

## Minutes

A meeting of the ISSC Executive Board was held in person and virtually in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

### I. Attendance

#### Board Members Present

|                  |                                       |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Kohl Kanwit      | Chair                                 |
| Bob Schuster     | Vice Chair/ Region 2 Regulatory       |
| Keith Skiles     | Executive Director                    |
| Eric Hickey      | Region 1 Regulatory                   |
| Lori Howell      | Region 1 Industry                     |
| Steve Fleetwood  | Region 2 Industry                     |
| Michael Bott     | Region 3 Regulatory                   |
| Gary Hill        | Region 3 Industry                     |
| Shannon Jenkins  | Region 4 Regulatory/Patrol            |
| Barry Hurt       | Region 4 Industry                     |
| Rick Burris      | Region 5 Regulatory                   |
| John Tesvich     | Region 5 Industry                     |
| Kimberly Stryker | Region 6 Regulatory                   |
| Miranda Reis     | Region 6 Industry (alternate)         |
| Bruce Flippens   | Non-Producing                         |
| John Strauss     | Non-Producing                         |
| Melissa Abbott   | FDA                                   |
| Laurie Farmer    | FDA/ORA                               |
| Steven Wilson    | FDA                                   |
| Bill Kramer      | EPA                                   |
| Mike Hughes      | CDC                                   |
| David Fyfe       | Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission |
| AJ Erskine       | VMC Chair                             |
| Keith Jackson    | Retail Advisory                       |

### Board Members Absent

|                   |               |
|-------------------|---------------|
| Blake Millett     | Non-Producing |
| Jonathan Gerhardt | Non-Producing |
| Steve Wilson      | NOAA          |

## II. Opening Remarks

### Kohl Kanwit

The chair welcomed board members and thanked members for traveling for the meeting, as well as those participating virtually.

A motion was made to approve the board minutes from the meeting held on April 13th, 2022. Several edits to the minutes were requested. The motion to accept the minutes, with approved edits, was seconded and carried by a voice vote.

## III. Updates

### Melissa Abbott

Jessica Jones has joined the shellfish and aquaculture branch as branch chief on a 120 day detail. Two new laboratory evaluation officers are also in the process of onboarding.

Japan is undergoing equivalence exercises. They are currently working on an element-by-element desk review in preparation for an eventual site visit with hopes of importing to the U.S.

The UAE has expressed interest to eventually import to the U.S. They currently do not have a shellfish program in place, and will be building one from scratch.

There have been internal FDA debriefs in regards to Canadian outbreaks earlier in the year. Canada has placed on the list for evaluation, which will likely result in updates in language in the agreement currently in place. They are working with FDA on recall protocol for similar situations, and have asked for the opportunity to work closely with field experts.

A question was raised by industry asking if it was the FDA's intention to establish authority to order a recall, or was this strictly in relation to Canada.

FDA responded that the previous situation is likely to result in an update of the Canadian MOU, as they are in a unique position of not being able to share information directly with the ISSC.

Laurie Farmer

Thanked the board members for the opportunity to share what the FDA has been working on .

Dr. Bess Ormond and Michael Lombardy joined today's meeting in their capacity as field and branch directors.

Jesse Deloach has retired as a field specialist and they are working on filling his position.

FDA is working towards their priority of national uniformity, by way of consistency with evaluations and standardizations. All field state experts are up to date with standardization. They are also looking at quality factors in work. They are committed to fostering a culture of learning together, and providing opportunities for invested parties to come together and discuss necessary calibrations.

The FDA's fiscal year started on October 1st.

20 of the new requests for extensions and standardizations have been completed. They have also completed 22 shipping, 16 growing, 15 evaluations, and 24 risk management requests.

The FDA applauds work that is being done by states and by branch directors.

Program assistance has been focused on in-field training to meet current needs. They would like to work towards looking at states holistically, and are looking at what training is necessary for this to occur.

FDA is in the process of developing a new advanced sanitary survey for growing areas. Courses for this upcoming year include: (242) Sanitary Survey from April

17th - April 21st, (245) Shellfish Sanitation from May 15th - May 19th, and Advanced Growing Area, every other year starting in 2024.

FDA is also developing a new risk assessment and management course, and aiming to have it ready by 2024.

The FDA has been continuing its monthly meetings with the ISSC Executive Director and Executive Board chair, and encouraged board members to reach out if there is anything they want to be discussed, or have an interest in.

The FDA thanked the board for continuing to have these important conversations.

Laurice Churchill

Laurice Churchill stepped in for Steve Wilson as the NOAA representative for today's board meeting.

Office updates include the news that Paul Deramis is no longer with NOAA. NOAA recognizes him for his leadership and support throughout the years, and thanks him for remaining an advocate for shellfish and safe seafood.

Jill Landon is taking on deputy assistant director duties following Paul's departure.

There is a new EU bivalve mollusk certification.

There is currently a transition to an online seafood inspection portal. In addition, the updated Federal waters guidance document is available.

Bill Kramer

EPA will be hosting a virtual conference on contaminants in fish in late february/early March. Any interested in participating speakers and abstracts are being accepted until November 2nd.

The EPA has issued a climate adaptation strategy, which is available online.

#### IV. Regional Updates

##### Region 1, Regulatory

New Hampshire has experienced a record rise in HAB toxicity, and were forced to close primary recreation areas. They have used this as an opportunity to expand lab testing. Labs are currently working on a comparative study. They are also working with the University of New Hampshire on developing a photo system to take high resolution images of various species.

Maine's Department of Marine Resources reported a successful summer with a high demand for shellfish, and that they experienced an average trickle of illness and toxicity reports.

Rhode Island has not experienced any biotoxin closures since 2017, and has opened a new growing area.

Massachusetts Department of Marine Fisheries has experienced a high demand for staff training. They also report that the oyster registry suffered a 40% loss in value in 2020, but 2021 has surpassed 2019. Technical assessments from the FDA were completed two weeks prior. They thank Michael Lomabrdy for his quick response.

Region 1 is interested in defining a new guidance document, as well as adding language to the ISSC constitution and bylaws.

##### Region 1, Industry

There are several new farms in Maine, as well as several in other states.

Most of the industry is adapting to new Vibrio time and cooling requirements.

Labor issues are affecting farms, dealers, and hospitality. Most farmers have had decent recovery since COVID, but high prices are affecting consumer consumption.

There is interest in expanding the EU program outside of Massachusetts.

### Region 2, Regulatory

Most states in the region have had little to no issue in staffing open positions.

Evaluations for states are going well and moving forward.

### Region 2, Industry

Harvest and consumer markets have been good throughout the states of Region 2.

Connecticut enacted a few precautionary closures due to rainfall.

### Region 3 Regulatory

This past September region 3 was finally able to hold an in-person Interstate Seafood Seminar. States in the region are continuing inter-region meetings.

### Region 3, Industry

The harvest in region 3 is going well. They are experiencing a successful market with a high demand for products.

### Region 4, Regulatory

Virtual meetings have been held for members to discuss the submission of ISSC proposals.

North Carolina is hosting the Gulf and South Atlantic Shellfish Conference in 2023. The meeting is tentatively planned for late summer.

States in the industry are largely getting back to normal, and dealing with a few maintenance issues.

### Region 4, Industry

All States seem to have weathered COVID issues fairly well.

Florida was the only state in the region experiencing significant effects from the recent hurricane, with southwest Florida being affected the most. Many of their growing areas were significantly impacted, and there was an excess of marine debris. There were several cases of VV reported from affected areas. None of

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these cases were from consumption, but from contact during the clean up.

#### Region 5, Regulatory

Alabama is having an above average harvest.

Mississippi has no reef opening this year.

Louisiana opened a few weeks prior, with no issues to report.

Overall environmental issues were good throughout the area.

#### Region 5, Industry

The gulf's regional oyster supply has been severely impacted. As a result prices are at a historic high.

Public reefs are facing collapse due to the crevices inundating them, as well as hurricane damage from the past few years.

Texas has also experienced production challenges. Last year their production was shut down mid season, and they have been importing product from the east coast to meet demand.

#### Region 6, Regulatory

Region 6 has held quarterly region meetings as an opportunity to talk through concerns and issues.

They are considering early February 2023 to host the PACRIM meeting, though no final date or location has been set.

#### Region 6, Industry

New director, Kim Thompson from California, will be participating in the ISSC this year.

They are working closely with state agency members and having ongoing conversations regarding seed size. They expect to have a proposal for the ISSC spring meeting.

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Washington state is currently having their first rule change meeting.

There was a low Vibrio report this season.

The states in the region have expressed continued interest in expansion of EU export.

Non-Producing

One of the retailers used a new testing program that resulted in nearly 2000 oysters being destroyed after they came back positive for vibrio. No illnesses were reported.

Comments advised the use of caution when restaurants use university equipment to test products.

**V. Chairman's Report**

Keith Skiles

The 2023 ISSC Biennial meeting will be held at the Baton Rouge Marriott in March of 2023.

The proposal window is open until November 18th.

The board adoption form was shown. Requests were made that the divisions be updated, and the Executive Director responded that they would make the requested corrections before the document was sent out.

A proposal was made that after the Biennial Meeting a half day board meeting be held, and a second virtual meeting may be set up shortly after.

The motion was seconded and carried by a voice vote.

Several proposals were developed by the Executive Office, including one to clarify language in the constitution bylaws and procedures in regards to when old members drop off/new members step in. It was advised that the board be thoughtful in regards to opening the constitution and bylaws.

A question was raised about where the Conference was in the meeting cycle.

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The Executive Director responded that the conference is back in the correct cycle, and that there will be a broader conversation for the 2025 conference regarding the timing of the meeting at the Spring Board meeting.

The 2025 biennial meeting will be held in a non-producing state.

## **VI. Executive Committee Report**

### Keith Skiles

AFDO cooperative grant agreement has led to discussions among joint advisory groups on whether the Biennial Meeting could be funded through the grant. While it hasn't been allowed in the past they are considering a possible policy change.

ISSC has some limited travel funding to provide for the upcoming Biennial Meeting.

The 2021 tax return is underway, as well as the 2021 financial review.

## **VII. Committee Reports**

### Federal Waters Committee

The committee was tasked with creating guidance since the biennial conference, and they have created a subgroup focused on drafting said guidance. This subgroup is requesting the board look into interim approval over their proposal ahead of the 2023 conference.

A motion was made to adopt the interim guidance until the spring meeting. The motion was seconded and carried by a voice vote.

### Unresolved Issues Committees

Maryland Dept. of the Environment (MDE) requested a consultation with the Consultation Subcommittee of the Unresolved Issues Committee regarding their disagreement between MDE and the FDA. No vote needs to be taken at this time.

#### VV Illness Review Committee

There are 50 cases from 2015 that they are currently working on.

Questions were raised as to the effectiveness of the committee that is still reviewing cases that are up to 7 years old, and the importance of needing to examine current trends.

### **VIII. Old Business**

#### ES/EU Equivalency agreement

Went into effect this past February. FDA is waiting to see what questions arise.

A processed shellfish audit by the EU is currently underway. There was a separate assessment consisting of a 6 day remote, virtual audit. Maryland, New Jersey, Rhode Island, and Maine all participated. One of the items participating members were most interested in was tracing shellfish back to their harvesting areas.

A meeting is expected to be held next week, the regarding processed shellfish to be exported to the EU. The intention will be to broaden this list to all members of the conference.

A motion was made for the ISSC to send a letter to someone to encourage movement in implementation of the EU agreement. The motion was seconded and carried by a voice vote.

#### Research Projects

Many projects have been delayed due to COVID.

There are two outstanding ISSC funded research projects.

#### ISSC Working Relations

A proposal to survey the board members to raise any potential issues was made. If there are a substantial number of issues raised, a special meeting can be scheduled to address them.

A motion was made to return to original list and see what issues there are unresolved, and report back to the board. The motion was seconded and carried by a voice vote.

## **IX. New Business**

### Reciprocity Complaint

A possible reciprocity complaint was raised by a company in Maine regarding California Prop 65 requirements. The Board discussed the complexity of the issue and possible implications for the Conference. No action is planned regarding the issue at this time.

### Committee Process

Committee meetings are now all virtual and open to all membership.

Committee sign up sheets will be modified to request areas of expertise

### Traceability Rule

The final rule is scheduled to be published in November.

A motion was made for the ISSC to contact the FDA to host a webinar to explain The final rule. The motion was seconded and carried by a voice vote.

### FDA Training

FDA is in the process of developing a strategic plan for human and animal food training.

### Service Animal Interpretation

The Service Animal Interpretation was recently finalized. A copy will be distributed to ISSC membership.

### Laboratory Capacity

A survey is needed to see if capacity is keeping pace with demand, and, if not, what can be done to encourage it.

### Other Information

Draft Infographics developed by the Conference for Food Protection for retail



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food vendors and regulators regarding shellfish tagging were shared for information purposes.

**X. Adjournment**

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. It was then seconded and carried by a voice vote.

DRAFT