



Town of Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts
Shellfish Department
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December 2014 Report

First I want to welcome Dan Martino to the Shellfish Committee. Dan was appointed by the Selectmen on November 18th.

The Harbor was opened for recreational shellfishing on December 6th and for commercial harvest on the 8th.

The Martha's Vineyard Shellfish Group (MVSG) was expecting a \$33,000 State earmark for this current fiscal year, but the line item was recently cut. This puts more pressure on the group to fund raise to meet the now expected budget shortfall. There will be a fund raiser benefiting the MVSG on December 18th at the Off Shore Ale House. The MVSG will get a percentage of the "dine in" food sales on that day.

I have submitted a proposed FY16 budget for the department. I am asking that some errors in the payroll line items be corrected and there is an additional \$1,000 assessment for the MVSG. All other line items will remain the same as they are in this fiscal year.

I met with the Capital Improvement Committee on my request for up to \$500,000 for the Farm Pond restoration project. At the Restore America's Estuaries Conference last month I had the opportunity to speak with someone that reviewed one of the funding proposals for the culvert. It was acknowledged that the proposal was strong but we got lower marks as the proposal did not have a significant financial commitment from the Town in the proposal. It was recommended that the Town re-apply in the next round of funding and include a financial commitment. The computer models predict the new culvert will dilute the nitrogen load in the pond to a level below the nitrogen threshold and bring the pond into compliance with the Federal Clean Water Act. This solution is much cheaper for the Town as compared sewerage more of the Farm Pond watershed.

Progress has been made in the Little Bridge Channel dredge project. Federal Emergency Management Agency has released the funds to the MA Emergency Management Agency. The selectmen will sign off on the contract from the State at their next meeting. The next problem is the contractor who had the lowest bid, says he cannot do the project before the January 15th deadline. As a contract was never signed it has been decided that CLE Engineering will apply for a Time of Year exemption to do the work in June. Due to the additional volume of sand in the channel we have also decided to re-bid the project. We will change the bid package to allow the use of range marks and tide gauge or the GPS system on the dredge equipment.

We have been seeing more seed scallops coming in from Lagoon Pond. Some of this seed is large. Seed is along the shore from the drawbridge to past the Sailing Camp Park. Most of the adult scallops have already been caught. The potential of closing the scallop season in Lagoon Pond will be discussed at the monthly Shellfish Committee Meeting.

Respectively submitted,