

DRAFT
MEETING MINUTES
Virginia Recreational Fishing Advisory Board
Monday, August 10, 2026
2:00 pm

Members Present

Stan Gold
Wayne Jessie Jr.
Kylie Muir
Meriwether Payne
Charles Randolph
Ed Rhodes
Wally Veale
Maggie Whittemore

Board Members Absent

J.T. Holland

Others Present

Staff Present

Debbie Corker
Sheri Crocker
Jennifer Farmer
Alicia Nelson
Adam Tomlin

Bernadette La Casse
Susanna Musick
Butch Pierce
Zach Tanner

Meeting minutes were recorded by Alicia Nelson. A recording of the meetings and presentations are available.

Agenda:

I. Introduction, Announcements, Comments.

The meeting was called to order at 2:02 pm. Ms. Nelson introduced Kylie Muir as the newest appointed Recreational Fishing Advisory Board member. Ms. Nelson thanked everyone for attending the meeting and noted that several applicants would be given the chance to present this meeting for the first time, in addition to applicants from other projects being available for questions as well.

II. Status of Fund.

Sheri Crocker reviewed the status of the fund and noted that there was just over \$4.8 million available for projects. Mr. Rhodes and Ms. Crocker discussed funding and expenditures over the last year.

III. Review of Minutes of the June 2026 RFAB Meeting.

Mr. Randolph made a motion to approve the minutes, and the motion was seconded by Mr. Jessie. Mr. Rhodes asked if we could include the start time of the meeting as well. Ms. Nelson asked if that would be an amendment to the June minutes or a request going forward. Mr. Rhodes asked for it to be included moving forward. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Fishing event applications:

DRAFT

- A) 0426-01 2027 Hope House & Oak Grove Nursing Home Fishing Excursion. T.B. Butch Pierce; Great Bridge Fisherman's Association. **\$5,200.**

Mr. Pierce presented the twice-annual fishing event for the Hope House and Oak Grove nursing home. He noted the success of previous years, and estimates 50-75 residents joining them at each event. He invited the board to the upcoming 2026 event at the Ocean View Fishing Pier on September 14th.

- B) 0426-04 2027 Sunshine Program. Steve York, Norfolk Angler's Club. **\$13,375.**

Officer York presented the Sunshine Program request for 2027. He told the board that each year, they take approximately 120 kids and adolescent kids f out on a boat called the the charter boat Nancy Ann. The club provides all the fishing rods, bait, and volunteers. He also noted that this past year, they have been working with the Saltwater Tournament Director and the junior citation program as well. He noted that several kids received citations this year. He noted that goal of the program is to promote a positive recreational activity for the children and adolescents and teach them about the Chesapeake Bay. He also commented that the interaction with uniformed officers in a positive way is a good public engagement. The program is currently in thier 28th year, and he noted that they restarted the program after Denny Dobbins' passing. He noted that he was looking forward to continuing to serve the Commonwealth through these programs.

- C) 0426-06 Hooked on the Future. Chris Schramm, Chasing Freedom. **\$12,743.**

The applicant was not present for the meeting.

- D) 0426-07 2026 Event Schedule. Micheal Lyons, Fishing for the Mission 22. **\$6,486.**

The applicant was not present for the meeting.

- E) 0426-17 C.A.S.T. for Kids-Eastern Shore. Zachary Tanner. **\$17,800.**

Mr. Tanner, event coordinator for CAST for Kids Eastern Shore described the organization as a non-profit that provides fishing outings for children with special needs. He noted that this would be the third Eastern Shore event for this nation-wide organization. Mr. Tanner described recent cost reductions to bring the request to \$10,699, with the possibility of additional reductions as he continues to work on estimates. He reviewed the current costs with the board and there was a discussion focused on appropriate cost guidelines for upcoming fishing events. Alicia Nelson noted that past recommendations suggested 60–75 dollars per child, with flexibility for special circumstances, and confirmed that 90 dollars had also been part of prior conversations. Charles Randolph asked whether the current proposal could stay within a 75–90-dollar range, and Zach Tanner agreed, stating he would work with local vendors to reduce costs and provide updated information to Alicia by the end of the week. Tanner also reported participation numbers from last fall's event with 27 registered, 13 attended, with 15 currently registered for the upcoming session and the expectation of more. The group agreed to revisit the proposal at the next meeting.

Later in the meeting, Mr. Gold asked to revisit the cost per child discussion and noted that some items, such as the cost of fishing gear would be reduced in future events

DRAFT

because it would be a initial purchase. Mr. Tanner was asked to consider startup costs versus the expected cost per child annually. Ms. Nelson also suggested connecting Mr. Tanner with some of the other event coordinators who have a lot of contacts and suggestions about gear and acquisition based on the long term history of some of the events. Ms. Payne also suggested reducing the overall number of rods because the total of 100 expected children were expected over 4 separate events.

V. Other Projects:

- F) 0426-08 MLC Public Access Waterfront Enhancement and Community Saltwater Learn to Fish Program (SL2F). Bernadette La Casse, Mathews Land Conservancy. **\$30,600.**

Bernadette La Casse gave a brief presentation with additional details about the project that had been requested at the last meeting. She reported that the 30-year-old site's riprap and bulkhead, installed in the early 2000s, now requires routine maintenance. Recent walkway improvements highlighted additional wear, including areas of backwash from king tides and needed reinforcement around a small pier frequently used by fishermen. She noted that she has received reliable cost estimates. Ms. La Casse also shared that their youth fishing program—now entering its fourth year—served 130 children last year with support from VMRC, VIMS, DWR, DCR, and the Rotary Club. Mr. Rhodes asked about the site checklist, and MS. Nelson confirmed that the checklist had not been required previously but could be filled out for the capital improvement projects on the site. She noted that she would share the checklist with Ms. La Casse before the September meeting. The group agreed to revisit the matter at that time.

- G) 0426-09 Virginia Game Fish Tagging 2027. S. Musick (VIMS), M. Hargis (VMRC). **\$103,105**

There were no comments on this item.

- H) 0426-14 Planning the Renovation of Coles Point Boater Access, Westmoreland County. John Kirk, DWR. **\$100,000.**

There were no comments on this item.

- I) 0426-16 Planning the Renovation of Gloucester Point Boater Access, Gloucester County. John Kirk, DWR. **\$41,019.**

There were no comments on this item.

Mr. Rhodes asked for any other questions or comments. Ms. Nelson noted that Mr. Randolph and Mr. Veale had requested a work session at the next meeting. She clarified that it will be an in-person meeting tentatively scheduled for September 14th. She also noted that they had asked for an artificial reef update, and she explained that the reef program was in the middle of several RFP's and updates. The largest ongoing project is the HRBT, which has received a full barge-load thus far (over several days of deployments). She said that the Artificial Reef Program would provide an update at the September meeting, and at that time hoped to be able to share more details about upcoming plans.

DRAFT

Mr. Rhodes asked Ms. Muir about her first meeting, and she thanked the board for the opportunity.

Mr. Veal motioned to recommend funding items A, D, and J as a block (0426-01, 0426-04, and 0426-09). The motion was seconded by Mr. Randolph. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Adjourn.

Mr. Randolph motioned to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Veale seconded the motion. The meeting ended at 2:52 p.m.