

MONTEREY BAY NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL

Final Meeting Minutes

December 11, 2020

Virtual Meeting

VOTING MEMBERS

Agriculture: Sarah Lopez

AMBAG: Steve McShane

At-Large: Dan Haifley

At-Large: Gary Hoffmann

At-Large: Gwen Kellas

Business & Industry: Tom Rowley

CA Coastal Commission: absent

CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife: Paul Reilly

CA EPA: Karen Mogus

CA Resources Agency: Tova Handelman

CA State Parks: absent

Commercial Fishing: Kathy Fosmark

Conservation: Katherine O’Dea

Diving: Brian Nelson

Education: Pamela Neeb Wade

Harbors: John Haynes

Recreation: Gary Pezzi

Recreational Fishing: Jose Montes

Research: John Hunt

Tourism: Mike Bekker

NON-VOTING MEMBERS

Channel Islands NMS: absent

College: Jacob Winnikoff

Cordell Bank NMS: absent

Elkhorn Slough NERR: Dan Brumbaugh

Greater Farallones NMS: absent

Monterey Bay NMS: Kevin Grant

National Marine Fisheries Service: Steve Lindley

U.S. Coast Guard: LT Jake Joseph

Alternates Present:

Cynthia Mathews – At-Large northern region

Carol Maehr – At-Large central region

Victoria Dickey – College

Rachel Kippen – Conservation

Keith Rootsart – Diving

Felicia Van Stolk – Education

Adam Helm – Recreational Fishing

Steven Haddock – Research

Dawn Mathes – Tourism

Julia Dyer – CA EPA

Jim Pruett – Harbors

Dawn Hayes – Monterey Bay NMS

Steven Bograd – National Marine Fisheries Service

LTJG Chris Bell – U.S. Coast Guard

I. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND MEETING MINUTES

Chair Brian Nelson called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM. Roll call was taken by Vice Chair Dan Haifley.

Approval of October Meeting Minutes:

Dan Haifley introduced a motion to approve the October meeting minutes. Seconded by Gary Pezzi.

MOTION: Passed

(Vote: 16 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions)

II. STANDING ITEM: MBNMS Superintendent Report

- MBNMS is hiring a new full time federal position, an outreach specialist to be working at the Sanctuary Exploration Center. Thirty-five applications were received. A panel will review the applications and rank them on internal criteria. The goal is to have the new hire selected and on board by March/April.
- During November and December, there were four vessel grounding incidents: a 30 foot sailboat sank near Bird Rock, a panga was abandoned at Pescadero State Beach, an aluminum skiff sank (people were rescued), and a 16-foot vessel sank (people were rescued). MBNMS is the go-to entity for vessel emergency response however MBNMS's funding is quickly running out to salvage grounded vessels.
- Staff is working on responding to Management Plan Review comments. There were many questions regarding beneficial reuse of dredged materials. The final Management Plan, Proposed Rule and Environmental Assessment will be submitted for ONMS and cleared by January. There will then be a 3-month review process.
- During the GFNMS AC meeting, the GFNMS AC presented a draft resolution recommending MBNMS "close the donut hole" (add that area to MBNMS) in northern MBNMS as well as shifting the northern boundary of MBNMS. Kevin explained to the GFNMS AC, the donut hole was already considered during MBNMS's Management Plan Review process and MBNMS will not be expanded to include it at this time. He suggested the AC make this recommendation to GFNMS's superintendent to include as a non-contiguous portion of GFNMS. Kevin is open to discussing the topic of shifting the northern boundary of MBNMS. He suggested the GFNMS AC recommend to GFNMS's superintendent to work collaboratively with MBNMS staff and AC to discuss a possible boundary change.
- Coastal Data Information Program deployed the Point Santa Cruz buoy. It measures wave height, direction, periods, sea surface currents and temperature, and air temperature. Data is broadcasted nationally and updated every 30 minutes.
- Suggestions were taken from MBNMS AC for potential names of the new Radon vessel that will be managed by the West Coast Regional Office.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

No public comment.

IV. INFORMATION ITEM: AREAS OF SPECIAL BIOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE (ASBS)

Bridget Hoover, Water Quality Protection Program Director introduced Areas of Special Biological Significance (ASBS), areas that are intrinsically valuable or have recognized value to humans for scientific study, commercial use, recreational use, or esthetic reasons. There are 34 along the coast of California and are regulated through the California Ocean Plan. She discussed some of the local ASBS, some of the dischargers into those areas, and the implementation of their compliance plans. Bridget discussed the various ways data is collected from these areas as well as elevated levels of surfactants found in First Flush water samples.

Advisory Council Member Discussion:

There were questions and discussion regarding surfactants and source tracking. Surfactant is monitored through the Urban Watch Program and First Flush. There was also a question regarding compliance plans and monitoring. There are monitoring requirements for ASBS but monitoring has been delayed due to droughts causing no discharge.

V. INFORMATION ITEM: MBNMS ADVISORY COUNCIL CHARTER REVISION

Nichole Rodriguez gave an update on the AC's Charter revision process. The revisions will be presented by the Charter Revision Sub-Committee during the February 2021 AC meeting. Once approved by the AC, the Charter will be submitted to ONMS for review and final approval.

VI. INFORMATION ITEM: OVERVIEW OF KEY ONMS PRIORITIES AND PLANS

John Armor, ONMS Director, presented operational updates, programmatic updates, budget outlook and his view of the future for the sanctuary system. Since all sanctuary sites throughout the system have gone virtual, 53 AC meetings have occurred, dozens of webinars have been created touching topics like climate change and education, and virtual reality content has been developed. John discussed sanctuary designations and expansions including Wisconsin Shipwreck Coast, Monitor – Graveyard of the Atlantic, Flower Garden Banks, Florida Keys and Lake Ontario. Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 small boat acquisitions included a replacement for the R/V *Tatoosh* at Olympic Coast, replacement boat to maintain buoys a Florida Keys and a new dive boat at Monterey Bay. John discussed the FY 21 budget compared to the enacted FY 20 budget. He discussed a new strategic plan with renewed focus on justice equity, diversity and inclusion, climate change and tribal and indigenous engagement. He ended with discussing ONMS's 50th anniversary coming up in October 2022. He presented the goals and the timeline of the 50th anniversary. Outcomes include new branding, Smithsonian book, the strategic plan and 20-year vision.

Question and Answer Session with Advisory Council Members

Q: Can you discuss the future for new sanctuaries?

A: Wisconsin sanctuary could happen in a matter of weeks. The future will be interesting. We still need equal attention on existing sites.

Q: Regarding the budget, with incoming administration and acknowledgement of NOAA in general, do you anticipate funding to be increased?

A: FY 21 shouldn't be any higher. It will likely be around the Senate budget of \$56 million. There is opportunity down the road for increases, if we can show to Department of Commerce sanctuaries can advance progress for issues like racial justice and climate change.

Q: Climate change is a clear priority for NOAA. Where does ONMS Headquarters stand on the idea of wind farms within sanctuaries?

A: Personal perspective – NOAA/ONMS can't say climate change is bad and do everything we can to combat it, and then on the other side not consider wind energy. We have to be willing to have difficult conversations. We need a very high bar and very clear justification as to why a wind farm would need to be in a sanctuary. We need to be willing to entertain the discussion. Too hypocritical to not consider it if we need to do everything we can to combat climate change.

Q: We need better engagement with Native Americans including land and sea acknowledgements to Native Americans. Is discussion occurring in ONMS regarding this topic?

A: Yes, discussion is happening. We can have someone from Headquarters give that presentation on what ONMS is doing.

Q: Has there been any discussion regarding AC term limits and allowing alternates to serve three terms as the primary?

A: John Armor stands by term limits. It is extremely important AC's have the ability to bring in fresh perspective. He does also acknowledge we will have huge loss of institutional knowledge. John suggested using the waiver for staggering terms.

VII. ACTION ITEM & INFORMATION ITEM: ADVISORY COUNCIL 2021 CALENDAR AND DRAFT WORK PLAN

Nichole Rodriguez proposed the 2021 Advisory Council calendar. She pointed out there will be six meetings in 2021: February 19, April 16, June 18, August 20, October 15 and December 10. These meetings will tentatively all be virtual due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nichole also gave an update on the 2021 AC work plan process. The deadline for AC members to submit their priority topics was extended to December 31, 2020. The priority topics will then be used by staff and the Executive Committee to create a work plan for the six AC meetings in 2021. The draft work plan will be presented and discussed during the February 2021 AC meeting.

Adjourned at 12:27 PM.