

UFA Board Meeting in Sitka

Thursday, 24 October 2013

{audio}/images/stories/mp3/131024.ufa_board_meeting.mp3{/audio}

Ed Schoenfeld/CoastAlaska

The United Fishermen of Alaska's Board of Directors is meeting in Sitka this week.

President Jerry McCune says the board will work on priorities for legislative and government-agency action.

"We're always looking for little tweaks in the (state) Division of Investments or things that would be more helpful to fishermen for their loans, especially with a lot of young folks getting online now. That was one of the reasons we fought so hard to up the (loan) limit for permits to \$200,000, because prices nowadays are a lot higher today than when it started out."

The United Fishermen of Alaska is an umbrella organization of about 35 commercial fishing and processing groups.

McCune is also president of Cordova District Fishermen United.

He says the UFA board will discuss Alaska Board of Fisheries appointments. It's been a hotbed of controversy over the balance among gear-group, subsistence and sport representatives.

"Right now it's pretty much up to the governor to pick who's going to be on the board of fish. Sometimes you end up with really, really good board members and other times people realize it's way over their heads with what they're talking about statewide."

Some governors' nominations have been blocked by the Legislature.

The board won't take up election endorsements during this meeting.

President McCune says it's too early because the latest redistricting plan is being challenged in court.

"Of course that might be just down in Southeast and north. But it would make a change in who's running against who and who would end up where. So I don't think we'll probably bring up any of that until (next) fall."

The UFA is urging its members and others in the business to attend another meeting later this month. The Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute is holding its "All Hands" Meeting October 28th through 30th in Anchorage. It will include updates on marketing efforts as well as species-specific sessions.