

**MARYLAND  
BOAT ACT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BAAC)  
MEETING SUMMARY**

October 1, 2020

**Attendees:** BAAC Committee Chair Thornell Jones and Vice Chair Jon Sheller, BAAC members Russ Dwyer, Joe Hellner, Bob Nickel, Steve Kling, Amy Craig, and Ramona Trovato. Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Asst. Secretary –Aquatic Resources Bill Anderson, BAAC Liaison Mike Simonsen, DNR Fishing and Boating Services members Karen Knotts, Paul Genovese, and Jeannine Moaney. Guests and members of the public were also in attendance during the meeting.

**Call to Order:** Mr. Jones called the meeting to order and asked the BAAC members to introduce themselves. He then explained the role of the Boat Act Advisory Committee.

**Approval of May 19, 2020 BAAC Meeting Summary:** Mr. Jones called on each member to approve the May 19 BAAC meeting summary. The committee unanimously approved the summary, with the exception of two members who did not attend the May meeting.

**Ground Rules:** Mr. Jones went over the rules for the virtual public meeting.

**Presentation of 2020 Boating Regulatory Requests:** Mr. Simonsen discussed the following requests.

- A. **Severn River/U.S. Naval Academy Sailing Department:** The request is for a 6-knot speed limit at all times, 220 yards from the U.S. Naval Academy.

Maintenance Division Officer, Lt. Sara Sanchez-Maldonado mentioned there was a request submitted regarding this topic, some time ago. Mr. Simonsen read a letter submitted by the Anne Arundel Maritime Industry Advisory Board, supporting an email for the record that their advisory board received on Sept. 30, 2020 by Gamma Engineering's – Mr. Mike Helfrich, which was in opposition to the boating regulation change request.

Mr. Peter Schellie shared his opposition to the request based on several factors: (1) it does not represent a reasonable sharing of the waterway; (2) the proposed boating regulation change request would cut in half the amount of waterway area for a boater; and (3) there is already a lot of boating traffic and the requested speed limit would not have any impact on boating congestion.

Natural Resources Police (NRP) Officer Hayes shared he had not received very many calls, but he was aware that there was a serious accident in the area. He also mentioned Mr. Schellie had some valid points.

**Severn River/U.S. Naval Academy Sailing Department: (Continued)**

Mr. Kling asked about the reason for requesting 220 yards. Lt. Sanchez-Maldonado stated that she would need to talk to her higher ups, to find out why. Mr. Nickel asked NRP if they approve the request or deny it. NRP Officer Hayes said it should be approved.

Mr. Simonsen shared that communications from constituents during the DNR survey period showed seven “In Favor” and nine “Opposed” to the request.

During deliberations regarding the regulation change request, Mr. Dwyer made a motion for “No Change” and Mr. Kling shared he would reluctantly second the motion. After a short discussion by Mr. Kling and Mr. Hellner, a vote on the motion for “No Change” was passed unanimously by the BAAC.

- B. **Martin’s Cove/Mill Creek:** The request is for a year round 6-knot speed limit for Saturdays, Sundays and State holidays. The petition is to combine and relocate the current waterway demarcations of Martin’s Cove and Mill Creek.

Petitioner Mr. Donald Parker stated that he requested this change 10 years ago but he did not receive a response. Mr. Parker also shared that he tried getting consensus from his neighbors and asking questions of DNR, but his personal water craft (PWC) concerns were not addressed.

Officer Hayes mentioned that regulation 08.08.02.05, Section (K) and (L) was still in effect. He noted there has been an increase in calls regarding Mill Creek, complaining about jet skis and stand-up jet boards. Officer Hayes strongly suggests 6-knots at all times.

Mr. Simonsen shared that communications from constituents during the DNR survey period showed six “In favor” and two “Opposed” to the regulation change request.

Mr. Nickel made a motion of “No Change” and Mr. Kling seconded the motion. The BAAC voted, which ended in a tie, (4 to 4). After deliberating on the remaining two Boating Regulation Change Requests for Anne Arundel County, Mr. Jones returned to re-open the question of Mr. Parker’s request. Mr. Kling made a motion to “Re-Open the Question” and it was seconded by Mrs. Craig. After a thorough discussion, the BAAC voted again. Six members voted for the original motion of “No Change” and 2 voted “Opposed” to the motion, which resulted in a majority “No Change” final vote by the BAAC.

- C. **Fork Creek/Cool Springs Cove:** The request is for relocating the DNR buoy and making the described area 6-knots speed limit all year.

**Fork Creek/Cool Springs Cove: (Continued)**

Petitioner Mr. Bill Zichos shared that he has never known of a 6-knot marker being so close to the Ulmstead Community Marina. His petition for a new demarcation line is at the location to which a NRP officer previously moved the buoy. He feels it is a reasonable area. Mr. Zichos is requesting moving the buoy an additional 400 feet down the waterway.

Mr. Niland and Mr. Cooley, residents of Ulmstead Community, stated they were in favor of the request. The NRP officer noted there were no complaints, but he is not opposed to the request.

Mr. Simonsen shared that communications from constituents during the DNR showed 46 “In Favor” and one “Opposed”.

Mr. Kling made a motion to approve the change and Mr. Dwyer seconded the motion. The BAAC voted unanimously “In Favor” of the change.

**D. Riva Bridge (South River):** The request is to make this area 6-knots at all times.

Petitioner Mr. Fred Galloway stated this matter is a safety issue and showed a presentation. Mr. Kling asked what the petition request was for and mentioned this idea was brought up a few years ago. Mr. Kling asked what changed? NRP Cpl. Robinson mentioned there is more traffic and that people (waterway users) are getting slammed (with wake disturbance). It was shared there were 7 slip holders. Mr. Kling questioned how many slip holders in total were there to accommodate. The reply was 25 slip holders in total. Cpl. Robinson explained it is a confusing area for boaters.

Mrs. Trovato questioned if there were any tickets written? Cpl. Robinson reported there were 10 calls for service this year in the Beards and Broad Creek areas, plus some speeding issues and a few patrols cited some people. Mr. Kling questioned what the breakdown for the 10 calls were. Cpl. Robinson did not know.

Mr. Kling explained there is a signage problem (Riva Bridge). Cpl. Robinson stated he is in favor of the petitioner’s request.

Mr. Simonsen shared that communications from constituents during the DNR survey period showed 21 “In Favor” and two “Opposed”.

Mr. Dwyer made a motion of “No Change” and Mrs. Craig seconded the motion. The BAAC voted on the motion for “No Change”, which passed by 6 “In Favor” of “No Change” and one “Opposed”.

**New Business:** Chair - Mr. Jones shared he wanted to recognize former BAAC members Mr. John Pepe and Mr. Coles Marsh for their years of service and asked the BAAC to let him know if they had any ideas.

Mr. Dwyer mentioned having future BAAC meetings at 10 a.m. and - Mr. Jones shared this topic would be discussed in the future. Mr. Simonsen shared that the DNR Secretary supported the BAAC's original decision for "No Change" regarding the Little Annemessex River and added the DNR Secretary would like more NRP presence on days that special events take place in the Crisfield area.

**Adjournment:** 8:22 p.m. / Amended Version