

**Title:** MSI Scoping Committee Public Meeting #2

**Date:** September 23, 2019

**Location:** DMF Gloucester

**Type:** DRAFT Meeting Minutes

**Time:** 7-8:30PM

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**Attendance:**

\*As listed by sign in sheet

Amy Croteau, Rob O'leary, Jeff Kennedy, Sean Bowen, Scott Soares, Ginny Parker, Iris Pickard, Sean McNally, Steve Parkes, Forest Schenele, James Elder, Summer Pingiree, Devon Smolak, Jude Ahern, Peter Seminara, Rebecca Vischick, Al Cottne, Pete Fatino, Paul Thistlewood, Geoffrey Walker, Amy Croteau

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**1. Introductions and Ground Rules**

O'Leary introduced himself and then asked the scoping committee and assessment committee members in the audience to introduce themselves.

Kennedy introduced the MSI to the audience and gave a brief overview of the MSI process to date discussing the MSI task force, and the objectives of the MSI (what it is and what it is not). The presentation of the MSI process is to better provide the context to the comment and clarify the background on the MSI itself.

Kennedy queued up the public comment by ending the presentation discussing that the MSI is meant to develop a strategic plan for the state as a whole. MSI is not a regulatory body and cannot change regulations or policy. The MSI is here to put things on the record to show what the viewpoints of the different stakeholders involved in ALL shellfish resources throughout the state.

O'Leary reiterated Kennedy's closing remarks and mentioned the key points and reason for the MSI public meetings. To hear from the public and comment on lack of resources surrounding various shellfish groups.

Schillaci followed up and outlined the point of DMF's involvement and the changing environment across both the state's social and natural systems. These changes can seriously affect the future of the various industries.

O'Leary opens the floor to general comments from the audience.

**2. Public Comments/Questions:**

Jeff Walker introduced himself as the Newbury selectmen and opened his comment by specifically putting on record and addressing the relationship his town has with DMF as a fruitful partnership and sustainable. He followed his comment with a synthesis of home rule and the accessibility of DMF on the

North Shore.

Pete Fatino followed Walker's comment and introduced himself as the fish commissioner of Newbury. He made mention of having followed the MSI since the beginning and recognized that the MSI is not a regulatory body. Fatino questioned that although the MSI is not a regulatory body won't the initiative advocate for regulatory measures? He discussed that the MSI puts forward that it is not a regulatory body but the work it puts out will directly affect and influence regulation.

In referencing regulatory measures Fatino put forward the conversation on clarifying what the MSI means when discussing "protecting public access".

Kennedy responded clarifying the point as access to fishing rights. Not exactly public access board but providing for public access for more harvesting activities.

Fatino followed Kennedy's response and asked if more access specifically meant for people in their own town or for people outside of the town?

Schillaci responded stating that we all come at from different angles on many issues. A lot of folks have come to the division asking for how we set our standards for public access. From the division prospect we couldn't do what the local towns do. The division has no interest in changing commercial roles. Newbury wants to maintain their resources.

Fatino responded and asked "are we dancing around a subject here. Are you looking to make this accessible for everyone in the state? Putting forward that he wanted to be certain that the resources remains as a town resource and wanting to know where the MSI is coming from. For him the initiative is dancing around the issues. Stating that he wants straight talk. For example, when the MSI talks about standardizing aquaculture – what does that mean

Schillaci responded when we talk about standardizing aquaculture, we mean within state standards it will not change the states or the specific towns ability to manage the resource. When we talk about standardizing, we are really talking about the environmental side of it and public health. Licensing is and will be held by the municipalities.

Walker followed Schillaci's comments stating perception that even though they have local rule, they might have no say over the emergence of aquaculture – local rule has worked well.

Fatino responded he was concerned about opening the area to the greater public and taking the right of the people who work and live here and rely on the flats for their livelihood. He stated that there are excellent people who work for DMF, but that they are stretched.

Amy Croteau followed Fatino's statement and mentioned that his comments are the whole reason we are here. When this was developed as an idea it was very clear that you cannot standardized the state. Croteau stated that the whole reason for the MSI is to have discussion like this to find out what he concerns of local communities are and to make that part of the discussion. You have to approach this in a broad way.

Jim Elder a Manchester boardmen responded that he seconds Fatino's comments. He stated interest in the town to open new areas but needs technical assistance and more assistance from the State. He

complimented Kennedy's work but specifically mentioned that it is hard to expect that much will come from DMF because of the lack of infrastructure and staffing.

Stevie Parkes of the Mass oyster project commented that what MOP does is education and the end result of our program is putting oysters in the water. There is limited space to put shellfish in and that MOP would like to be a part of a process to be involved in opening more areas. The state is overworked and underpaid and these areas do not have the resources to be open and we want to change that.

Walker followed building on what Parkes said and that he would like to use oysters to for marsh restoration and harden the towns banks using oysters.

Jude Ahern commented that the DMF plan there is mention of offshore aquaculture and posed the question as to why offshore aquaculture is not included in the MSI report.

Schillaci and Kennedy responded that there are state controlled waters that are not under town control and that offshore aquaculture as it stands is too costly. Offshore aquaculture in that state has only seen thus far been associated with kelp and Mussel farms. Rockport is the only federal water project (mussels Salem State Univ).

Fantino commented that he has a problem with information from DMF specifically, how his town gets landings information from DMF.

Croteau questioned Fantino and asked him if the town specifically asks for the data and if his town requires an annual report from harvesters. There are definitely discrepancies with what you see on paper and what you know is happening on patrol.

Fantino responded he wants exact number if DMF can give it to him.

Schillaci and Kennedy responded and discussed the reality of confidentiality in reported landings data and the state law.

Ahern followed Fantino's statements on data and discussed that the data is important for finances. She made mention that the survey was not specific enough and stated that she thought that was a real weakness in the survey. She closed her statement stating that DMF shouldn't have shared the data as freely as it did. Ahern's comments were more so referring to concerns in sharing the data whilst compiling the report not so much in how the data was presented in the final report.

O'Leary addressed the audience asking for further comments, questions, concerns

Parkes asked for clarification on the sequence of events in order to open water bodies.

Schillaci responded and a discussion followed regarding the cost to DMF on opening water and challenges that FDA new interpretation is causing the division. Specifically, DMF is unable to dedicate specific resources to upgrade certain areas due to the challenges in just keeping areas already open, open. Schillaci stated the importance of putting dedicated efforts to changing classifications and have asked communities about infrastructure problems.

Schillaci closed his statement asking the audience to submit written comment if you can written

comment and mentioned the extension of the comment period. Right now, it is extended to the 21<sup>st</sup> but will extend it further.

O'Leary closed the meeting at 7:47PM thanking the audience for taking the time to come out and discuss the issues at hand