

MINUTES

COMMISSION MEETING

June 23, 2026

The meeting of the Marine Resources Commission was held at the Marine Resources Commission main office at 380 Fenwick Road, Bldg. 96, Fort Monroe, Virginia with the following present:

Joseph Grist	Commissioner
Patrick Hand	
A.J. Erskine	
William Bransom	
Jeremy Headley	Associate Members
Jeanette Edwards	
Thomas Preston	
Preston White	
Kelci Block	Assistant Attorney General
Gerald Pitt	1 st . Sgt., Marine Police
Justin Worrell	Deputy Chief, Habitat Management
Mike Johnson	Engineer, Habitat Management
Tiffany Birge	Engineer, Habitat Management
Ethan Simpson	Chief, Fisheries Management
Alexa Galvan	Fisheries Management
Adam Kenyon	Chief, Shellfish Management
Andrew Button	Deputy Chief, Shellfish Management
John Dearstine	Natural Resources Manager
Alicia Nelson	Natural Resources Manager

Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS):

Lyle Varnell	Emily Hein	Alex Sabo
Julianna Kawal	David Rudder	

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Others present:

Joseph Schiabel	Jeff Sili	Kenneth Richardson
Will Gemma	T & P Rush	M & M Thomas Bass
Robert Brett	Kaylene Green	Margaret Sitison
Andy Sitison	Roger Arnold	Christine Conrad
Rebecca Frances	John Ryan	Kim Huskey
Katy Damico	Madeline Loht	Rebecca Frances
Lois Elson	Tom Kramer	Thom Ennen
Dave O’Brien	Tammy Heath	Hill B. Willford Jr.
and others.		

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APPROVAL OF AGENDA. – Commissioner Joseph Grist asked if there were any changes from the Board members or staff.

Associate Member Bransom moved to approve the agenda as presented. Associate Member Erskine seconded the motion. The motion carried, 7-0.

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MINUTES: Commissioner Grist asked if there were any changes or corrections to be made to the May 26, 2026 meeting minutes.

Associate Member Erskine moved to approve of the minutes as presented. Associate Member Headley seconded the motion. The motion carried, 7-0.

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Commissioner Grist swore in the VMRC staff and VIMS staff that would be speaking or presenting testimony during the meeting.

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Ethan Simpson, Chief, Fisheries Management, introduced the two new data specialists, Reece Aponte and Linsey Nelson to the Fisheries Management Division team. His comments are a part of the verbatim record.

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2. **CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS: There were no consent agenda items.**

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3. **CLOSED MEETING FOR CONSULTATION WITH, OR BRIEFING BY, COUNSEL. – No meeting needed**

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4. **PUBLIC COMMENT: No one spoke during the public comment period.**

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5. **PERMITS** (Projects over \$500,000.00 with no objections and with staff recommendation for approval).

Justin Worrell, Deputy Chief, Habitat Management, reviewed the Page 2 items 2A through 2F for the Associate Members. Mr. Worrell's comments are a part of the verbatim record.

- 2A ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, VMRC #2025-2791,** requests authorization to hydraulically place up to 200,000 cubic yards of sandy dredged material, resulting from the maintenance dredging of the Winter Harbor Project Channel, upon approximately 3.6 million square feet of state-owned subaqueous bottom, creating a berm approximately 7,100 feet long with an elevation up to six (6) feet above mean low water, adjacent to undeveloped Tax Map parcels #37-A-2 and #36-A-151 along the Chesapeake Bay, near Winter Harbor in Mathews County. Staff recommends approval of the project with our standard dredge conditions and a condition requiring a time of year restriction (TOYR) of April 1 through October 31 of any given year to protect submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV). Additionally, staff recommends permit issuance be contingent upon receipt of revised cross-sectional drawings and a plan view drawing identifying the placement area relative to VIMS mapped SAV beds. The project requires a VMRC subaqueous permit.

- 2B CITY OF BRISTOL, VMRC #2026-0380**, requests authorization to construct a 51-foot wide clear span replacement bridge over a 35-foot section of Beaver Creek along Goodson Street in the City of Bristol. The project requires a VMRC subaqueous permit.
- 2C CITY OF BRISTOL, VMRC #2026-0379**, requests authorization to construct a 91-foot wide clear span replacement bridge over a 45-foot section of Beaver Creek along Martin Luther King Boulevard in the City of Bristol. The project requires a VMRC subaqueous permit.
- 2D NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, VMRC #2025-2813**, requests authorization to hydraulically or mechanically maintenance dredge approximately 22,700 cubic yards of state-owned submerged lands, to a depth of minus 10 feet mean low water with beach and near shore (beneficial use) placement of sandy dredge material along properties immediately downstream of the Smith Point Inlet to the Little Wicomico River in Northumberland County. Staff recommends approval of the project with our standard dredge permit conditions. The project requires a VMRC subaqueous permit.
- 2E STEPHEN RICHARD, VMRC #2025-2003**, requests authorization to remove and replace five (5) 48-foot low-profile timber groins; reconstruct one (1) 48-foot low-profile stone groin; and to install two (2) 48-foot low-profile stone groins at 199 and 221 Shellfield Road, situated along the Rappahannock River in Essex County. This project requires a VMRC wetlands permit and General Permit #2 (Groin).
- 2F CHARLES TANGO, VMRC #2022-2429**, requests authorization to construct and backfill 80 linear feet of vinyl bulkhead and install 65 linear feet of stone revetment at 5237 Pickett River Drive situated along the James River in Henrico County. Staff recommends approval with the purchase of Virginia Stream and Wetland Mitigation Program credits to compensate for wetland impacts. This project requires a VMRC wetlands permit.

The matter is before the Commission for discussion and action.

Associate Member Erskine moved to approve the projects 2A through 2F as presented. Associate Member Preston seconded the motion. The motion carried, 7-0.

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6. **CAROLINE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, VMRC #2020-0514**, requests authorization to install a 9 million gallon per day raw water intake structure along the south bank of the Rappahannock River, at 38.2347 N, -77.30815W, between Moss Neck and Olney Corner in Caroline County. The project is protested.

Mike Johnson, Environmental Engineer, Habitat Management, gave the briefing of the information provided in the staff's evaluation, with PowerPoint slides. for the Associate Members. Mr. Johnson's comments are a part of the verbatim record.

Joseph Schiabel and Roger Arnold were sworn in and spoke in support of the project on behalf of the applicant. Their comments are a part of the verbatim record.

There were two (2) people that spoke in support and two (2) people spoke in opposition to the project. Their comments are a part of the verbatim record.

The matter was before the Commission for discussion and action.

Associate Member Bransom moved to approve the application as presented. Associate Member Erskine seconded the motion. The motion carried, 7-0.

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7. **THOMAS KRAMER, VMRC #2025-1966**, requests authorization to construct a 34-foot by 16-foot open-sided boathouse over an existing boat lift and construct timber access stairs adjacent to an existing statutorily authorized private pier serving 2749 West Landing Road, situated along the North Landing River in Virginia Beach. This project is protested.

Tiffany Birge, Environmental Engineer, Habitat Management, gave the briefing of the information provided in the staff's evaluation, with PowerPoint slides. for the Associate Members. Ms. Birge's comments are a part of the verbatim record.

Tom Kramer, applicant, was sworn in and spoke on behalf of his application. His comments are a part of the verbatim record.

David Amit spoke in opposition to the placement of the finger pier. His comments are a part of the verbatim record.

Louise Kramer was sworn in and spoke in support of the application. Her comments are a part of the verbatim record.

The matter was before the Commission for discussion and action.

Associate Member Preston moved voted to approve the application as proposed. Associate Member White seconded the motion. The motion carried, 7-0.

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8. PUBLIC HEARING

Proposed amendments to Chapter 4VAC20-270 "Pertaining to Blue Crab Fishery" to establish season and bushel limits for the 2026-2027 commercial blue crab fisheries and to close the 2026-2027 winter commercial crab dredge fishing season.

Alexa Galvan, Fisheries Management, gave a briefing of the information provided in the staff's evaluation, with PowerPoint slides for the Associate Members. Ms. Galvan's comments are a part of the verbatim record.

The matter was before the Commission for discussion and action.

Associate Member Erskine moved voted to approve staff recommendation. Associate Member Edwards seconded the motion. The motion carried, 7-0.

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9. RECOMMENDATION

Funding recommendations from the Recreational and Commercial Fishing Advisory Board.

Alicia Nelson, Natural Resources Manager, gave a briefing on the information provided in the staff's evaluation, with PowerPoint slides for the Associate Members. Ms. Nelson's comments are a part of the verbatim record.

The matter was before the Commission for discussion and action.

Associate Member Headley moved to approve funding for seven proposed projects, totaling \$783,543 from the Virginia Saltwater Recreational Fishing Development Fund, and four proposed projects, totaling \$220,033 from the Marine Fishing Improvement Fund as presented. Associate Member Bransom seconded the motion. The motion carried, 6-0. Associate Member Edwards was not present during the final vote.

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10. LICENSE STATUS REQUEST.

John Dearstine, Natural Resource Manager, gave the briefing of the information provided in the staff's evaluation for the Associate Members. Mr. Dearstine's comments are a part of the verbatim record.

Christopher Akers requested to have his Commercial License reinstated. His comments are a part of the verbatim record.

Associate Member Preston moved to reinstate his Commercial Card. Associate Member Headley s seconded the motion. The motion carried, 7-0.

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There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:55 a.m. The next Commission meeting will be on **Tuesday**, July 28, 2026.

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Joseph Grist, Commissioner

Jamie Hogge, Recording Secretary