

Minutes

A meeting of the ISSC Executive Board was held virtually.

I. Attendance

Board Members Present

Michael Bott	Chair
Shannon Jenkins	Vice Chair
Keith Skiles	Executive Director
Eric Hickey	Region 1 Regulatory
Lori Howell	Region 1 Industry
Debra Barnes	Region 2 Regulatory
Steve Fleetwood	Region 2 Industry
Danielle Schools	Region 3 Regulatory
AJ Erskine	Region 3 Industry (alternate)
Portia Sapp	Region 4 Regulatory
Erik Broussard	Region 5 Regulatory
Amanda Lowry	Region 6 Regulatory (alternate)
Margaret Pilaro	Region 6 Industry (alternate)
Bruce Flippens	Non-Producing
Blake Millett	Non-Producing
Melissa Abbott	FDA
Laurie Farmer	FDA/ORA
Steve Wilson	NOAA
Mike Hughes	CDC
Bill Kramer	EPA
David Fyfe	Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission
Kohl Kanwit	Past Chair
AJ Erskine	VMC Chair
Keith Jackson	Retail Advisory
Kathy Brohawn	Lab Chair

Board Members Absent

Gary Hill	Region 3 Industry
Barry Hurt	Region 4 Industry
Steve Pollack	Region 5 Industry
Todd Phillips	Region 6 Regulatory
Miranda Ries	Region 6 Industry (alternate)
Jonathan Gerhardt	Non-Producing

II. FDA Board Changes

As a result of the FDA reorganization there is a vacancy on the board. FDA would like to nominate Bess Ormond as a replacement for the non voting FDA liaison. Jessica Jones will be the new FDA voting board member.

A motion was made to approve Bess Ormond as the non voting FDA member to the executive board. The motion was seconded and carried by a voice vote.

III. Minutes

Minutes of the spring board meeting were sent out via email. Several corrections were sent back. The executive office will incorporate these changes and send out the revised minutes for approval via email.

IV. Introductory Comments

The Chair thanks everyone for participating in the zoom board meeting.

FDA

As of October 1st, 2024, FDA has undergone reorganization, combining CFSAN and the ORA into the Unified Human Foods Program, as a way to transform the FDA to be more nimble, efficient, and ready for the future.

Massachusetts and Washington are still the only approved states to export to the EU, although additional states have submitted their packages for consideration. The EU has begun its review with the package from the state of Connecticut, which is now complete. The EU is now currently reviewing Maine's package. The FDA has requested that the EU add both Connecticut and Maine to the agenda

for the committee that reviews additions to the shippers list. Any state with interest in being considered is encouraged by the FDA to submit their package.

The FDA is still awaiting final equivalence determination as a result of the audit conducted by the EU in 2022 to assess the US control system for processed shellfish. FDA anticipates a positive audit finding will result in firms in any state.

The FDA has developed an internal SOP for responding to shellfish incidents. This includes roles, responsibilities, how investigations are conducted, and how states are supported during their investigations.

The FDA encourages states interested in assistance of the Growing Area Review Board or the Vibrio Assistance Review Board to reach out to their state shellfish specialist.

In 2015, FDA and NOAA developed a joint ecological forecasting for the Vibrio team. The mission was to assist the states and shellfish industry in implementing Vibrio risk management strategies to achieve equivalent or greater protection as required under the NSS. The current project is to refine purge calculators that take into account variability between regions, seasons, great type, and harvest and post-harvest practices. If any states have data to share they should reach out to Jessica Jones.

The 2025 work plan includes five SSO standardizations, eighteen plant processing and shipping, seventeen growing area classifications, seventeen risk assessment and risk management, seven control of harvested, and five national training courses.

There are ongoing efforts to reach out to non participating states and educate them on the benefits of the program.

There has also been outreach to retail regulators and epidemiologists within non participating states.

An ISSC specific funding portal will be opening sometime in December, where interested parties will be able to request funds to attend the 2025 biennial meeting.

NOAA

NOAA is working to ensure they have representation on every committee and to expand their role within the ISSC.

NOAA is in the final stages of being able to certify live bivalve mollusks to the UK.

Steve Wilson will be retiring on November 30th, and the agency is working to find a replacement.

EPA

Presented a previously delivered attachment of EPA updates.

CDC

CDC has been investing in data modernization efforts and as a result of that, Vibrio data from CDC have been shared with FDA up to 2019. 2020 - 2022 data will be shared with FDA shortly.

CDC has been working to increase data accessibility. They are also in the process of finalizing analysis and pivoting to write up new manuscripts related to Vibrio.

The CDC will have expanded engagement from some of their SMEs in their water branch and norovirus engagement with some new CDC representatives serving on relevant ISSC committees in the coming months and years.

V. Regional Updates

Region 1 Regulatory

Rhode Island's Department of Environmental Management's accomplishments include revisions to its aquaculture regulations to include stricter time temperature controls during warmer months.

The New Hampshire Department of Health Human Services is currently evaluating floating gear for potential pollution sources and are also developing a

bird mitigation strategy for their aquaculture industry. They are also considering allowing commercial wild harvest. They have also recently added a second SSO.

Maine Department of Marine Resources shares that between July 9th, 2024 and July 15th, 2024 there were six confirmed cases of campylobacter infection. Through a process of elimination, the source of the Campylobacter contamination was traced to two oyster aquaculture sites.

Massachusetts depuration plant continues to be closed to depuration following destruction of the sea water wells during a severe storm last fall.

Massachusetts DMF Bedford Labs are working towards expanding capabilities to include MSC and HPLC methods.

FDA has informed DMF that their labs are slated for evaluation in 2025.

Region 1 Industry

Industry expressed appreciation for Massachusetts regulators for the efforts toward the MOU in Maine.

Industry remains concerned about bird related illnesses and looks forward to meeting on this issue.

Region 2 Regulatory

Connecticut provided several recommendations to try to increase the effectiveness of ISSC committees. They recommended that ISSC develop a host site for ISSC committees to share working documents, in an effort to streamline reviews and edits. They inquired if the committee chair could complete and post transcripts to be available to members ahead of their next scheduled meeting. They also proposed ISSC take a more active role in committee meetings to help the committee stay on track and meet its assigned charge. They also expressed concerns with certain NSSP MO provisions that have created burdensome documentation or field work verification requirements.

New York recently hired three new staff to fill vacancies and are now fully staffed. They were also able to rescind a proposed regulatory extension of a seasonal

closure in a mooring area used for oyster farming based on the no discharge zone enforcement verification documentation that was provided to us by a local enforcement agency to satisfy the requirements of the NSSP. New York was approved for another hydrographic dye study to be conducted with the assistance of the FDA GARB team next spring.

Effective October 4th, 2024 New Jersey suspended harvest and two aquaculture sites involving floating gear due to water quality impairments. These closures have created hardships for the industry, and New Jersey Shellfish is working closely with industry to address these concerns.

Region 2 Industry

Though there has not been detrimental news reporting, the market has remained soft.

Region 3 Regulatory

Virginia has completed their certification period, and Maryland is close to doing so. The Virginia program is fully staffed and working on acclimating to having the marina program join them.

Delaware has a new program manager, Josh Barth.

Virginia was able to participate with North Carolina in the GARB study.

All three states are currently working on applications for the AFDO training grant.

Region 3 Industry

Industry is feeling a slow down in the economy as sales are not as strong as previous years.

Shellfish Growers of Virginia has recently hired a new director, and hopes to be involved in the ISSC process.

Region 4 Regulatory

North Carolina, Virginia FDA and the FDA engineering team conducted a dye study training in the Cape Fear River area of North Carolina in September that was part of a garb process and was successful despite significant weather challenges.

Florida was affected by Hurricane Helene making landfall near Cedar Key, which is a primary clam production area.

Region 4 Industry

No update was given for Region 4 industry.

Region 5 Regulatory

Oyster seasons are currently underway. Mississippi will be holding its first season in five years.

Region 5 Industry

No update was given for Region 5 industry.

Region 6 Regulatory

California is in the early stages working on rules, including adopting the model ordinance by reference.

In Hawaii Kauai State Labs is working on shellfish water sample processing.

In Washington, regulatory is working with an appointed contractor to assess fees for rulemaking.

Region 6 Industry

California is continuing to deal with a wind proposal in the Humboldt region that is likely to have some impacts on the growing areas in Humboldt Bay.

Hawaii just experienced the 50th anniversary of the NELHA research facility.

VI. Program Chairman's Report

2025 ISSC Biennial Meeting

The 2025 ISSC Biennial meeting will take place October 18th-23rd, at the Inverness Hotel in Denver, Colorado. Information on a room block for interested parties will be forthcoming.

The need to raise the meeting registration rate was brought up. The last time the registration rate was raised was \$25 in 2015. Prior to that the rate had not been raised since 2001. The office recommended raising the meeting cost from \$545 to \$645.

Concerns were raised that increasing the registration cost could lead to a decline in industry participation. The possibility of creating a tiered approach to conference registration, or soliciting sponsorships was discussed. Participants agreed to form a work group to discuss possible solutions and present proposals to the board at a later date.

2025 Spring Board Meeting

A motion was made to hold the spring 2025 board meeting virtually. The motion was seconded and carried by a voice vote.

The executive office will be reaching out with a poll of possible dates and time

VII. Executive Committee Report

The ISSC was again awarded their usual grant over the summer, and is fully funded through that grant through July of 2025.

The executive office is also planning to apply for a small conference grant that would help fund state representative's travel. The executive office will look into seeing if there is any award that could possibly be used to fund industry travel as well.

The 2023 tax return and audit is still underway, and will be submitted mid November.

VIII. Committee Reports

Lab Evaluation Checklist

The lab committee presented their proposed shellfish laboratory evaluation checklist to the board. The changes were made in an effort to correct two errors that were found in the previously approved checklist prior to the publication of the NSSP guide. The Laboratory committee recommends that the executive board grant interim approval to the checklist as amended, so that it can begin to be used as soon as possible.

A motion was made to accept the laboratory committee's recommendation. The motion was seconded and carried by a voice vote.

Updated Recommendation for Proposal 19101

At the 2024 spring board meeting there was a motion for the lab committee to reconsider their initial recommendation. Following this the lab committee reconvened to evaluate the necessary changes to the proposal.

The laboratory committee's recommendation is that the executive board provide interim approval to the updated proposal as amended so that it can be used by state authorities as soon as possible.

A motion was made to give interim approval of Proposal 19101 based on the lab committee's recommendation and revised text. The motion was seconded and carried by a voice vote.

IX. Old Business

Laboratory Evaluations

As of January 2024 there were ten domestic laboratories that were performing or provisionally conforming for the NSSP covering twenty-eight scopes of service. In 2024 the lab team evaluated seven laboratories covering sixteen scopes of service. In the remainder of 2024, the lab committee is planning to evaluate three laboratories covering seven scopes of service.

In 2025 the lab team plans to evaluate nineteen laboratories covering sixty scopes of service.

2023 NSSP Guide

The 2023 NSSP guide was published in September, 2024.

VV Review Committee

A question was raised about the effectiveness of continuing to review VV cases.

A motion was made that the board present a proposal to the next biennial meeting that case counting is discontinued, and in the interim, that the ISSC suspend that provision within the constitution, bylaws, and procedures. The motion was seconded and carried by a voice vote.

X. Recess.

The remaining agenda items were tabled for discussion until the following day.