



# Wellfleet Shellfish Department



300 Main Street, Wellfleet, Massachusetts 02667

## MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 2, 2020

TO: Town of Wellfleet Selectboard Members

CC: Town Administrator Maria Broadbent and Town Moderator Danny Silverman

RE: Request to change Article 22

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Dear Selectboard Members:

It has come to my attention that Barnstable County will have a matching grant program for fisheries enhancement available to towns this fall to help deal with the ripple effects from COVID-19. In Wellfleet's case, I think that we are likely to have oyster growers with a surplus of over three-inch oysters due to the market downturn, and we are also experiencing an increase in recreational fishing pressure at Indian Neck.

We can apply for a matching grant from the County with a proposal to buy the surplus oysters from grant holders and distribute them to the Indian Neck recreational area for recreational harvest. In order to participate in this program, I would like to use monies from our Revolving Fund for Propagation, which takes 75% of all shellfish revenues (from permit sales and grant lease fees) and puts them into a fund only to be used for propagation. The funds come out of the pockets of those who use our shellfish resources, not through town tax revenue, so this will have no impact on people's taxes nor on the Town's FY21 budget.

I would like to propose an additional up to \$10,000 increase in usage of the revolving fund in FY21. I will always need to think ahead and prepare for unknowns that may arise. For FY21, it will help us take advantage of the County's and other grant opportunities related to COVID-19 relief that may come about, as well as allowing us to continue to run propagation programs like the channel quahog relay that we did in March and April, and any other initiatives to contribute worthwhile sustainable shellfish propagation activities to the town, while helping local shellfishermen weather the market downturn effects that might get worse as we move into the fall and winter.

This would require that the warrant article #22 authorize spending from the Revolving Fund to be increased from \$40,000 to \$50,000. The \$40,000 in the current article funds our town propagation budget line 180, which has all but eliminated the tax dollars being directed to our propagation activities already.

[wellfleet-ma.gov/shellfish-department](http://wellfleet-ma.gov/shellfish-department)

Phone (508) 349-0325



Fax (508) 349-0305

Here is the article from the warrant:

**ARTICLE 22: Shellfish Revolving Fund Spending Limit.** To see if the Town will vote to establish a spending limit for FY2021 of \$40,000 for the Shellfish Revolving Fund established pursuant to MGL Chapter 44, Section 53E½.

***Majority vote required.***

**Selectboard:** Recommends 5-0.

**Finance Committee:** Recommends 7-0.

**Shellfish Advisory Board:** Recommends 0-0.

**SUMMARY:** The purpose of this article is to establish the spending limit for the Shellfish Revolving Fund which was established for propagation efforts. The Shellfish Department's propagation efforts include the seeding of quahogs and oysters in all Wellfleet waterways which also contributes to improving water quality and natural oyster set in our harbor to benefit growers and spat collectors. This revolving fund takes the responsibility for funding the shellfish department's budget line 180 out of the taxpayer's pockets and puts it in the hands of those who make their living in the shellfish industry and those who harvest shellfish recreationally. The Shellfish Propagation Revolving Fund revenues will be derived from shellfish grant revenue and permit fees. The Revolving Fund expenditures may be used for the propagation, cultivation, protection and study of shellfish only.

**Here is how I would amend the motion to read during Annual Town Meeting:**

ARTICLE 22: Shellfish Revolving Fund Spending Limit.

MOTION: I move that the Town which has established a Revolving Fund for Shellfish Propagation in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 44, Section 53E½ vote to establish the total amount that may be expended from said fund for Fiscal Year 2021 ~~at \$40,000~~ **for up to \$50,000.**

Attached is a complete accounting of revenues and expenditures from the Shellfish Fund and the Shellfish Revolving Fund for Propagation for your reference, so you understand that the money is available.

I am happy to bring this item to both Shellfish Advisory Board and the Finance Committee for a vote at their next meetings prior to the Annual Town Meeting. I look forward to discussing this at your September 8 meeting. Thank you for your consideration,



Nancy Civetta