

SPECIAL GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL MEETING
With the Gloucester Fisheries Commission
Thursday, January 16, 2015 – 1:00 p.m.
Kyrouz Auditorium – City Hall
-MINUTES-

Present-City Council: Chair, Councilor Paul McGeary; Councilor Melissa Cox; Steven LeBlanc, Jr.; Councilor Greg Verga; Councilor Paul Lundberg; Councilor William Fonvielle; Councilor Robert Stewart; Councilor Robert Whycott

Absent: Councilor Ciolino

Also Present: Linda T. Lowe; Dana C. Jorgensson

Councilor Cox entered the meeting at 1:16 p.m. and **Councilor LeBlanc** entered the meeting at 1:54 p.m.

Councilor Whycott left the meeting during the recess.

Present-Fisheries Commission: Chair, Mark Ring; Angela Sanfilippo; Al Cottone; Joseph Orlando; Scott O. Swicker; William Brown

Absent: Paul Vitale.

William Brown left the meeting at 2:20 p.m.

City of Gloucester Administration Representatives Present: Mayor of the City of Gloucester, Sefatia Theken; Jim Destino; Salvatore Di Stefano, Sr.; Tom Gillett; former Mayor John Bell

Also Present-Federal and State Government Representatives: Congressman Seth Moulton; State Senator Bruce Tarr; David Pierce, Deputy Director-State Division of Marine Fisheries and New England Fisheries Management Council member (NEFMC); Ariel Vega, Jr. of Sen. Elizabeth Warren's office; Kate Machet of Sen. Edward Markey's office; Morgan Bell of State Rep. Ann-Margaret Ferrante's office; John K. Bullard, Regional Administrator, National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

President of the City Council, Paul McGeary, and the Chair of the Gloucester Fisheries Commission, Mark Ring, called their respective meetings to order at 1:10 p.m., opening the meeting entitled, "The Future of the Fisheries of Gloucester".

Flag Salute & Moment of Silence: Council President McGeary dedicated the Moment of Silence in memory of the 5,300 Gloucester fishermen who lost their lives at sea whose names are inscribed on the Fisherman at the Wheel statue cenotaph.

Council President McGeary welcoming and thanking those present, pointed out Gloucester is America's oldest seaport and that it is important to maintain that legacy and ensure that it continues to prosper. He added this meeting is to be a pathway for a candid and frank exchange of views as to what and how the industry can move forward.

Mark Ring, Chair, Fisheries Commission, on behalf of the Commission thanked the elected officials for their presence. He thanked Council President McGeary for putting the meeting together. He said this is to allow everyone to have an overview of the city's fisheries. Not all industries are in disaster mode, he noted, but all have their issues and need attention. He said he hoped those present leave with a better understanding of where the fisheries are and where the fisheries need to go by having an open, constructive discourse.

Members of the Fisheries Commission and the Council that were present were introduced.

Council President McGeary reviewed the two topics under the agenda for the meeting: Short-term assistance and opportunities for the fishing industry and the long-term direction of the fisheries. He acknowledged representatives from Senator Edward Markey's office, Senator Elizabeth Warren's office and State Representative Ann-Margaret Ferrante.

Mayor Sefatia Theken welcomed everyone including Congressman Seth Moulton, State Senator Bruce Tarr, John K. Bullard, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Regional Administrator, Dr. David Pierce, Deputy Director of the State of Mass. Division of Marine Fisheries and member, New England Fisheries Management Council (NEFMC); and other guests. **Mayor Theken** acknowledged her Chief Administrative Officer, Jim Destino. She announced she would have monthly meetings with Sen. Tarr and Rep. Ferrante's office. She said someone had asked her why the city isn't getting the grant money it deserves to promote its waterfront which she

expressed she wished to remedy. She said because fishermen are focused on restrictions affecting their industry, there is a co-existence and a desire to work together for the betterment of the industry and the city that needs to move forward. She said what comes from her office is a united front and invited city residents to view her office as open to them to air their opinions on this matter and help the city form its united front. The Mayor also highlighted her desire to work with Congressman Moulton and help educate him so that he would better know how to assist his Cape Ann constituents. The city has a working waterfront, she said, and each sector of it needs diversity to ensure economic development; and to view the city's waterfront as its new economic development zone. She highlighted Salvatore DiStefano Sr.'s appointment as Director of Economic Development to move such matters forward. She said that if people think the science doesn't match then money needs to be found to find scientists who can bring forward the information that the groups can use to negotiate with regard to fishing restrictions.

Congressman Seth Moulton said he was present to listen but observed that everyone in the auditorium wants a sustainable fishery and is the common goal. He noted he has a lot to learn and looked forward to helping to reach the common goal.

State Senator Bruce E. Tarr, noted that Rep. Ferrante was at the statehouse working on legislative initiatives as it was the last day to file them. He acknowledged the presence of federal and state government representatives. He said that there are two issues that are at odds--rebuilding stocks of groundfish to preserve the resource and sustaining fishing infrastructure and waterfront businesses and families. He cited the efforts of the city's legislative delegation that resulted in the creation of the Mass. Seafood Marketing Commission to increase the value of limited catches, and make the public aware of underutilized fish species. He highlighted some "modest" assistance now available for new effort to make available capital to help waterfront property owners to maintain the critical infrastructure to support and maintain the city's commercial fisheries. He cited the case of Cape Pond Ice in which regulatory flexibility allowed a staple of the fishing industry to survive while it diversifies while not compromising its mission.

Sen. Tarr also highlighted legislation he would be filing which was hoped to generate more waterfront investment by providing low interest loans and grants to waterfront property owners and the commercial fishing industry, as well as to provide some tax relief. To continue to leave such things undone for the commercial fishing industry, he said, compromises safety and viability. He said the legislative delegation is looking forward to open and productive dialog and encouraged his federal counterparts to meet monthly with the City's Mayor as well. The way forward long-term depends on having a management scheme that keeps focus on the two goals which is required under the Saltonstall-Kennedy Act Grant Program and the Magnusson-Stevens Fisheries Reauthorization Act (Magnusson Act), managing fisheries to achieve sustainable yields and to allow commercial fisheries to harvest those yields to the benefit of all. He said there is need for an effort for understanding to science and reality of what is going on in the ocean through communication and common understanding. He noted Governor Baker pledged his support several weeks ago in Gloucester that he would lead an effort for scientific development using existing state resources and soliciting others to participate to put the intellectual capacity of the Commonwealth to work to have an independent understanding separate from the federal government but in harmony with it. He cautioned that the truth doesn't change; they just need to find it. He said in his opinion when found, it will be easier to make shared decisions and take shared responsibility to make important difficult steps forward that will require sacrifices. It can be done in such a way that is complementary to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the common collective goal of a sustainable fisheries. He pledged his commitment to continue to find solutions.

John Bullard, Regional Administrator of NOAA, acknowledged the importance of the conversation taking place. He quoted the inscription on the auditorium wall, "Build not for today but for tomorrow as well," saying that it epitomizes what he has to balance daily between fish and fishermen, and the balance between today and tomorrow. Getting that balance right is the job at NOAA, he pointed out. He said he didn't want the loss of seaports, but that seaports have to evolve and change over time, noting that New Bedford is no longer a whaling seaport but is still a seaport. He said while NOAA has a job to do, they are here as the fisheries' partner. He explained that NOAA's job is to protect fish stocks, living marine resources; that in order to do that the agency has to make tough decisions. Sometimes the decisions, as in the case of the harbor porpoise a few years ago and in the recent case of cod, aren't welcome; but the regulations are made to preserve the fishing stock for the future. They are listening, speaking with many, he said, and with every conversation information is passed back and forth with mutual respect, NOAA is continuing to learn. He said that part of his job is to be as honest and straight in letting the fisheries know what NOAA is doing which isn't easy just as going to sea isn't easy.

Mr. Bullard explained some of the points of getting through the hard times of ground fishing noting that Gloucester is a diverse port and that the biggest moneymaker in Gloucester is lobstering, but ground fisheries are otherwise in tough times. He said there are many ideas and reports; there are ideas of seafood marketing to promote buying local which Angela Sanfilippo has been very involved in. He encouraged efforts to get the public to buy

locally. He said America has the toughest [fisheries] management in the world. He said consumers have to ask in restaurants, in supermarkets, at fishmongers, where their fish comes from and support their local fishermen. It is done all the time in agriculture, and the fisheries should be no different, he said. Seafood marketing is a way to start supporting higher prices for pollock and redfish, which is plentiful and delicious to eat.

He noted that the congressional delegation has secured disaster assistance for the fishing industry of \$75 million nationwide, with \$32.8 million headed for New England. While not enough, he said, the six state fisheries agency directors have agreed on a plan for \$11 million in direct assistance, including an outright grant of \$32,500 for everyone who landed 5,000 pounds. This idea was generated by the fishing industry, he noted. The states have different needs based on relative loss, he explained, and that Massachusetts has the greatest loss of all the states and so that \$8.3 million will be for customized shore side infrastructure, crew and other initiatives, managed by the State's Division of Marine Fisheries, with the funds available this month. The final \$11 million is scheduled to be for vessel buyout for those who have made the decision to get out of the fisheries business in order to recover some of their investment and at the same time strengthening those who want to stay in the industry.

He noted Mayor Theken's assertion that the city doesn't get enough grants and pointed out that one of the partners is the Economic Development Agency (EDA), a sister government agency to NOAA, and that the EDA has grants available. Saying he had a close relationship with that agency, **Mr. Bullard** encouraged the Mayor to call him as soon as the city submits a grant application, and he said that he will act as an advocate for the city. He noted that 100 grants had been submitted and that this region gets more grants than the rest of the country.

He said that exempted fishing permits are another way that cooperative research happens, and a number of them have come from Gloucester. Aquaculture is yet another way that change can happen where people can still provide seafood and work with fish. He noted that he was at an aquaculture conference in Maine several days prior which was attended by 450 people whose average age was 40 years old and came from North Carolina to Maine (the NOAA region of which Gloucester is a part). He said in that region \$220 million in seafood receipts were in aquaculture in 2013; the year before the industry harvested \$160 million, a one-year growth of \$60 million. By way of comparison he said that the entire groundfish harvest was \$60 million in one year. He also observed that the Massachusetts aquaculture industry is an \$18 million business, which indicates a rapid rate of growth. He said this is a way to support shore side businesses, and a way for people to have jobs on the ocean but cautioned that it involves change and people being willing to learning about it and cited that there is aquaculture activity already in Gloucester.

Mr. Bullard made note that NOAA is finishing a five-year strategic plan after much public discourse, and he offered copies of drafts.

Joe Orlando, Fisheries Commission member and commercial fisherman, said that Gulf of Maine cod is only one groundfish species out of 17 landed in Gloucester. He asked what the agency will do to facilitate the landings of the other groundfish stocks. **Mr. Bullard** conceded that a lot of the Gulf of Maine is closed to fishing even though the quota on haddock has doubled. A lot of the areas that are closed, he pointed out, are where the other species are. He encouraged Mr. Orlando to talk with him about the matter or others in NOAA to offer their assistance. **Mr. Orlando** pointed out that there are no other areas [to fish] for the Gloucester day boat fleet and that for the city's day fishing fleet having to travel 50 miles out is too far, particularly for those fishermen who have been forced because of the fishing economy to fish alone. He said, "This is killing the day boat fleet completely." He pointed out the other 16 fish species are very important to them; that in order to survive the fleet needs to get to the fish, and so closed areas should be opened.

Al Cottone, Fisheries Commission and commercial fisherman, noting that the debate on cod in the Gulf of Maine in the last few years between the industry and NOAA, and during that time Mr. Bullard had referenced the possible extension of the Gulf of Maine cod. **Mr. Bullard** responded saying that science is challenged by some but that NOAA is guided by the latest assessment update which was peer reviewed that puts cod at three to four percent of its historic biomass, and that he characterized as close to zero. He pointed out that the Gloucester day fishing fleet is not the only fleet fishing for cod. Even if they stopped fishing for cod, the cod are being eaten by other predators. Cod can become extinct, he said. He said NOAA has a responsibility to take measures to prevent the extinction of cod. He said he is frequently asked if NOAA is certain about the science, and pointing out while there is uncertainty in science, the science out of Woods Hole Northeast Fisheries Science Center (Woods Hole) is really good science. He noted were Dr. Bill Karp, Science and Research Director of Woods Hole present he would say the same thing. **Mr. Bullard** said that there is a real problem on how the science at Woods Hole is communicated, saying they could do a much better job of involving people in the science and communicating that. He pointed out that like NOAA, Woods Hole is working on their strategic plan also and said that Woods Hole knows they need to do a better job communicating because if they don't reach out to the fishermen, even if Woods Hole has the best science available, fishermen don't believe it. This, he said, is an area of improvement, and Woods Hole knows it. While expressing

his discomfort in speaking for Dr. Karp, he said in speaking with Dr. Karp many times, he would convey the same information were he present.

Mr. Cottone said the evidence the industry has presented in the last six to eight months about the state of Gulf of Maine cod is at variance with what Woods Hole is presenting and asked for Mr. Bullard's opinion. **Mr. Bullard** said what makes the most sense to him on the contradiction is a paper summary he read in Nature Magazine that said when cod stocks get low they congregate and fishermen know where those congregations are and fish them. Then fishermen say there's plenty of cod in those congregations, but scientists who are looking everywhere say there are very few cod. Noting his attendance at a conference on fisheries management, in speaking to managers from Newfoundland, Mr. Bullard said Canada stopped 100 percent of the fishing 20 years ago, and cod is just starting to come back in the Eastern Maritimes after 20 years of zero fishing. He suggested they should learn a lesson from the Eastern Maritimes. **Mr. Cottone** commented that the 1990's there were similar problems, and this was the exact explanation NOAA gave.

Angela Sanfilippo, Fisheries Commission, President of the Gloucester Fishermen's Wives Association, said it has been a long road for many and with the best available science it has left the industry is the state it is now. The results are the same with the best available science. Science said there was no cod, and yet the entire fleet from Rhode Island to the Hague Line was catching cod in the late 1970's. She pointed out Mr. Bullard's statement that until Dr. Karp speaks with the fishermen they'll never see eye to eye, which they have been saying since 1977 and still it hasn't happened.

Ms. Sanfilippo said that a year ago the Mass. Fishing Partnership (MFP) submitted a grant to do research with Woods Hole as a partner to help people still trying to fish. The grant was submitted at the eleventh hour and didn't even receive an acknowledgement that the grant was submitted. As of today, she said she had never heard a word about it, which she pointed out, would have been the perfect opportunity to move forward. She said she didn't believe Woods Hole wants to work with the fishermen.

She pointed out that the Gloucester Fishermen's Wives Association (GFWA) has done fish marketing since 1976. But she wondered aloud what the group could market today from the Gloucester day fleet when the entire ocean is closed. For the day fleet to fish any farther out to sea is to risk their lives. The Magnusson Act, she said, says they have to protect the lives of those people, and their safety is important. She said she has no desire to cry once again for a fishing boat that disappears and the men are lost.

Ms. Sanfilippo said the community is paralyzed, with the majority of the groundfish fleet not having fished since Nov. 13, 2014. Many of the fishermen and their crews don't claim unemployment. She also referred to Mr. Bullard's statement that the city's lobster industry was the No. 1 industry in Gloucester. She said that as of Feb. 1, 2015, the lobster industry in the Gulf of Maine will be shut down to protect whales and prevent their being caught in lobster pot ropes. She said that lobstermen are now removing all their pots in frigid winter weather in unsafe conditions to comply with the regulation. She said safety of the lobstermen attempting to comply with the regulation was never discussed.

She noted that last year Gloucester, with funds from the state of Massachusetts, produced the Port of Gloucester Groundfish Port Recovery and Revitalization Plan. The plan identified 41 items, which, if implemented, would have supported the industry during hard times last April, she said. How, she asked, can they implement any of these initiatives when no fish are coming through the docks? Citing that Gloucester has always been a diverse port, when there was flexibility – when there was no groundfish, the fishermen go for whiting, when there was no whiting they went for squid. They lost all their permits, she pointed out, because of all the control dates. She said the few boats that fish in the summer for whiting have asked for the time to fish for it two weeks earlier so they can help their families a bit more. She said her offices are the places where they deal with individual families and now they see that things are really bad. When there is no income for families, all kinds of socio-economic problems happen. Answers are needed and soon, she said.

Mr. Orlando challenged the contention that regulations were based on the best science in the world, citing that in 2010 the fishing industry went to a sector system which worked well initially only to find out two years later the same science said things weren't good, even though the same science said stocks would be fully rebuilt by 2014. The science two years later has cut quotas by 22 percent on Gulf of Maine cod and then by 60 to 70 percent on all flounder stocks. The same science is bankrupting the fishing industry and keeping fishermen tied to the docks, he said. **Mr. Bullard** said it is the impact of the science, not the science that Mr. Orlando is objecting to. **Mr. Orlando** said it is the same people and the same science, the same scientific source each time. **Mr. Bullard** responded that he didn't tend to hear complaints about Woods Hole from fisheries that do well. The impact has something to do with the amount of complaints and was understandable, he said.

Council President McGeary, referring to the question of science, he asked what flexibility NOAA has in assessing other kinds of scientific input, like the reports from the fishermen who have worked to do research during

trawls who have filed them. He said the assertion is that they are filed and disregarded in favor of Woods Hole science. Is it left entirely in the hands of Woods Hole or does NOAA actually have some flexibility as to what science is used in NOAA's decision-making process, he asked. **Mr. Bullard** said this gathering is great and would have been better if someone from Woods Hole was present. He noted there is sometimes a misconception that all the science Woods Hole uses comes from just Woods Hole or just the Henry Bigalow (NOAA's newest fisheries survey vessel). He cited there was a meeting just that morning in Woods Hole about fishery dependent data collection, landing reports and similar information. Woods Hole, he said, is reaching out to obtain science from many different sources. He suggested if the intention is to have other meetings like this, a presentation on how the assessments are generated would be useful from people from Woods Hole who should be accountable, or a small group could also go to Woods Hole which he offered to facilitate. **Council President McGeary** referring to the "Great Gate clanging shut" on Nov. 13, asked if NOAA has the ability when it detects there is a significant decrease in fish stock populations to phase in over time a reduction in catch or must it act on the day it is determined, citing an unscheduled survey, must it act precipitously or is there discretion on those kinds of closures. **Mr. Bullard** said it started with a surprise assessment which showed a dramatic decline in cod. The NEMFC reviewed that information and the Council needed to do something of which he is one vote as a member of it, he noted. It was voted by the NEMFC that he was to put an emergency action forward through NOAA because the NEMFC knew emergency action was needed. The NEMFC said with industry support do not change the quota because they'd made their business plans around that quota as it exists, he noted, and with that tool off the table, it became about closing areas which went into effect November 13. It was done as an interim rule so they could take comments on it, he said, which NOAA has done and has just finished that process. He noted that no announcement has been made yet, but will be likely in the next two weeks when the NEMFC next meets. The fishing year begins May 1, he said, and subsequent to NOAA's action, the NEMFC put in place Framework 53 which takes effect May 1 when the emergency rule ends. An area, he pointed out, can't be half closed -- it is either closed or not, and with the quota remaining in place it couldn't be handled any other way.

Mr. Orlando contended that NOAA did change the quota because they closed the area for cod fishing which shuttered the port. He charged that NOAA has killed the day boat industry and has killed Gloucester alone which he said was unfair. **Mr. Bullard** said NOAA chose the area for closure based on where the cod were.

Mr. Cottone asked if Mr. Bullard was aware about the Gloucester Fishing Community Preservation Fund (GFCPF) attempt to give back quota to try to relieve some of the closures. **Mr. Bullard** said Vito Giacalone, representing the GFCPF explained that to him. He said that it is a comment, like others, on an interim rule which he can't comment on. They have a detailed proposal in writing from Mr. Giacalone which will likely be responded to by the NEMFC at their next meeting in Portsmouth.

Dr. David Pierce, Deputy Director, State Division of Marine Fisheries, said that his agency has been aggressive to get the necessary paperwork to the federal government in order to get the \$8.7 million in Phase 2 aid released to the Commonwealth in order to disburse the disaster funding according to the plans developed. One exception is the second phase of disaster relief funding is for \$8.7 million, the proposal of how it is to be spent was submitted to the National Marine Fisheries Service. He said it is his understanding that they have reviewed it, and submitted to Washington, and expects they'll be in a position shortly to disburse the funds to fishermen according to a plan that was developed by his agency working with a group of which Ms. Sanfilippo was part of that group.

Councilor Cox spoke to the lobstering area being closed as of Feb. 1, saying that by closing this area NOAA is forcing the fishermen and lobstermen to be in conflict with by crowding what open fishing areas are left available which she termed as an open invitation to problems. **Mr. Bullard** said he was unsure of the Councilor's implication. The closure was worked out through Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team (a group within NOAA which is tasked to help develop plans to mitigate the risk to marine mammals). It is a negotiation between different parties: member of the Mass. lobster industry, members of whale conservation groups, similar groups from Maine, Rhode Island of different constituencies who hammer out issues. They reached agreement on a plan earlier. That deadline was Jan. 1 and people in Massachusetts pointed out it was too early for reasons Ms. Sanfilippo mentioned, and Massachusetts asked for a delay to Feb. 1. In exchange there was a shifting of the location. That location was supported by the Mass. Lobster Association, he pointed out. He said he didn't envision the problem the Councilor outlined. **Mr. Ring** said the question referred to the possibility of a conflict between lobstermen and fishermen. **Mr. Bullard** indicated he would follow up on this matter.

Mr. Ring said this is 4,400 square miles that are involve and asked if the federal government struck a deal with conservation groups as a result of a law suit in 2009 to close 50,000 square miles from Florida to Canada by 2016. **Mr. Bullard** said he didn't know the answer to Mr. Ring's inquiry. He indicated that a part of this Feb. 1 closure was a Massachusetts petition NOAA responded to and then submitted it to the Take Reduction Team. It was supported by the team with only one negative vote out of 36, he said.

Statements by Stakeholders and Association representatives:

Jackie Odell, Northeast Seafood Coalition (NSC), gave her testimony and submitted her written statement (placed on file). She noted that since John Bullard has been in office, he and his staff have been accessible and responsive to the NSC. She testified on regulatory changes necessary to maintain small fishing, family-owned and operated commercial groundfish businesses that operate from and within the port of Gloucester. She provided an organizational description and then focused her comments on Groundfish Regulations. She said that contrary to public perception, the catch reductions implemented in 2013 were not because catch limits, which are driven by the results of stock assessments, had been exceeded by the commercial fishing fleet. In fact, since rebuilding plans were implemented in 2004, commercial fishing businesses have remained within every prescribed catch limit directed by the rebuilding plan and analyses. She also emphasized that any effort put forth following the Groundfish Disaster Declaration would largely appear to be all for naught because the GOM cod “crisis” has shown the fundamental issues plaguing the fishery are alive and will only continue to create instability and crises in fishing businesses and fishing communities until they are genuinely fixed. She concluded her remarks noting that the NSC will continue to provide updates to the Gloucester Fisheries Commission and look forward to the partnership with the city as well.

Councilor Stewart noted the term Ms. Odell used, “shifting management philosophies” and asked for a definition.

Ms. Odell responded as follows: Different initiatives have come through the years for the groundfish fishery and within federal policies and federal law. The industry is currently operating under the 2006 Magnusson Reauthorization that required annual catch limits and accountability measures to be placed in federally managed fisheries. In this region there were a lot of concerns with the previous input-control-based program in that when there was a problem with an assessment it was reviewed within the management realm to reduce fish mortality in the most comprehensive and quick way possible. Gloucester has faced rolling closures, and the Gulf of Maine closures, differential days at sea counting; all based on the effort-control-driven programs. She said the concern was those tools weren’t working, and that if going to an output-control-based system and sector-based system it would move the fishing industry away from inefficiencies. With the measures in place regarding catches with hard quotas and limits it has all controls coming back – closures and trip limits which had been shown to not rebuild stocks.

Angela Sanfilippo, speaking as President of the Fishermen’s Wives Association, noted in 1969 the GFWA was formed because the wives saw a threat to the fisheries and started the effort for the Magnusson Act which finally came to fruition. The first year that the Magnusson Act was in place there was a total allowable catch like now, but with no trip limits and no closed areas. In 1976 there wasn’t a fish to be caught and cod landings had the worst year on record until April 1977 where in May of that year the cod came back. Codfish sold at 4 cents a pound it was so plentiful. She pointed out at that time it became the dealers choice who would go out to catch cod. The cod fishery was going to be shut down by the federal government that year despite the rebound in cod stock. The GFWA has a mission statement to promote and protect the Gloucester fishing industry and help the fishermen live a better life, she pointed out. She said the GFWA has fought many battles that if they can keep the ocean clean the fish will always be there. If you can’t get the fish, what is the purpose of fish promotion and marketing, she asked. This resource belongs to the people of the United States that has become privatized, she claimed. She pointed out that while the city’s port is in the best position geographically to get to the fishing grounds, yet the boats are tied up and can’t fish. She said there has to be a way to get the boats untied, to have all waterfront industries to prosper. The Atlantic Ocean has not run dry, and they are feeding the world, she said. She urged whatever needs to be done has to be done or a resource will be lost for people to live.

Sunny Robinson, Gloucester Harbor Community Development Corporation, submitted a written statement (placed on file) and described the GHCDC as a private non-profit organization creating a symbiotic relationship between the shore side and water-based industries to promote a sustainable fishing port. She said the organization has a vision for the future of a vibrant working seaport interlocking sea and shore for the benefit of the city and region. She noted lobbying successes of the group, and said her organization has been working with private property owners within the Designated Port Area (DPA), local and state officials, towards changes, for an increase for the number of pilings allowed, up to 50 a year, that can be driven to rebuild structures, as an example and pointed to other recent successes. These activities should produce a minimum investment in piers, wharfs, railways and related marine infrastructure of \$9 million over the next few years. She highlighted the critical role of the private sector property owners. The DPA is a state asset in need of support in addition to regulation, and suggested that the city could designate the DPA as a Business Improvement District and encourage reinvestment through a Tax Incentive Finance (TIF) arrangement. She also suggested that the city could designate the BID as an energy innovation zone, in a collaborative effort to encourage commercial/industrial energy conservation. She also espoused other selective and innovative initiatives and improvements for the city to adopt as well as other ideas that could have a positive impact on the city’s fishing industry and waterfront. She touched upon wastewater screening,

and the recent lowering of the city's water rate. She spoke to lobstering equipment initiatives and several others to expand the city's fisheries.

Vito Giacalone, Gloucester Fishing Community Preservation Fund, a self-supporting non-profit organization, spoke to the community asset of a fishing permit bank that the GFCPF manages for the benefit of the Gloucester groundfish fleet and submitted a written statement (placed on file). He spoke to the non-profit's funding and its start in 2007 for the specific purpose of operating as a permit bank with initial funding of about \$10 million from liquefied natural gas importing companies as a condition of the Mass. Dept. of Environmental Protection in order that those companies could receive permits for deep water construction of LNG offloading ports in federal waters which were historically fished by in-shore Gloucester trawlers. He reviewed the fishing restrictions that had hit the ground fishing industry since 2007. He said the reductions in catch limits, days at sea allowed, and Framework 42 have restricted and further reduced Gloucester's groundfish fleet. As a result he pointed out there has been a loss of vital port infrastructure and limited permits. The danger for the city is long term, he said, and the fishing permits for sale increased from 6 to 16. The port of Gloucester was gutted by discriminatory regulations with no protection from an open market, he pointed out. This is where the Gloucester Community Preservation Fund which purchases permits is helping to preserve the industry, he said. The reductions have happened to their permit bank as well, and as a city they have to look at the economic value in saving the industry and what is the revenue potential with local vessels and to local families – which he contended comes to the port. He suggested that the age of the vessels is a problem in that they need to improve the vessels to enable the day fishermen more range. There is a need for full range boats and they need help. Attrition has caused a huge loss in the fishing fleet due to the age of the fishermen. The primary source of the problem is the small amount of vessels is spending more time trying to find fish and if you find them, your quota forces you to leave the fish. A local sector went out to fish and in seven days they caught the same amount of fish they caught in the previous six months because NOAA announced a closure. He also cited a great disconnection between the science and the fishermen's observations. There is a need for a science discussion as nothing the fishermen are seeing agrees with the science being used in the assessments, and he referred to the reliance on the trawl survey.

Mr. Orlando asked what was the permitted catch GFCPF had for cod currently. **Mr. Giacalone** said it was over 90 percent less than when the Fund started in 2010. There were around 1.3 million pounds of Gulf of Maine cod and the total allowable catch is down to 50,000 pounds at this time.

Councilor Lundberg asked if this goes to the sector based solution that the GFCPF put forward for the cod closure. **Mr. Giacalone** said this year's allocation is larger than what it would be next year. He explained the layering on the effort control system on top of the output control system which exacerbated the problems of the fishermen.

Tom Balf, director of Maritime Gloucester, said that the fisheries management issue is a "wicked" problem being wrestled with. Maritime Gloucester is interested in playing a critical role. As to short term issues, he said that there is a need to communicate to the public to gain a better understanding of the fisheries, and suggested that Maritime Gloucester can facilitate that. As to transitional assistance, he suggested that fishermen could bring their boats to Maritime Gloucester's docks to talk about the relevant issues and educate visitors. Noting his 25-year career in environmental sciences was in regulatory matters, he suggested there is a need for innovative approaches and suggested there is a lack of opportunity to run pilot programs to allow people to try new.

He advocated for cooperative fishing research and for funding to support it. He said there is a need to work on trust as much as to work on science. He referred to reframing the economic value of fishing. He said there was a need to look for ways to make more money with fewer fish. He also touched briefly about who owns the ocean and how it is valued. He suggested conservation might be advanced through financial or tax incentives like carbon credit trading.

Joe Orlando, Fisheries Commission, lifelong fisherman and representing Sector 2, spoke to the instability in the Gloucester fishing industry with regulatory changes that shift constantly impacting not only the industry but entire families. He explained how he went from a larger fishing boat with a multi-person crew to a smaller boat to fish by himself at 60 years old but that he can't fish because of the emergency action until May 1 and has invested in three additional permits and still can't fish. He said he spoke for many fishermen who are in his same position. He asked what can fishermen at his age do next. He said it was a disaster, and there appears to be no way out after a lifetime of fishing.

The Meeting recessed at 3:30 p.m. and reconvened at 3:41 p.m.

Public Comment:

Dr. Valerie Nelson, 7 Sunset Point Road, said this was an unprecedented meeting. She said she wished to reinforce the findings of the Groundfish Port Recovery and Revitalization Plan and suggested that implementation of the plan needs to move forward. A primary recommendation was to charter vessels for research out of recognition

that there isn't what she termed as a lot of good data collected by big ships. The Senate Appropriations Committee has put money forward for such an initiative and that this should be fast tracked, she said. She praised the work of Jackie Odell, and said that the problem is not the fishermen but the regulations. She added that the city needs to take the lead to define sustainable fishery management. She also mentioned innovation within the fishing industry for developing new products and their distribution.

Ms. Sanfilippo added that the Gloucester Port Recovery and Revitalization Plan is available through the city's website.

Sam Parisi, 108 Commercial Street, submitted a statement for the record (placed on file) spoke to what he termed as an all-time low of the city's fishing industry. NOAA's scientific data always shows a minus, he noted, and none of the regulations leveled at the fisheries have worked, and there is still no fish like there was. He suggested there is a need for a full-time Executive Director for the Fisheries Commission when times are bad, not when times are good, to advocate for the port working hand and hand with the Northeast Seafood Coalition. The sea is a fisherman's farm. Farmers are subsidized, and their work is not as dangerous. He suggested there be a program like what was done in Newfoundland while stocks rebuild, and institute a comprehensive Fish Bill similar to what the country's farmers have in place to support fishermen and shore-side businesses.

Carmine Gorga, 87 Middle Street, said he's worked with the fisheries for 40 years. Whatever has been tried in the last 40 years hasn't worked. He suggested they have to think about the fisheries in a different way. Fisheries ownership is very important, he noted. There has been a restriction of the physical commons which has been a hardship on the poor. Fisheries have been in existence for millions of years and have self-regulated successfully, he said. The science that NOAA is using is upside down, a science of surveys and can't work. He urged the Council and the Commission to look into the science. He submitted a statement (placed on file).

Dr. Damon Cummings, 1063 Washington Street, statement submitted (placed on file) suggested there is a need for financial aid, an Executive Director of the Fisheries Commission; credible stock data; fishing crews and boats should be used to expand data collection. Management should be in eco-systems. The management is chaotic, and that the competition is international. There is the matter of fuel efficiency and technology, freshness and quality and need to be taken advantage of. He warned the cost of water is inhibiting fisheries processing in the city. Fisheries survey data is erratic, he said, and suggested that there isn't enough data because it is random. It is important the data based on chartered fishing boats and would be more important. Gloucester should lobby hard for this. If the resulting management were working out, they could live with it, but it is not and should be reviewed from the ground up. The government and fishing industry need to work together to concentrate on quality and freshness to overwhelm international competition; research should be funded to develop new products.

Susanne Altenberger, 66 Atlantic Street, she said the city is living out a tragedy with the fishing industry. The fleet makes the industry and the resource feeds the machine. The focus has been on the fish, she noted, then asked why there is a fleet on average is 40 years old but it is assumed that the industry is sustainable based on hardware several generations old. No one has tended to the actual boats that can fish and their viability to be fit to fish, she asserted. She charged that there has been a limit on innovation, and asked why has Gloucester's fishing industry not challenged the federal government to allow for that innovation. She advocated for the updating of the fleet's fishing boats.

Susan Waller, 184R Granite Street, Rockport spoke to aquaculture and its inherent risks, suggesting fish farms are harmful for the marine ecosystems due to the methods employed, which, she said, are damaging to the environment. She cautioned that if the farmed fish are let loose in the ocean due to damage to pens by storms, it will have a detrimental outcome to wild fish in the open ocean. She said laws should be in place to protect the wildlife in the ocean from fish farms.

Patti Page, 3 Tidal Cove Way, said that once the vessel baseline standard is done away by NOAA the results could be factory trawler ships without limits. Healthy oceans are a public security health issue, she said. It is a mission of NOAA's to protect living marine resources and protect habitat, to some degree for good reason. The national ocean policy has a north 42 zone. That is north to the Canadian Maritimes to protect it from industrial extraction from the natural resources which must be dedicated to wild protein harvesting. There is a need to develop seafood hubs, product development and funds for research and development. The future is in high value, low volume, she said. The science is too sparse, she put forward, saying that the term, "best available science" needs to be redefined and have investment in robust and collaborative science which she pointed out is in NOAA's mission statement. There is a need to build a better science database in order to support reliable management decisions which in turn will provide a more stable economic environment, she said. She concluded her remarks by saying that NOAA has a responsibility and obligation to ground policies and actions around community values not corporate profits. She likened fin fish aquaculture to a "dirty business" and said that aquaculture should not put fishing into the same path as land food farming, which produces unhealthy food.

Hilary Frye, 27 Beacon Street, observed that Gloucester's is not a picturesque harbor but a working harbor. She suggested that the fishing industry is not dead. There is demand for fresh fish across the country, she said, noting that Portland, Maine, has a prosperous port and fishing industry even in the oppressive climate of government regulation. She said Cape Ann Fresh Catch is a good example locally. The Port Recovery Plan should be heeded; she pointed out, and urged they all go fishing.

Ms. Sanfilippo said that the community cares noting that after the November shutdown, checks came in to support the fishermen through the Fishermen Wives Association.

Mayor Theken said it is the people listening that count not the audience in the auditorium. She pointed out this joint meeting is historic. She noted Carmine Gorga helped to start the GFWA. There had been hope for local aid 30 years ago, yet here they are again still fighting and struggling and asking the government for help. She said she was encouraged that everyone will work together to move forward with saving the city's fishing industry. Mr. Bullard said, "Grant? Call me," she recounted, saying it is about science and the trust. She said she felt Gloucester can do it, and this administration will create a gateway for the next administration and looked forward to the monthly legislative meetings.

Council President McGeary thanked everyone who participated and to hear first-hand from people like Mr. Orlando, Damon Cummings and Ms. Sanfilippo and others who came this afternoon to start a very important process. He said it was important to hear first-hand the remarks of people like Mr. Orlando, Mr. Cottone, Ms. Sanfilippo, and Dr. Cummings. It is a beginning of a process asking the questions about what constitutes the city's fishery and what their options are. He pointed to Mr. Balf's offer to convene a session on the science of the fishery and would work with him to see if it can happen sooner rather than later.

Mr. Ring thanked Council President McGeary giving him credit for putting the meeting together and gathering the many key public officials who appeared today. He said he looked forward to meeting with Woods Hole that Mr. Bullard would put together also.

A motion was made, seconded and voted unanimously to adjourn both the City Council and Fisheries Commission meeting at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dana C. Jorgensson
Clerk of Committees
For the Gloucester City Council and Fisheries Commission

STATEMENTS/DOCUMENTS/ITEMS SUBMITTED AT MEETING PLACED ON FILE:

- **Jackie Odell, Executive Director, Northeast Seafood Coalition**
- **Vito Giacalone, Gloucester Fishing Community Preservation Fund**
- **Sunny Robinson, representing the Gloucester Harbor Community Development Corporation**
- **Sam Parisi, 108 Commercial Street**
- **Dr. Carmine Gorga, 87 Middle Street**
- **Dr. Damon Cummings**
- **Susanne Altenberger, Phil Bolger & Friends, Inc., 66 Atlantic Street**