



Halibut-Sablefish Committee Meeting
All Hands, Anchorage, Alaska, Captain Cook Hotel
Friday, November 24, 2017
1:30 pm

Draft minutes
Recording: 07/07, 120723_001

I. Roll Call

Chair Peggy Parker called the meeting to order at 1:33 PM.

Members present: Peggy Parker, William Sullivan, Mark Callahan, John Jensen, Joe Childers, Bob Barnett, Carina Nichols

Absent: Yvonne Shay

A quorum was established.

Guests present: Joe Morelli (SPC), Kate Pethebridge (ASMI NEU), Jim Hubbard (Kruzof Fisheries), Will Rogers (Icicle Seafoods), Rhonda Hubbard (Kruzof Fisheries), Jhi Jhi Ferrer (ASMI), Beth Munnelly (Revelry/ASMI), Michael Kohan (ASMI), Kieran Healy (APICC), Jessica Hathaway (National Fisherman)

II. Approval of agenda

No amendments to the agenda were made.

John Jensen made a motion to approve the agenda; seconded by Mark Callahan. The motion passed unanimously.

III. Approval of the minutes from Oct. 25, 2016

Peggy as for a motion to approve the minutes.

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Barnett; seconded by Jensen.

- a. Under the minutes in the sixth paragraph, the bolded statement “as was made” should be amended to delete the word “as”.
- b. On the last page, three lines from bottom, the phrase was unclear “Despite the limitations...”.

Barnett moved the changes be made. Minutes approved as amended.

IV. Public Comment

The following were public comments made throughout the agenda:

- a. During the Old Business discussion of potential research on chalky halibut, Peggy opened up the floor for public comment. Joe Morelli noted that their operation sees less than 1% of this issue at their plant. Jim Hubbard noted that handling fish on the boat is key but that it is strange when neighboring fishing operators are coming in with significantly higher levels of chalk.
- b. During the New Business item of halibut stock assessment, Rhonda noted that there will be more small fish in the market and there will be a need for a new marketing effort accounting for this lower price point. Gelatinous sablefish is also a growing issue that should be taken into account. The general committee discussed the issue of more small-sized fish coming onto the market.

V. Old Business

- a. Discussion on potential research regarding Chalk and “Jellied” flesh in Halibut

Peggy intended but did not connect with Michael and the Seafood Technical program regarding research about chalky halibut, as referenced in the previous minutes. The question remained whether there is new information for industry, as well as jellied/mushy halibut.

Michael was asked by the committee to join the meeting and provided a summary on both topics for the committee’s edification. Discussion ensued around the regional variability of chalk issues. Peggy’s impression from the industry is that this issue has not diminished throughout this year, although it varies from region to region.

As a general group consensus, the issue is one that should be shared with and involve the harvesters as well as the processors. The group discussed whether it might be worth the research time to talk to the fishermen and find out what part of their process could be contributing to the issue. There were comments that unless all processors are deducting for chalky fish, the fishermen will not be held accountable for chalky fish.

Bob stated that the data is available and the where and when factors are known, now it’s what percentage of what fish that needs to be answered. For next steps, Michael advised that this issue will go before the Technical committee tomorrow. From there, she can begin collecting data.

The group decided an objective of this project should be establishing a baseline of how often these instances occur. The group also agreed that the issue is naturally occurring in fish and posed whether there could be a correlation between the freezing process and the chalky fish.

Peggy asked for a volunteer to go before the Technical Committee tomorrow and talk about the committee’s issue. William and John will both be available to go.

VI. New Business

- a. Increased competition

Mark noted that there is increased product now coming from Iceland, Greenland, Norway and Canadian maritimes. The farmed fish quality is improving. The increase in these wild fish are going to become an issue. Costco does a social audit to find out where the fish come from. How to compete against larger fish

from overseas that is poorly sourced. Cooperation between processors and fleet would greatly help with this project.

b. Summary of 2018 Halibut Stock Assessment

2018 Recommendations Constant Exploitation Yield is (34 million in 2017) 22 million pounds for all areas in Alaska. Peggy noted this is not what the commission would likely adopt, but something slightly higher. Her takeaway is that it would be helpful to get halibut's value back up in the market. It has suffered from price fatigue lately, and it will be a more difficult sell with less fish. Peggy will put together a report this afternoon and send to the committee.

Carina brought up two subjects - the halibut pot fishery and whale predation, and the IPHC size limit. From the marketing position, Mark noted this would not go over well.

c. Summary of 2018 sablefish stock assessment

Huge recruitment event for 2014 fish, 10 times bigger than the largest the industry has seen before. The scientists do not know how to deal with the increase. The council will set the TAC and the ABC.

VII. Alexa's Questions for the Halibut-Sablefish Committee

1. What challenges do you see the ASMI program you guide facing in the coming years? (short-term and long-term) Please specify by market, species, or general programmatic concern.

The possible cut in halibut quota for 2018 is an issue the committee would like all programs and committees to be aware of, but it points out that this is a sustainable fishery because of these cuts, which is good news.

We have a quality issue that we would like the technical committee to consider framing a technical project around.

2. What strengths or opportunities have you identified in the ASMI programs can capitalize on?

No change from past committee comments. No decrease in promotion. The committee likes what the domestic marketing and communications programs have done and appreciate the apparent increase in promotions. The one thing the committee would ask is that the results compare to the previous year or a five-year average.

3. Taking into account comments from the species committees, are there any specific questions pertaining to your program you would like the ASMI Board to address? Or any specific actions you would like them to consider? If not, write N/A.

Committees felt this question was not applicable/redundant.

4. Are there any specific questions pertaining to your program you would like the ASMI board to address? Or any specific actions you would like them to consider? If not, write N/A?

N/A

VIII. Good of the Order

1. "Halibut Act"

- a. For the second year in a row, the committee wants to verify if the "Halibut Act" has been added to the mission statement. This was in the motion two years ago, but was added to the Good of the Order discussion this year.

2. Research Project: What should the scope be?

- a. Get statistical range on where the fish is coming from and when, likely over the long term. This will take cooperation between the processors and the fleet to find out where the missing data is. The objective should be new handling guidelines for the fishermen and processors to help keep the fish in rigor as long as possible.

3. Graying of the Fleet

- a. The group noted the graying of the fleet and bringing younger participants onto the committee. Carina posed the question of where else ASMI could recruit new members, possibly the Young Fisherman's Summit. Jeremy Woodrow joined the meeting and agreed to add a plug to his presentation at the Summit about young committee member recruitment. The committee would like to find out how many new young applicants there have been for the vacant seats. Jeremy further noted that the town halls he attends would be a good opportunity to recruit that hasn't yet been capitalized on.

4. IPHC

- a. Dates for the IPHC next year should be taken into account when scheduling All Hands in 2018.

IX. Officer Elections: Chair and Vice Chair

- a. Chair: Nominations from Committee Members

Peggy asked for nominations from the floor. She noted that unless the date of All Hands or IPHC changes, another committee member has to take on the responsibility of reporting to the other committees. She would be willing to continue acting as Chair if scheduling allows.

Joe moved that Peggy be elected Chair, John seconded. No discussion. By voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

- b. Vice Chair: Nominations from Committee Members

Mark moved that Bill be elected Vice Chair, John seconded. No discussion. By voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

Bill moved that Carina be elected back-up Vice Chair, John seconded. No discussion. By voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

X. Adjourn

- a. **Peggy asked for a motion to adjourn. Joe moved to adjourn, John seconded.**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:12 PM by 4:12pm.

