**Shrimp Task Force Meeting**

**Wednesday, March 27, 2019, 10:00a.m.**

**8026 Main Street, Houma, LA**

**I.** Pledge of Allegiance

**II.** Roll call and introduction of guests

**Voting Members Present:**

George Barisich

Acy Cooper

Lance Nacio

Rodney Olander

Kristen Baumer

Alan Gibson

Andrew Blanchard

**Voting Members Absent:**

Ronald Dufrene

Steven Sode

**Non-Voting Members Present:**

Peyton Cagle

Edward Skena

Jack Isaacs

Stephen Sessums

**Non-Voting Members Absent:**

Justin Gremillion

**III.** Andrew Blanchardmotioned to approve the January 16, 2019 meeting minutes, 2nd by Acy Cooper. Motion carries.

Alan Gibson motioned to amend the agenda, adding an item under ‘New Business’, I. To Hear a Presentation on the Summary of the 2018 Shrimp Season and an Introduction of the 2019 Spring Shrimp Season, 2nd by Acy Cooper. Motion carries.

Acy Cooper motioned to approve the March 27, 2019 meeting agenda as amended, 2nd by Andrew Blanchard. Motion carries.

**IV.** Treasury Report:

Remaining Fund Balance- $548,469

Remaining Budget Balance- $86,468

Andrew Blanchard motioned to accept the treasury report as presented, 2nd by Alan Gibson. Motion carries.

**VI.** New Business

**A.** Mike McDonough provided the task force with a presentation on the proposed changes to near-shore artificial reef planning; the areas presented are recommendations until considered and approved by the Artificial Reef Council

Acy Cooper expressed concern for inshore reef planning sites and those areas being properly marked; requested that the task force be kept up-to-date on all current and future inshore planning sites

Requested that Mike McDonough accept the questions of the STF and the industry and come back to the next meeting to provide answers and feedback

Acy Cooper made a motion to request that Mike McDonough accept the questions of the STF and the industry and come back to the next meeting to provide answers and feedback, 2nd George Barisich. **Motion withdrawn.**

Public comment by Barry Rogers, stated that he is against the approval of any additional inshore artificial reef sites

Kim Chauvin stated that she put some questions together for LDWF and the STF, regarding these site proposals, after finding out what’s going on in Mississippi with artificial reef sites. Stated that prime shrimping ground areas were chosen to place the artificial reef sites and these areas are now deemed fishing grounds, concern with losing shrimping areas; concern with insufficient data on where boats are trawling; stated that she would recommend that the task force write a letter to the Artificial Reef Council requesting that they notify and include the task force and the industry in the beginning and through the planning stages of artificial reef sites

Acy Cooper withdrew his motion on the floor ‘to request that Mike McDonough accept the questions of the STF and the industry and come back to the next meeting to provide answers and feedback’, 2nd by George Barisich. Motion withdrawn.

The task force expressed concern with not having a seat at the table during throughout the process of planning or public hearings to notify the industry and allow time to discuss and provide input on the artificial reef sites that are being proposed.

Lance Nacio recommended using electronic logbook data to display shrimping efforts. Stated that this data provides lines which can provide the industry and decision makers with a better idea of where shrimpers are fishing and how these reef sites might affect fishermen in various areas

Alan Gibson motioned to request that the Artificial Reef Council postpone consideration and approval of the artificial reef sites for six months to allow time to answer questions and accept feedback and input from the fishing industries, 2nd by Acy Cooper. Motion carries.

Acy Cooper motioned that the task force create a list of questions in the next week to submit to Mike McDonough and request that Mike McDonough accept the questions of the STF and the industry and submit a response in writing to the task force within 30 days. Requested that LDWF provide the task force with a presentation and update on this at their next meeting, 2nd Andrew Blanchard. Motion carries.

Kristen Baumer requested that LDWF provide the task force with a map that overlays fishing efforts with proposed reef site areas

Acy Cooper motioned to request that the Artificial Reef Council notify the task force of any planning or pre-planning of inshore artificial reef sites, 2nd by Alan Gibson. Motion carries.

Acy Cooper motioned that the task force write a letter of opposition to the Artificial Reef Council in the event that they do not postpone consideration and approval of the near shore artificial reef sites for six months, 2nd by George Barisich. Motion carries.

**B.** Peyton Cagle addressed the task force with an update on the Shrimp Bycatch Study and a proposal to provide partial funding for the fishermen trips and the completion of the 2019 Bycatch Study

Supplying personnel for fishermen trips and accommodating the 12-hour boating times proposed an issue, so to complete the Bycatch Study contracted workers would need to be hired. LDWF is also still seeking commercial fishermen who are willing to volunteer to participate and will be doing a mail-out version of the application to the industry

Acy Cooper motioned to provide $30,000 to fund fishermen trips and the completion of the 2019 Shrimp Bycatch Study to include data compilation, analysis, and reporting, 2nd by Andrew Blanchard. Motion carries.

Sandy Nugyen requested that LDWF provide her with a flyer with the Shrimp Bycatch Study information so that she can translate into other languages and spread the word to the community she works with

**C.** Kristen Baumer led discussion on the Shrimp Promotion and Marketing Fund Bill

The bill would abolish the Shrimp Trade Petition Fund and convert the balance to the Shrimp Promotion and Marketing Fund

·        The Shrimp Petition Account was established with additional fees imposed on trawl gear during 2005/2006.  The revenues were earmarked to specifically assist with a petition filed in 2003 related to antidumping activities under the Tariff Act of 1930.

·        That legal action has since expired and no new revenue is being generated in the Shrimp Trade Petition Fund.

·        The Shrimp Trade Petition Fund is scheduled for elimination in 2020 and the balance will likely be swept into the State General Fund at that time. This bill would instead convert the balance in the account to the Shrimp Promotion and Marketing Fund

Alan Gibson motioned to pass a resolution to support the Shrimp Marketing and Promotion Fund Bill, 2nd by Andrew Blanchard. Motion carries.

**D.** Acy Cooper led discussion on a commercial shrimping industry professionalism program; Would like to ask that LSA consider a program of this kind, asking for LSA and industry’s input and feedback

The task force requested that LDWF provide feedback and a presentation at their next meeting on the crab and oyster industry’s professionalism programs and the possibility of the shrimp industry proposing something similar

**E.** Acy Cooper led discussion on a seafood label of origin for restaurants and a bill being proposed this legislative session in this regard

Representative Gisclair is planning to propose a bill this session that would require restaurants to have a seafood label of origin for crawfish and shrimp; requesting a letter of support from the STF to support the bill and also asked that industry members come when the bill is being heard by the legislature

The task force plans to host a marketing meeting to discuss a statewide campaign to notify the public on the country of origin labeling in restaurants and to rally support for local shrimp markets

Seafood Import Monitoring Program (SIMP) began March 1, 2019

**F.** Kristen Baumer provided an update on the shrimp industry’s trip to Washington, D.C. Hill meetings and the Louisiana Alive event

Some items discussed at Shrimp Hill Meets:

* The industry expressed concern with the amount of imports coming into the country and the need for accurate country of origin labeling, stating there is more shrimp in the country than what can be consumed and there are a lot of grocery stores mislabeling and misrepresenting where product is actually coming from throughout the country
* The task force expressed concern for shrimp testing and the need to destroy bad shrimp. Stating that, ‘in the EU when shrimp is tested and it turns up bad the shrimp is destroyed at that moment. In the U.S., shrimp that tests bad is returned to the boat and not destroyed, only to find out later, that the same bad shrimp is then brought back to the U.S. One of the things being addressed in Washington now is make changes that would require any bad shrimp to be destroyed

Discussed the task force, LSA and ASPA making two-three trips to D.C. every year to keep a pulse on the shrimp industry issues and following up

The task force discussed the possibility of combining resources with the Oyster Task Force to plan a 2020 Louisiana Seafood event in Washington, D.C.

Thomas Olander, chairman of the Louisiana Shrimp Association, requested that the task force put together a letter to send to hospitals, doctors associations, and other entities about the health concerns with imported shrimp to get their support to make the changes necessary to require that bad shrimp be destroyed

Thomas Olander also suggested putting rocks at the mouth of the Calumet Spillway to address concerns for the Vermillion Bay area and land erosion near Marsh Island due to wave action as well as flooding and pollution causing areas of dead-zones. Requested that the task force add an item on their next meeting agenda for this discussion

Letter outlining why country of origin labeling is needed and have the TF sign it and

The task force requested feedback from LDWF on the catch per effort in Vermillion Bay, stated that the effort from this area used to be around 50% and is now as little as 2% of the catch per effort; Requesting feedback on the percentage of overall landings from Vermillion Bay back in 2000

**G.** The task force considered nominations for shrimp task force seat vacancies

Andrew Blanchard motioned to nominate Craig Authement to fill the current Dock Buyer vacancy on the task force, 2nd by Acy Cooper. Motion carries.

The task force requested to add an agenda item for next meeting to consider nominations for three alternate processor seat vacancies; the STF Nomination Subcommittee plans to also meet prior to next STF meeting for 9:00a.m.

**H.** Acy Cooper motioned to postpone officer elections until the next meeting, 2nd by Andrew Blanchard. Motion carries.

**I.** Peyton Cagle provided a presentation on the summary of the 2018 shrimp season and an introduction of the 2019 spring shrimp season

The task force asked when LDWF was going to do ride-alongs; the task force stated that the industry will get together to compile a list of captains who are willing to participate

**VII.** Public Comment:

Task force requested that LDWF Enforcement provide them with feedback for the next meeting on purchasing a drone to aid in shrimp industry enforcement

The task force discussed proposing a bill that would increase shrimp penalties; the task force to come up with a list of violations that affect the industry the most and bring the item to the STF Legislative Committee to further discuss the changes the industry would like to see

Kim Chauvin requested that the task force add an item on their next agenda to discuss the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2019 (specifically section 305)

Kristen Baumer suggested appointing a subcommittee to discuss the label of origin for restaurants

Next meeting set for Wednesday, May 1, 2019 for 10:00am in Houma with a Nomination Subcommittee meeting prior for 9:00am

**VIII.** Motion to adjourn by Acy Cooper, 2nd by George Barisich. Motion carries.

Meeting adjourned