Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

Commission Business Session

November 11, 2026; 9:45 – 10:45 a.m.
November 12, 2026; 11:00 – 11:15 a.m.

Draft Agenda

The times listed are approximate; the order in which these items will be taken is subject to change; other items may be added as necessary.

1. Welcome/Call to Order *(D. McKiernan)*

2. Board Consent
    - Approval of Agenda
    - Approval of Proceedings from August 2026

3. Public Comment

4. Consider Approval of 2027 Action Plan (*D. McKiernan*) **Final Action**

5. Elect Commission Chair and Vice-Chair (*R. Beal*) **Final Action**

6. Consider Noncompliance Recommendations, if necessary **Final Action**

7. Other Business/Adjourn

This meeting will be held at The Hotel Viking, (1 Bellevue Avenue, Newport, RI; 844.806.4895) and via webinar; click here for details

DRAFT PROCEEDINGS OF THE

ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION

COMMISSION BUSINESS SESSION

The Westin Crystal City
Arlington, Virginia
Hybrid Meeting

August 6, 2026

These minutes are draft and subject to approval by the Commission Business Session.
The Board will review the minutes during its next meeting.

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1. **Approval of agenda** by consent (Page 1).

2. **Approval of Proceedings of Wednesday, May 6, 2026** by consent (Page 1).

3. **Move to approve the changes as presented today to the Commission Rules and Regulations** (Page 3). Motion by John Clark; second by Joe Grist. Motion passes by unanimous consent (Page 3).

4. **Move to adjourn** by consent (Page 3).

ATTENDANCE

Board Members

Carl Wilson, ME (AA)
Rep. Allison Hepler, ME (LA)
Renee Zobel, NH (AA)
Doug Grout, NH (GA)
Dan McKiernan, MA (AA)
Raymond Kane, MA (GA)
Rep. Sarah Peake, MA (LA)
Jason McNamee, RI (AA)
Eric Reid, RI, proxy for Sen. Sosnowski (LA)
Shanna Madsen, CT (AA)
Bill Hyatt, CT (GA)
Robert LaFrance, CT proxy for Rep. Gresko (LA)
Marty Gary, NY (AA)
Emerson Hasbrouck, NY (GA)
Monica Martinez, NY (LA)
Joe Cimino, NJ (AA)
Adam Nowalsky, NJ (GA)
Kris Kuhn, PA, proxy for T. Schaeffer (AA)
Loren Lustig, PA (GA)
Jordan Zimmerman, DE (AA)
John Clark, DE, proxy for R. Miller (GA)
Michael Luisi, MD (AA)
Russel Dize MD (GA)
Joe Grist, VA (AA)
Del. Adele McClure, VA (GA)
Chris Batsavage, NC, proxy for M. Loffler (AA)
Ben Dyar, SC, proxy for B. Keppler (AA)
Chris McDonough, SC, proxy for Sen. Cromer (LA)
Doug Haymans, GA (AA)
Spud Woodward, GA (GA)
Erika Burgess, FL, proxy for J. McCawley (AA)
Garry Jennings, FL (GA)
Mike Ruccio, NMFS
Lowell Whitney, US FWS

(AA = Administrative Appointee; GA = Governor Appointee; LA = Legislative Appointee)

Ex-Officio Members

Staff

Bob Beal
Toni Kerns
Tina Berger
Madeline Musante
Alexander Law
Caitlin Starks
Emilie Franke
Tracey Bauer
James Boyle
Chelsea Tuohy
Katie Drew
Jeff Kipp
Samara Nehemiah
Jainita Patel

The Business Session of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission convened in the Jefferson Ballroom of the Westin Crystal City Hotel, Arlington, Virginia, via hybrid meeting, in-person and webinar; Thursday, August 6, 2026, and was called to order at 11:45 am by Chair Daniel McKiernan.

CALL TO ORDER

CHAIR DANIEL McKIERNAN: Welcome to the Business Session. I am Dan McKiernan from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

CHAIR McKIERNAN: First, approval of the agenda. Are there any objections to the agenda as listed? Seeing none.

APPROVAL OF PROCEEDINGS

CHAIR McKIERNAN: Regarding the approval of the proceedings from May, any objections to the proceedings? Seeing none.

PUBLIC COMMENT

CHAIR McKIERNAN: Public comment. To the public here or online, are there any issues you would like to bring up, issues that are not on the agenda? Seeing none. Toni, I believe we have a final action, two final actions. One is to consider changes to the Commission Rules and Regulations. Bob Beal.

CONSIDER CHANGES TO THE COMMISSION RULES AND REGULATIONS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ROBERT E. BEAL: Just a quick bit of background. For a number of meetings now the Policy Board discussed voting privileges and the criteria needed that are included in the rules and regulations for states to declare an interest in a species. There was a long discussion at the Spring Meeting about the voting privileges.

Ultimately, the Policy Board decided to hold off on that, with the awareness that there are more thoughts and perspectives on voting privileges that folks should consider as they are determining whether they should vote or abstain on an issue, but not take any formal action to develop guidelines or anything else on that issue.

However, the Policy Board did approve changes to two parts of the Rules and Regulations. One is the criteria for the declared interest in a species. The second issue that the Policy Board approved changing the Legislative Group and the Governor's Appointee Group from a Section to a Committee.

I know it sounds like semantics, but in Section 2 and Section 3 of the Rules and Regulations, under I think Article 2 maybe, there is reference to Legislative Section and Governor's Appointee Section. Day to day this really doesn't change the functioning of the Legislative and Governor Appointees (LGAs) group or the Legislative Group and the Governors Appointee Group. They met jointly yesterday, as they often do over lunch, to discuss a number of issues. One of the values of making this change is that under Amendment 1 to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission Compact, Amendment 1 declares that states can get together, form a Section and that Section actually functions as a joint regulatory agency. The Legislators and Governors Appointees never function as a Section under Amendment 1 to the Compact.

Just making this change sort of moves away from any potential confusion of that Amendment 1 Section language, and you know the way that group functions historically and how they function now. It looks like semantics, but there is a nuance there that is pretty important. I don't know Mr. Chair, if you want to talk about that one first, before you go to Declared Interest, or tackle them both. Moving on to the next one, and Toni has a question.

In the Rules and Regulations in Section 5 there has been three different criteria that have been used to declare interest in a species, which means that state sits on the species management board, essentially. Those three criteria are recommended to be replaced by two criteria. These criteria have already been reviewed and approved by the Policy Board.

This group could make changes to them, should you want to. One of the key things here is that for a state to have an interest in a species, you only have to meet one of these criteria, you don't have to meet both, it can be either one, and that state is eligible to then participate on a fishery management board based on the approval at the Policy Board.

I am happy to read these into the record, but I think they are in the briefing materials, they've already been approved by the Policy Board and you know had really extensive conversation about both of these criteria at the Spring Meeting at the Policy Board level. Happy to answer any questions on these, but we'll read through them and get more background, if necessary, Mr. Chair. But I think there has been considerable debate.

CHAIR McKIERNAN: Okay, the first one obviously is a little cleaner, the second one might generate a little more discussion. I'll take the first one about the Section being transformed into a Committee. Does anybody want to speak to that or make a motion to accept those changes?

MR. ERIC REID: I will do both. I did ask for this change for a couple of reasons, and I do appreciate the fact that you are even talking about it here. That group has been meeting for a very long time, and it was kind of my opinion that it was a very nice lunch, and nothing ever came out of two-thirds of the Commission sitting in a room together.

My intention was to change that. This is part of my vision on how to change that, the way that group behaves and the way they are recognized by this Commission. I appreciate you doing it, and we had a meeting yesterday, and it was my opinion the meeting went pretty damn well. I'm looking forward to the future and thank you for the effort.

CHAIR McKIERNAN: I've been advised that we can make a combined motion here if that is desirable, so thank you for that. Are there any other comments on the transformation of the Section to a Committee? Jason. Yes, and then we'll go to the next issue. The first one is wrapped up, so now let's go to the second one, which is the modifications to Section 5 of the Rules and Regs, further discussion. Jason, do you want to speak to that?

DR. JASON McNAMEE: Just a question, and I want to just make sure there were those two criteria, which seem reasonable, and it says either, so it just has to be one of them, is that correct?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: Yes, that is correct.

DR. McNAMEE: Thank you.

CHAIR McKIERNAN: Any other questions? Yes, Spud.

MR. SPUD WOODWARD: I know we have discussed this ad nauseum, but I think just to make sure I understand, because part of a discussion we had about this is, if you were to use B as a qualifying criteria, it is the responsibility of the Management Board to sort of monitor that, to make sure that criteria remains valid over time, because you make a decision at a point in time.

Then I think there was discussion about making sure there was a monitoring process to make sure. We had a lot of discussion about *de minimis* and 1 percentage point and things like that. Is that the way we had planned for this to be executed?

CHAIR McKIERNAN: I'll ask Bob to respond. Go ahead, Bob.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: Yes, thanks, Spud, that is a great point. If these changes are incorporated into the Rules and Regulations, then the question becomes, how do you want to implement that? The Policy Board did agree to reviewing the membership of each management board every two years, and/or if there is a stock assessment that is completed that may change the range of a species, or something along those lines.

Part of that conversation, or incorporating those details on how to implement this, I think is more appropriate for the ISFMP Charter than the larger Rules and Regulations on frequency of review and

how that is going to be done. The plan now, or at least the thinking at the Policy Board was to initiate that with the Plan Review Team level, and then move that forward.

One of the remaining questions is, when do you want to start those reviews? I assume it is immediately. Does the Commission want to review all the management boards for the 27 species all at once, or do we want to stagger that in over the years? What is the best way to tackle that?

Doing it all at once is a fair amount of work, but we can work through that. The way we envision this at the staff level is, if these are approved, we will bring back some recommendations at the annual meeting on implementation and timing for the reviews, and how to move forward, if that is okay with the group.

CHAIR McKIERNAN: That sounds good, Bob. Any questions for Bob at this point? All right; can we get a motion to accept both changes? We've got John Clark and seconded by Joe Grist.

MR. JOHN CLARK: **Move to approve the changes that are presented today to the Commission Rules and Regulations.**

CHAIR McKIERNAN: All right, any discussion. Not seeing any, **any objection to the motion? Not seeing any there, it passes by unanimous consent.**

ADJOURNMENT

CHAIR McKIERNAN: All right that's it, any other business? Seeing none; motion to adjourn. Mike Luisi, seconded by Ben Dyar. Thanks, everybody.

(Whereupon the meeting adjourned at 11:55 pm on Thursday, August 6, 2026)