09/22/2026 at 10:00AM, via Zoom <https://townofbarnstable-us.zoom.us/j/83588609032>

Corey Hendricks discussed how he harvests the shellfish by hand, with a 19-foot Carolina skiff, he has about two acres. He also uses a couple of predator traps: crab cages just to keep the crabs from getting onto his

seed. This is his sole means of support. He does a little bit of wild fishing, but 75% of his income comes from his farm. He does on occasion employ some seasonal help. He is requesting to renew his farm for ten (10) years.

Constable Coteau mentioned that Mr. Hendricks was up to date on all his paperwork and fees. There are not any compliance issues with him. Hence, Natural Resources doesn't have any opposition to the request for a ten-year renewal of this license.

No comments from the public or committee members.

Vote was taken. Bob Lancaster made a motion to approve the aquaculture license for site ng005 for Corey Hendricks for a period of ten (10) years. Second: Bill Cherepon - All voted unanimously to approve.

- a. Hearing for the transfer of aquaculture license site ng054 from Thomas Nawoichik, 230 Scudder Ave, Hyannisport, MA 02647 to Jill Anne Nawoichik, 12 Geraldine Rd, Cotuit, MA 02635 and issuance of a new aquaculture license for Jill Anne Nawoichik for a period of 5 years. Public hearing 09/22/2026 at 10:30AM, via Zoom <https://townofbarnstable-us.zoom.us/j/83637202163>

Jill is managing two acres, mean high water is ten (10) to twelve (12) feet. Sandy and muddy bottom. There are natural existing quahogs, soft shell clams, and some razor clams. Her hope is to cultivate oysters, quahog, soft shell clams and razor clams. There won't be any other species of shellfish cultivated. Jill will be using grow bags, oyster trays, clam nets. She plans to harvest by hand, by rake, hydraulic pump. Will be using green crab traps for a predator control program. Eventually the farm will be her sole means of support, but not for a bit. So right now, she works for another farm. Jill does not plan on hiring any outside help, just some volunteers. She is requesting a license for five (5) years.

Constable Coteau mentioned that this aquaculture license transfer is from her brother Thomas, who bestowed this site after the passing of their father. Jill has been out there working in the area for the past five (5) years and trying to build up to the point that she can start this farm. Tom, for his piece of paperwork over these years, has been up to date with his required fees and documentation. Jill supplied her 12 months' proof of domicile for the Town of Barnstable as required, for a new license. Natural Resources does not have any opposition to this transfer and issuance of a new license to Jill Anne Nawoichik for five (5) years.

No comments from the public or committee members.

Vote was taken. Jim Weiler made a motion to approve the transfer aquaculture license for site ng054 for a period of five (5) years to Jill Anne Nawoichik. Second: Bill Cherepon - All voted unanimously to approve.

- b. Hearing for the renewal of the aquaculture license for site ng023 for Lynn Kraus, 55 Packet Landing Way, West Barnstable, MA 02668 for a period of ten (10) years. Public hearing 09/22/2026 at 11:00AM, via Zoom <https://townofbarnstable-us.zoom.us/j/85419838290>

Lynn Kraus has two acres that she is looking to renew. Mean high water is eight (8) feet. Combination of silt, fine sand and mud on the lease. Small population of jackknife clams present and American oysters, quahogs, and occasionally some soft-shell clams. Harvesting is by hand, rakes, hydraulic pumps. Predator control program is mainly netting, and she does employ staff from ARC to basically go out and harvest shellfish. Looking to renew for ten (10) years.

No comments from the public or committee members.

Constable Coteau: mentioned this site was transferred to Lynn, after the passing of her husband. Lynn is up to date on all her paperwork and fees. Natural Resources has no opposition to a ten-year renewal.

Vote was taken Bob Lancaster made a motion to approve the aquaculture license for site ng023 for Lynn Kraus for a period of ten (10) years. **Second:** Bill Cherepon - All voted unanimously to approve.

Upcoming (and old) Proposed Coastal Projects:

7. Old Business:

- a. Apprentice Program Moratorium regulation wording discussion continued from August

As Constable Croteau had stated last month, everybody was comfortable with the conditions of the regulations. It just needed a little legal vetting for wording. Instead of saying brother or sister the word "sibling" has been applied. Legal department had tightened up the language around the moratorium itself, but it's still the original regulations apply to the seven that are in the program. The age stays at 18 years old. There's a moratorium on any new entrants into the program. The subject of reopening the program can be revisited at any time. Striking the piece that says that after five years, it would be added to the fishery. There would be different permits, that if they were not renewed, would be dissolved and not added to the fishery. Still meets the intent of all the discussed items at the prior meeting.

No comments from the public or committee members.

Vote taken. Jim Whiler made a motion to approve changes to 407. Bill Chereapon made a second. All voted unanimously to approve.

- b. Transfer of Commercial Permit regulation wording discussion continued from August
figuring out transfer of commercial permit and the wording around what immediate family is defined as.
This was included in the same regulation that was just voted on.

- c. Sub-Committee to study Conservation, Zoning and Harbormaster regulations of other Towns to protect habitat- check in

Jim Weiler has been taking the lead on this topic. Presentation of document. Summary of 15 towns on Cape Cod of Comparisons dock and pier regulations of where Barnstable stands in relation to other towns. The document is intended to be informative, help with definitions, as well as exclusions: offering multiple changes to multiple small regulations. Next steps: here's the language we think we'd like to have for these two regulations. Suggest we share this presentation with the Conservation Commission and Town Council to review. Get their input, suggestions, recommendations.

- d. Quahog Dry Dragging 2026-27 discussion continued from August
Closed to Commercial Zone Barnstable Harbor discussion continued from August

At the last meeting, it was requested that I look through all the areas that are going to be dredged in this ten-year plan and see where people might be able to get into sooner than later. West Bay, North Bay are the areas that are getting done at the beginning of October. I don't see any reason to restrict the dry dragging for quahogs. The area largely is in open status. Then the river around Samson's Island and through the narrows.

A lot of those areas can only be done after November 1st, water quality pending because they're conditionally approved areas.

Constable Croteau is open to the discussion of allowing dragging only within the footprint as given for these dredging areas. And if the intent really is to get into these areas where possible, to dig them out, if there's stock there ahead of dredging in this program, then I'm in favor. But it needs to be done in such a fashion that the area is in open status when it's taking place. There's going to be a seasonality to it. And there's not much that I can do if there's more lucrative fisheries. I'm more than happy to share them with all of the commercial permit holders, they are in that original notice of intent.

Chairman Crook: If an area is planning on getting dredged, recommends fishermen to get in there before dredging starts. If it's open and there's enough lead time ahead of each project when it comes up.

9. Matters not reasonably anticipated by the Chair: None

The Shellfish Committee unanimously voted to approve a motion made by Chairman Crook and seconded by Lynn Kraus at 7:58 PM to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted: Mary Anne Burke – MEA Administrative Staff