



Town of Barnstable

Shellfish Committee

1189 Phinneys Lane, Centerville MA 02632

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

Shellfish Committee Members present: Douglas Crook, Bill Cherepon, Jacob Angelo, Timothy Hammel, Jim Weiler, Paul Hendricks

Shellfish Committee Members absent: Patricia Farinha, Gloriann Hurwitz

General Public present: Jason French, William Eastman, David Whitmore, Joe Weinberg, Nick Weinberg, Tyler Hagenstein, Connor Rogan

Town Staff present: Amy Croteau, Shellfish Constable; Lee Ann Bergal, MEA Administrative Staff

Douglas Crook called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM, as July 8, 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:** June 10, 2026, minutes.

After discussion of the minutes, a few edits were recommended. Jacob Angelo made a motion to approve the minutes as appended; Paul Hendricks seconded the motion. Douglas Crook, Bill Cherepon, Timothy Hammel, Jim Weiler: all voted to approve the minutes as amended.

2. **Chairman's Comments:** None

3. **Natural Resources Report / Correspondence:**

a. Growing Area Updates

Constable Croteau stated we have a closure of SC20 which includes Barnstable and Shoestring Bay, which is already closed, Popponesset Bay which is posted and access to Nantucket Sound from Oregon Beach. This is mainly due to coastal flooding concerns but should be open in a couple of

days. Constable Croteau did not have the new maps yet that show the Bridge Street mooring area being removed from West Bay, or the Cotuit Oyster Company mooring area being removed from Cotuit Bay but should have next month. That was effective June 13th.

b. Monthly Propagation Report

Constable Croteau gave an update submitted by Liz Lewis, Shellfish Biologist. Team member C.C. Dunham has moved on to an exciting new opportunity and will be joining Florida Sea Grant as their aquaculture specialist. We'll be hiring a seasonal staff member for the remainder of the season before posting for the other shellfish technician position.

We picked up half of the remote set 400 bags just before the 4th of July and brought them over to Scudder Lane, we are a little behind but have one more boatload of last year's remote set to plant. We completed the second year of a pilot project growing remote set in East Bay, and will continue one last year before we really assess if we should continue, expanding propagation efforts over there.

Quahog and oyster seeds have been trickling in. We received the last of our quahog seeds just today and are waiting on some of our oyster seeds for the flupsy. Everything's been going smoothly since we had wiring done at Prince Cove this spring. We have also been busy maintaining nets, pulling nets, and harvesting/broadcasting quahog throughout the 3 bays. We have already moved 170 bushels of seed and legal quahogs this year.

Kids Clamming Class was a huge success, with 62 kids showing up on Saturday's class alone! We saw over 100 people between the two days, and our volunteers came in clutch to help out! Big shout out to BARS!

Lastly, they completed the field portion of our school programs with 3 separate field trips for our fifth graders. They had stations for quahogging, razor clamming, and tide pooling. These classes are definitely making a huge impact in the school system.

We have pictures from the most recent trash pump treasure hunt out in Barnstable Harbor, where we came out with our hydraulic pump. TJ came out with his. This is the rope gear that we've collected to date thus far this year. Anything that's tagged we've attempted to relocate with the people that they belong to. And this was from the most recent one back in mid June. We have additional dates scheduled in August.

Chairman Crook elaborated on the cleanup effort in Spring Creek, noting the age of the cages and mesh were notably old and well preserved. The amount recovered was substantial considering they only went 50' down the creek. Jacob Angelo expressed his concern for years has been about the agricultural past and possibly how much more there is since the marsh has grown around the area and in the channels that nobody sees.

4. New Business:

Constable Croteau noted that the elevators in Town Hall will not be in service starting in September, so we will be unable to meet in person. The Town Council directive is to either meet via Zoom for probably 3 months or for the Advisory Committees to go on hiatus. Jacob Angelo made a motion to

continue on Zoom, Tim Hamel seconded the motion, committee members voted unanimously to continue on Zoom.

Discussion regarding having biannual visit from Shellfish Biologist Liz Lewis, one in Late fall and one in late spring.

- a. Annual Chair and Vice Chair Nominations- vote to take place in August

Discussion regarding possible nominations, no nominees accepted and no vote taken at this time. Vote to be taken in August if nominees present themselves willing to take on the position of Chair.

5. Upcoming (and Old) Renewal & Transfer Hearings:

- a. Hearing for the transfer of the aquaculture site ng010 from Florence Lowell, 78 Meadow Lane, West Barnstable, MA 02668 to Phillip Julien Swanson, 78 Meadow Lane, West Barnstable, MA 02668 and issuance of a new license to Phillip Julien Swanson for a period of 5 years.

Constable Croteau stated that Florence is retired and has passed her aquaculture business to Julian and Stephanie who have been working out there for a number of years. A letter was written to the Shellfish Committee regarding the transfer and highlighting acreage involved, ML and MH water depth, existing conditions of bottom and proposed area, natural shellfish population and other details of cultivation of species and process. Jacob Angelo made a motion to recommend grant site ng010 is approved by the Town Manager. Tim Hamel seconded the motion. Remaining members unanimously voted in favor of the aquaculture transfer.

6. Upcoming (and old) Proposed Coastal Projects - None

7. Old Business:

- a. Apprentice Program Moratorium regulation wording discussion
- b. Transfer of Commercial Permit regulation wording discussion

Discussion continued on the age requirement, verified it was not voted on prior. Discussion on specific wording and definitions as it related to transfers and immediate family as drafted by Constable Croteau per the committee's request. Constable Croteau will share with the committee members for review copies of the draft wording of the Apprentice Program Moratorium and Transfer of Commercial Permit, both of which are contained in the same regulation. Final review and approval to be continued at the next meeting before a vote to present to legal is taken.

- c. Commercial Harvest of Razor Clams from within the Closed to Commercial Zone

Constable Croteau stated that despite extensive discussion and research on the potential of opening a portion of the Closed Commercial Zone she is no longer comfortable in recommending that the Town Manager open that piece of closed area to the commercial fishery. Her decision was based

largely on an incident that occurred involving three recreational shell fishers and Commercial shell fishers. Due to inappropriate behavior and concern over one specific incidence in which a senior was involved and could be considered a felony, Constable Croteau felt firm in her decision to not move forward with the recommendation at this time. Constable Croteau shared her rationale with the department, supervisor and the town. She also stated staff have had problems with people forcing the line, being argumentative and being inside the closed area. Her concern is for the safety of recreational fishery.

There was much discussion back and forth regarding this change in decision. Jacob Angelo felt that many were being punished for the actions of one. Jim Weiler discussed having recreational and commercial shell fishers having access on different days to avoid any risk of both being present in close quarters. There was concern for the shellfish that are there and will not be able to be harvested due to recreational fishers not being able to reach the set, a potential loss, as a result of this decision. There was concern over the potentially dead shellfish next year if they don't make it through the winter and how it affects the bottom for future propagation negatively. There was also discussion on the boundaries and the closed line accuracy, as well as how many tides are left for harvest in the season. Tim Hamel confirmed the interactive map was originally wrong. Constable Croteau confirmed that was corrected and pins were dropped to mark the line.

William Eastman identified himself as the individual involved in the incident that affected this decision. Mr. Eastman spoke of the incident and how he saw it unfold. He apologized for his behavior. Constable Croteau referenced statements that were taken from the people involved, and none of them wished to pursue charges.

Nick Weinberg stated he has never seen recreational shell fishers in the channel, and didn't see how they would potentially be near commercial shell fishers in the area that is now closed.

Tyler Hagenstein stated he felt if you opened the closed area for 7 days the recreation people could get the limit of razor clams. He understood and respected Constable Croteau's position but felt there has been a lot of education since the incident and that it was in the Town's best interest to open the closed area up, due to the significant amount of revenue it could generate to keep shell fishers fishing. He stated there are studies that show 90% of the revenue generated stays in the town where it is landed. He said he thinks Town council would be interested in this, as there is a lot of free money out there and we should bring it into the town and not let it go to waste. With waters being warm, who knows what can happen. And a cold winter could kill all the clams. Years of good harvest help to carry us in bad years.

There was continued debate regarding the opening of the closed area for commercial shellfish and whether it could be open in the future. No commitment was made at this time by Constable Croteau.

Mr. Eastman reiterated that he did not have a malicious intent regarding the incident. He also explained again how he felt the recreational shell fishers had come into his area, between himself and the clams he had harvested.

Tim Hamel stated that we were told cohesiveness within the fisheries had to occur and that if anyone were to mess with the lines this would create a problem. There was more discussion regarding the lines and the pins that were dropped. Mr. Hamel said he is not happy but understands

why the Constable has made the decision she has, and bad behavior should not be rewarded or accepted.

Jacob Angelo stated that in the past for years both recreational and commercial have fished and there have never been problems.

Paul Hendricks stated that the area we are talking about years ago, way back, was closed.

Nick Weinberg stated that he is constantly in contact with recreational shell fishers. So why is opening up this closed area going to be different.

Constable Croteau stated that the close proximity would inherently increase the risk for conflict.

Jacob Angelo continued to express his unhappiness with this decision and its effect on the razor clams and the commercial shell fishers income. He also expressed concern that the recreational shell fishers can go 7 days a week and the commercial shell fishers cannot.

Jim Weiler recommended we have separate days for recreational and commercial shell fishers.

Chair Crook said we can put it on for next month.

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

Jim Weiler said he is willing to gather documents and links to other towns as to what they are doing for regulations. Specifically looking at what can be done at the Conservation level, where a variance can be obtained but more importantly at Zoning level restrictions which are harder to overturn than habitat restrictions. There was discussion on more members attending the Conservation hearings. Bill Cherepon discussed possible conservation moratoriums on docks and whether this has ever been considered. His research has shown another town that just came off such a moratorium of 10 years.

Bill Cherepon stated that there was a Kids Clamming Class held on 6/20 & 6/21 that was run by Liz Lewis the biologist and she did an excellent job. All kids were made to feel important and so many smiles. Liz and her group did a phenomenal job.

9. Matters not reasonably anticipated by the Chair: None

The Shellfish Committee unanimously voted to approve a motion made by Tim Hamel and seconded by Jacob Angelo at 6:58 PM to adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted: Lee Ann Bergal – MEA Administrative Staff