

**Rhode Island Seafood Marketing Collaborative /Advisory Council
Minutes**

Thursday, February 2, 2012 - 2:00pm

RIDEM, Room 300

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On Thursday February 2, 2012, the Rhode Island Seafood Marketing Collaborative / Advisory Council was called to order by Director Janet Coit for its third formal meeting at approximately 2:05 p.m. at the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, 235 Promenade Street, Room 300

**In attendance were:**

**Collaborative Members**

Janet Coit, Director of DEM  
Mike Walker, Senior Project Manager, EDC  
Robert Ballou, Assistant to the Director, DEM  
Ken Ayars, Chief of Agriculture DEM  
Kelly Mahoney, Policy Director, DOA  
John Mullen attending for Ernest Julian, Chief of Food Protection, DOH  
Dave Beutel, Aquaculture Coordinator, CRMC  
Barry Costa Pierce, Director, RI Sea Grant

**Council Members**

Ryan Clark, Vice President, The Town Dock  
Ann Cook, Co-founder, The Local Catch, Inc.  
Bill Silkes, President, American Mussel Harvesters  
Derek Wagner, Chef & Owner, Nick's on Broadway  
Mike McGiveney, President RI Shellfishermen's Association  
Hirotsugu Uchida, Assistant Professor, URI  
Perry Raso, President, Ocean State Aquaculture  
Kathryn Farrington, Vice President of Marketing, Newport Chambers & Visitor's Bureau

**Others**

Larry Mouradjian, Associate Director, DEM Natural Resources.  
Rayna Santoro, Assistant to the Director, DEM  
Gerard Bertrand, Executive Director, RI Rural Development Council  
Sarah Schumann, Education Coordinator, SMC  
Representative Peter Martin, State Representative  
Representative Teresa Tanzi, State Representative  
Janice McEachen, Business Development, American Mussel Harvesters  
Greg Silkes, General Manager, American Mussel Harvesters  
Ross Pearsall, President, Ocean State Fresh

Nick Obolensky, President, Nobol Trading International  
Katrina White, Travel Trade Manager, EDC  
Steven Anderson, President, RIPCBA  
Bob Rheault, Executive Director, East Coast Shellfish Growers  
Lori Pivarnik, Coordination Food Safety Outreach/Research, URI  
Sarah Smith, Seafood Extension Specialist, RI Sea Grant  
Mercedes Lyson, Graduate student, Brown  
Hannah Mellion, Food Systems Activator, Farm Fresh RI  
Peg Parker, Executive Director, Commercial Fisheries Research Foundation  
David Spencer, Manager, Newport Lobster Shack  
Nancy Sullivan, Legislative Clerk, Senate Committee on Environment and Agriculture  
Caitlin Thomas, Deputy Director, Senate Policy  
Nicole Poepping, Legislative Liaison, DEM  
Stephen Arnold, Co-owner, Wild Rhody, LLC  
John Schenck, Publisher, Edible Rhody, LLC  
Cory Smith, Intern, Newport Chambers & Visitor's Bureau

Director Coit welcomed the group, and asked participants to introduce themselves.

### **Announcements**

Director Coit provided the following updates and announcements.

The January 18, 2012 Providence Journal's Food Section featured an article written by Gail Ciampa and developed by the RISMCM, "From Sea to Table?" promoting the Collaborative and the local seafood initiative. Gail Ciampa indicated her willingness to write future articles on seasonal seafood. Derek Wagner suggested the articles be printed with seafood that would be in season at that time.

Barry Costa-Pierce, distributed copies of the latest URI Sea Grant publication "41degrees N" - "A Seafood Buffet" highlighting the Baird Symposium as well as a DVD featuring the program held last June. The video is available at [www.seagrants.gso.uri.edu](http://www.seagrants.gso.uri.edu).

The National Seafood Marketing Coalition is coordinating a panel and an open roundtable discussion during International Boston Seafood Show focusing on "Seafood Jobs in America". Coordinator Bruce Schactler ([bschactler@ak.net](mailto:bschactler@ak.net)) hopes for RI's participation during the open roundtable. RISMCM members are encouraged to attend.

### **PRESENTATIONS**

#### **Scup and Striped Bass - *A tail of two fisheries.***

Bob Ballou gave a PowerPoint presentation of fisheries management for Scup and striped bass.

**Comments:** Ann Cook and Mike McGiveney asked about allocations by other states and can formula be changed? Bob Ballou answered that it was very political and would be hard to change. Any added allocations to one state would only result in reduction to another.

Ann Cook stated that monkfish should be considered as a good fish and could allocations be increased for this species? Bill Silkes asked Bob how the recreational fish catch is monitored. Ballou stated by phone survey and other means. Ballou further indicated it was somewhat of a soft assessment. Ryan Clarke indicated that scup was a critical fish that should be a branded product promoted as Rhode Island product since we have the largest allocation.

### **Marketing - Ideas and Updates**

Ken Ayars distributed a 1981 study which was written to promote and expand markets for seafood products, which is the same charged as RISMCM. Ayars further suggested the agricultural direct sales model to consumers could create a greater demand. Educating the public is critical in this effort.

Sarah Schumann suggested we add Rhode Island Seafood “How to” promotional videos to new website, which is still under development. We could use You Tube videos to: expose Rhode Islanders to available methods for preparing local seafood; introduce Rhode Islanders to fishers, processors, chefs who make our local seafood economy vibrant; promote a variety of locally grown and landed seafood species to the public. Schumann asked interested participants to contact her.

**Comments:** Hirotsugu suggested we film “average household cook” for one of the “how to” video to demonstrate how easy it is to prepare seafood. Katrina White mentioned that the “Gloucester (MA) wives of fishermen” does an annual cooking demonstration for fundraising. Steve Arnold mentioned that underutilized species are becoming popular and our restaurants prepare fabulous dishes with monkfish, skate, and scup. Pervanik stated that “scup” is somewhat difficult to prepare, and suggests we start with another species. It was decided to stay with the scup.

Katrina White, RI Tourism, announced Providence is placed #3 in best cities for food in the US, and the Travel and Leisure Magazine has named Providence as the #2 best for food, surpassing all but New York City. White further announced the National Geographic Magazine wants to do a feature in Rhode Island, “What’s Cooking in Rhode Island”. White also hosts a tour of Rhode Island to Travel Trade Managers and would welcome seafood/aquaculture farm tours.

### **Subcommittees:**

Director Coit asked participants to choose a subcommittee (listed below) and that they be available to meet and prepare a report of actions / recommendations to be included in the April 30 report to the General Assembly. Subcommittee reports should be submitted to Rayna Santoro **on or before Friday, March 23, 2012**. Director Coit asked that at the end of this meeting, the subcommittees meet and select a leader.

The subcommittees and their members are:

**Regulatory:** Identify DEM, DOH, & other regulatory restrictions preventing &/or inhibiting local &/or direct-to-consumer seafood marketing initiatives; explore feasibility of alternative regulations that would preserve food safety & resource sustainability while facilitating the flow of seafood goods to market. [Could include: shellfish transplants; striped bass; health restrictions.]

| Name                       | Email Address                                                            | Telephone #         |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Bob Ballou - <b>Leader</b> | <a href="mailto:Robert.ballou@dem.ri.gov">Robert.ballou@dem.ri.gov</a>   | 401.222.4700 x 4420 |
| Dave Beutel                | <a href="mailto:dbeutel@crmc.ri.gov">dbeutel@crmc.ri.gov</a>             | 401.783.3370        |
| Lori Pivarnik              | <a href="mailto:pivarnik@uri.edu">pivarnik@uri.edu</a>                   | 401.874.2972        |
| Ann Cook                   | <a href="mailto:thelocalcatch@cox.net">thelocalcatch@cox.net</a>         | 401.284.1195        |
| John Mullen                | <a href="mailto:John.mullen@health.ri.gov">John.mullen@health.ri.gov</a> | 401.222.7716        |
| Bob Rheault                | <a href="mailto:bob@ecsga.org">bob@ecsga.org</a>                         | 401.783.3360        |
| Bill Silkes                | <a href="mailto:bill@americanmussel.com">bill@americanmussel.com</a>     | 401.294.8999 x 17   |
| Rep. Teresa Tanzi          | <a href="mailto:teresatanzi@mac.com">teresatanzi@mac.com</a>             | 401.527.9468        |

**Promotion & Education:** Identify & facilitate opportunities to increase consumer demand for local seafood, through education, media, events, advertising, etc. Provide educational opportunities for consumers & the fishing community regarding local seafood issues & initiatives. Develop a promotional slogan &/or logo. Provide input on an R.I. seafood website.

| Name                          | Email Address                                                                | Telephone #       |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Katrina White - <b>Leader</b> | <a href="mailto:kwhite@riedc.com">kwhite@riedc.com</a>                       | 401.278.9150      |
| Kathryn Farrington            | <a href="mailto:kfarrington@gonewport.com">kfarrington@gonewport.com</a>     | 401-845-9117      |
| Lori Pirvarnik                | <a href="mailto:pivarnik@uri.edu">pivarnik@uri.edu</a>                       | 401.874.2972      |
| Janice McEachen               | <a href="mailto:Janice@americanmussel.com">Janice@americanmussel.com</a>     | 401.294.8999 x 14 |
| Mike McGiveney                | <a href="mailto:mclamdigger@aol.com">mclamdigger@aol.com</a>                 | 401.828.9369      |
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| Perry Raso                    | <a href="mailto:perryraso@gmail.com">perryraso@gmail.com</a>                 | 401.932.4946      |
| Derek Wagner                  | <a href="mailto:DerekJXWagner@yahoo.com">DerekJXWagner@yahoo.com</a>         | 401.421.0286      |
| Nick Obolensky                | <a href="mailto:Nicholas@roboltraining.com">Nicholas@roboltraining.com</a>   | 508.965.5145      |
| Sarah Schumann                | <a href="mailto:schumannsarah@gmail.com">schumannsarah@gmail.com</a>         | 401.297.6273      |
| Mercedes Lyson                | <a href="mailto:Mercedes.lyson@brown.edu">Mercedes.lyson@brown.edu</a>       | 401.464.2784      |
| Hannah Mellion                | <a href="mailto:Hannah@farmfreshri.org">Hannah@farmfreshri.org</a>           | 401.312.4250      |
| John Schenck                  | <a href="mailto:Johncs2@cox.net">Johncs2@cox.net</a>                         | 917.520.6574      |
| Genie Trevor                  | <a href="mailto:genie@ediblerhody.com">genie@ediblerhody.com</a>             | 401.250.5003      |
| Ross Pearsall                 | <a href="mailto:ross@oceanstatefresh.com">ross@oceanstatefresh.com</a>       | 401.218.0673      |
| Jody Sullivan                 | <a href="mailto:jodyjude@newportchamber.com">jodyjude@newportchamber.com</a> | 401.847.1608      |

**Branding/Certification:** Explore the pros & cons of a label (branding) or seal (certification) conveying to the consumer that a product is local, healthy, fresh, sustainable, or some combination of the above. Determine logistics of applying this label/seal & define specific protocols for accountability/traceability.

| Name                       | Email Address                                                          | Telephone #         |
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| Bob Ballou - <b>Leader</b> | <a href="mailto:Robert.ballou@dem.ri.gov">Robert.ballou@dem.ri.gov</a> | 401.222.4700 x 4420 |
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|               |                                                                          |                   |
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| Ryan Clarke   | <a href="mailto:rclarke@towndock.com">rclarke@towndock.com</a>           | 401.789.2200      |
| Steve Arnold  | <a href="mailto:steve@wilrhodyseafood.com">steve@wilrhodyseafood.com</a> | 401.639.6335      |
| Ross Pearsall | <a href="mailto:ross@oceanstatefresh.com">ross@oceanstatefresh.com</a>   | 401.218.0673      |

**Building local market connections:** Identify & facilitate opportunities to establish agreements between local fishermen & seafood dealers for potential seafood marketplace expansion. Explore potential regulatory, legal, & business aspects related to this type of agreement. Explore feasibility of a central seafood market.

| Name                           | Email Address                                                            | Telephone #       |
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| Sarah Schumann - <b>Leader</b> | <a href="mailto:schumannsarah@gmail.com">schumannsarah@gmail.com</a>     | 401.297.6273      |
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| Hannah Mellion                 | <a href="mailto:Hannah@farmfreshri.org">Hannah@farmfreshri.org</a>       | 401.312.4250      |
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| Steve Arnold                   | <a href="mailto:steve@wilrhodyseafood.com">steve@wilrhodyseafood.com</a> | 401.639.6335      |
| Rick Bellavance                | <a href="mailto:makosrule@verizon.net">makosrule@verizon.net</a>         | 401.741.5648      |

**Research:** Review & identify existing studies, pilot program & initiatives of this state & other states regarding seafood-marketing practices. Identify data needs for describing the current status of the R.I. seafood supply chain & possible improvements. Evaluate expected economic benefits to producers & consumers of R.I. Seafood Marketing Collaborative activities.

| Name                       | Email Address                                                          | Telephone #  |
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**Funding:** Identify funding needs to promote SMC program & goals. Identify existing funding sources available to the fishing community & others to support seafood marketing. Identify opportunities for potential funding – public & private - to support Rhode Island seafood marketing efforts & initiatives.

| Name                           | Email Address                                                          | Telephone #         |
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| Gerry Bertrand - <b>Leader</b> | <a href="mailto:director@riruralri.org">director@riruralri.org</a>     | 410.667.0071        |
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## Adjournment

The February 2, 2012 was adjourned at 3:40 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for April 5, 2012 at 2:00 p.m.