

**Aquaculture Advisory Council  
Meeting Agenda  
July 25, 2023, from 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM  
Augusta DMR Room 224 or [Microsoft Teams](#)**

Call to order – **Fiona de Koning** **10:00-10:01**

Roll call – **William Fearn** **10:01-10:05**

First Name	Last Name	In attendance
Fiona	de Konig	Yes
Amanda	Ellis	Yes
Briana	Warner	Yes
Christopher	Davis	Yes
Greg	Lambert	Yes

Adoption of minutes from last meeting – **Fiona de Koning** **10:05-10:10**

**Ms. Warner motioned to adopt minutes with comment, Mr. Lambert seconded, all present voted in favor of accepting the minutes without comment.**

Question from previous meeting – **Amanda Ellis** **10:10-10:40**

**Ms. Ellis discussed conversations that took place at the last meeting regarding statutory changes that the AqAC would like to make to the statutory language defining the council. Ms. Ellis shared draft changes she wrote up that incorporated the suggestions of the council with respect to the capacity of DMR to effect statutory change. Ms. Ellis solicited the opinion of the council on her suggested changes and consensus seemed to be in favor of adopting the changes as written.**

**Mr. Davis asked a question regarding whether there should be language that requires DMR to update the council on changes within DMR. Kohl Kanwit, Director of the Bureau of Public Health and Aquaculture answered that while this may have been typical of the way the council operated in the past it is not typical of other advisory councils in general that DMR is required report to them. She emphasized that while she does not believe there should be a statutory reporting obligation that ultimately the relationship between the DMR and the council should remain a productive, two-way dialogue but that a statutory reporting obligation would be unnecessarily cumbersome. Mr. Davis clarified that he was specifically interested in ensuring that the AqAC is given the opportunity to comment on DMR proposed legislation which Ms. Kanwit agreed, being a more specific requirement, made more sense than a more general reporting requirement for any change that might affect the aquaculture industry. Ms. Kanwit did state the caveat that any kind of reporting requirement regarding proposed legislation would require flexibility on the part of the council when it comes to meetings since the nature of the legislative calendar is subject to constant change.**

**Ms. Warner requested that language not necessarily specify only requiring DMR to inform the council of legislative changes because there could potentially be significantly consequential changes that are not legislative. Ms. Kanwit mentioned that most other advisory councils are guaranteed a seat on the DMR Advisory Council, which effectively already serves the purpose that the AqAC members are discussing here, to their respective chairs. Ms. Warner motioned to have the chair of the AqAC become an ex officio member of**

the DMR Advisory Council, Mr. Lambert seconded. All present voted in favor without additional comment. Ms. Ellis asked whether this satisfied the council's desire for a reporting requirement and Ms. Warner and Mr. Davis stated that it does. Ms. Ellis will inquire with the appropriate DMR staff member to initiate this change.

There was discussion regarding the addition of the limit on consecutive terms and whether this effects the current membership considering most, if not all, current members have served more than two terms. Ms. de Konig advised the council that given the disruption the council experienced as a result of COVID19 it is essentially operating from a clean slate and that all current members will be considered as serving their first term starting from the date they were appointed most recently.

Ms. de Konig asked for the opinion of the council on the statutorily required number of meetings per year. Ms. Ellis' proposed language only specifies one required meeting per year and Ms. de Konig would like to specifically require four meetings per year. Other councilors suggested requiring two by statute but still plan on meeting minimum four times per year. Mr. Lambert motioned to meet a minimum of two times per year with no more than four months between meetings unless the council decides to meet more than twice, Mr. Davis seconded, all present voted in favor.

Ms. Ellis asked the council if they are okay with the suggested language, including the previously mentioned changes, and the council agreed.

Work plan - **Fiona de Koning**

**10:40-11:10**

1. 6080 Statutes
2. Bylaws
3. Agenda item policy

Discussion of 6080 Statutes took place during previous agenda item *"Question from previous meeting."*

Council discussed the suggested updates to the AqAC bylaws based on ShAC bylaws. Mr. Lambert motioned to accept the updated bylaws as presented, Mr. Davis seconded, all present voted in favor of accepting the updated bylaws as presented.

Agenda item policy will be consistent with ShAC (and other advisory councils) agenda item policy. A draft agenda will be created by DMR staff based on minutes from the previous meeting and then an open call will be put out soliciting agenda items from AqAC members and partners and final discretion for what ends up on the agenda will be with the chair and vice chair. Ms. de Konig suggested adding a permanent industry input item under other business.

Public input - **Fiona de Koning**

**11:10-11:20**

**No public input.**

Other business - **Fiona de Koning**

**11:20-11:50**

1. Programmatic updates – **Amanda Ellis**
2. Industry Input
3. Schedule next meeting

Ms. Ellis updated the AqAC on staffing changes within aquaculture and advised that the program is preparing for LPA renewals and that there will be some changes to the quiz.

**Ms. Warner stated her belief that the conversation regarding the backlog of lease applications should not be delayed much further. She also stated that she has heard complaints from industry members regarding the application process being moved to email exclusively because some industry members do not use email. She also mentioned concerns of industry members with lease applications being delayed because of DMR procedural errors and asked that there be more flexibility on the part of the DMR if there is an issue that could be considered the fault of DMR. Ms. Ellis clarified that the option to opt out of email communication is available to applicants and that they can still call to inquire about the process over the phone.**

**Mr. Davis mentioned concerns of industry members regarding rulemaking changes that prevent them from continuing to operate because they have LPAs that are in prohibited areas.**

**There was a public question regarding changes to midseason amendments to LPAs. Ms. Kanwit answered that the amendments were taking up an inordinate amount of DMR staff time and that this change was part of the ongoing attempt to improve efficiency within Aquaculture.**

**Ms. Kanwit suggested scheduling a short meeting relatively soon for a final vote on proposed changes to statutory language. Ms. Ellis suggested potentially just balloting for the proposed changes rather than having a full meeting.**

**Council agreed to meet again on 9/28/23 for 2 hours.**

**Adjourn - Fiona de Koning**

**11:50-12:00**

**Mr. Davis motioned to adjourned, Mr. Lambert seconded, all present voted in favor of adjourning. Adjourned at 11:15.**