

MINUTES

COMMISSION MEETING

July 28, 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	
Lynn Kellum	
A.J. Erskine	
William Bransom	Associate Members
Jeanette Edwards	
Thomas Preston	
Preston White	
Kelci Block	Assistant Attorney General
Gerald Pitt	1 st . Sgt., Marine Police
Randy Owen	Chief, Habitat Management
Justin Worrell	Deputy Chief, Habitat Management
Kylie Harris	Engineer, Habitat Management
Jeffrey Madden	Engineer, Habitat Management
Mike Johnson	Engineer, Habitat Management
Tiffany Birge	Engineer, Habitat Management
Claire Gorman	Engineer, Habitat Management
Kirsten Travis	Engineer, Habitat Management
Brad Reams	Engineer, Habitat Management
Olivia Upton	Engineer, Habitat Management
Ethan Simpson	Chief, Fisheries Management
Adam Kenyon	Chief, Shellfish Management
Andrew Button	Deputy Chief, Shellfish Management

Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS):

Lyle Varnell

Emily Hein

Alex Sabo

Commission Meeting

**19411
July 28, 2026**

David Rudder

Others present:

Roger Anderson	Jim Deaver	Mike Shackelford
Dave O'Brien	Brian Fletcher	and others.

* * * * *

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 Edwards seconded the motion. The motion carried, 7-0.

* * * * *

MINUTES: Commissioner Grist asked if there were any changes or corrections to be made to the June 23, 2026 meeting minutes.

Associate Member Erskine moved to approve of the minutes as presented. Associate Member Bransom seconded the motion. The motion carried, 6-0-1. Associate Member Kellum abstained

* * * * *

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

* * * * *

Adam Kenyon, Chief, Shellfish Management, introduced a new surveyor, Nathaniel Curtis to the Commission. His comments are a part of the verbatim record.

Ethan Simpson, Chief, Fisheries Management, introduced a new field observer, Preston Hudlow, to the Commission. His comments are a part of the verbatim record.

* * * * *

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

* * * * *

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

* * * * *

4. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Roger Anderson & Jim Deaver:

Mr. Roger Anderson and Mr. Jim Deaver, recreational anglers, expressed their concerns about decline of fish populations around the Middle Peninsula and Northern Neck, respectively. Both had concerns about commercial gillnetting for striped bass. Further, both commented on perceived inequality between recreational and commercial harvest limits. Commissioner Grist asked them to submit their written comments to Chief of Fisheries Management Ethan Simpson to be provided to the Finfish Management Advisory Committee. Their comments are a part of the verbatim record.

Mike Shackelford:

Mr. Michael Shackelford, commercial waterman, asked for Corrine Gentile's (his mother) oyster ground lease to be returned to their family. Mr. Shackelford missed applying and paying for the 10-year renewal of the lease and, by the Code of Virginia, that lease was terminated. Another party has applied for this lease ground, and, by Code, lease applications must be considered in the order they're received. Commissioner Grist advised Mr. Shackelford that the other lease application must be considered first but if Mr. Shackelford protests that application, the matter would come before the Commission. His comments are a part of the verbatim record.

No action was taken by the Commission on these matters.

* * * * *

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 item 2A for the Associate Members. Mr. Worrell’s comments are a part of the verbatim record.

2A TUSCARORA BEACH ASSOCIATION, VMRC #2026-0676, requests authorization to extend an existing timber groin 10 feet landward at 194 Rio Vista Lane, situated along the Rappahannock River in Essex County. This project requires a VMRC Beach and Dune Permit.

The matter is before the Commission for discussion and action.

Associate Member Erskine moved to approve project 2A as presented. Associate Member Bransom seconded the motion. The motion carried, 7-0.

* * * * *

6. DEANA MASSEY, VMRC #2026-0060, requests authorization to install an 82-foot long and an 83-foot long marsh toe sill, backfilled with clean sand and native wetland plantings, for the construction of a living shoreline adjacent to 38 Point Cove Lane, situated along Bush Park Creek in Middlesex County. The project is protested by an adjacent property owner.

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

Brian Fletcher, agent for the applicant, was sworn in and spoke. His 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 per staff recommendation as presented. Associate Member Erskine seconded the motion. The motion carried, 7-0.

* * * * *

Commission Meeting

**19414
July 28, 2026**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:12 a.m. The next Commission meeting will be on **Tuesday**, August 25, 2026.

* * * * *

Joseph Grist, Commissioner

Jamie Hogge, Recording Secretary