

In accordance with notice to members of the Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council's Ocean Special Area Management Plan (SAMP) subcommittee, a meeting of the subcommittee was held on Thursday, Aug. 13, 2009 at 4:30 p.m. at the University of Rhode Island (URI) OSEC Room 115 in Narragansett, R.I.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Michael M. Tikoian, Chairman
Paul Lemont
Don Gomez

STAFF PRESENT

Grover Fugate, CRMC Executive Director
Laura Ricketson-Dwyer, CRMC Public Educator
and Information Coordinator
Brian Goldman, CRMC Legal Counsel

Others present: Jen McCann, URI/Coastal Resources Center and RI Sea Grant; Kate Manning Butler, URI/CRC, Dennis Nixon, Associate Dean URI GSO

Call to order. M. Tikoian called the meeting to order at 4:45 p.m.

Item 1. The subcommittee reviewed the minutes of the previous meeting, and accepted them unanimously. M. Tikoian told the rest of the subcommittee that D. Abedon sent an email saying he could not attend the meeting.

Item 2. G. Fugate provided the subcommittee with research abstracts for the additional \$2.8 million and a budget as well.

Item 3. G. Fugate reported that the Ocean SAMP team was meeting with the different agencies. By the time the SAMP is completed, he said, the team will have gone to 60 meetings with the federal agencies alone. M. Tikoian asked what took place at these meetings, and G. Fugate listed topics of discussion at the different meetings: potential projects, geotechnical information, side scan sonar, benthic habitat, cable routes and tower placement. M. Tikoian asked for clarification on the development process – data collection with simultaneous SAMP development – and if there was a need to collect data before placing possible wind farms offshore. G. Fugate explained that all of that is indeed going on at once, and that it was necessary to complete the project on-time and to also collect the necessary data (for example, the avian studies need to be three years because the birds are migratory, so the team is working to combine those three years both during and after the SAMP is developed). Even without having a complete survey of the entire SAMP area, G. Fugate said that the data collected suggests one location off Block Island. Deep Water Wind recently bored eight holes in this location. M. Tikoian requested that any future federal consistency permits, such as this, go before the full council. D. Gomez asked about the three research vessels available for the research – the Endeavor, Bold and Roosevelt. G. Fugate said their use is free to for the SAMP research. M. Tikoian asked whether any of the research would be expanded with the extra funding,

and how the SAMP team would determine a cutoff point for the research. G. Fugate said nothing is expanding, and that what was outlined in the original SAMP proposal still stands. Some of that will be determined by how the federal agencies react to the data as it is collected. M. Tikoian inquired about NEPA concerns, and G. Fugate said that it is under the purview of MMS and the Army Corps, not CRMC. M. Tikoian expressed a desire for the subcommittee to meet more frequently so that members can be updated on a more regular basis to keep the flow of information timely. G. Fugate also told the members that there are now several states in competition to develop an ocean zoning and planning tool.

Item 4. B. Goldman would like to see the SAMP chapters in advance of them being released to the general public, as well as chapter outlines, as he needs to draft standards for the SAMP chapters to be adopted. B. Goldman asked how often the SAMP team conducted chapter writing and review sessions, and if he could attend. J. McCann said they were on an almost daily basis.

In reviewing a timeline for SAMP chapter creation and adoption, M. Tikoian inquired about there being only one chapter on policies, procedures and regulations. J. McCann clarified that each chapter will include existing policies, procedures and regulations, and that the one chapter will focus on new ones. It will also make reference to any federal regulations or policies. B. Goldman suggested there be a special section for federal and state policies and regulation. J. McCann explained the timeline to present draft chapters to the public - each chapter would be reviewed by a committee, then the subcommittee would review, then the stakeholders and then to the public. M. Tikoian requested that the team create a procedure from chapter creation to final adoption for the subcommittee to approve and forward to the full Council, to eliminate confusion and make the process clear to the public.

Item 5. B. Goldman reported that he met with the R.I. Attorney General and asked him to participate in the SAMP process, but that the AG had concerns about his participation. B. Goldman said that once a formal process is outlined, he would meet with the task force and also with Megan Higgins (of RWU) to direct the students.

Discussion. J. McCann told the subcommittee that at the Baird Symposium, running from November 2-4, 2009, the Ocean SAMP will be a co-sponsor and that M. Tikoian would possibly be on the agenda and that there were tickets for interested subcommittee members. G. Fugate said that the Council on Environmental Quality was tasked with developing a marine spatial planning framework for the U.S. in 180 days and the task force will be holding one of its five public hearings in RI in late September. The task force wants the CRMC's input. M. Tikoian said he'd like the subcommittee to meet two times a month.

ADJOURN. The subcommittee voted to adjourn the meeting at 6 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Laura Ricketson-Dwyer, CRMC public educator and information coordinator