

NEW HAMPSHIRE FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT

JANUARY 23, 2008 COMMISSION MEETING

Meeting Location: Fish and Game HQ, 11 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH 03301

Commissioners Present: T. Hubert, W. Morse, W. Carney, R. Phillipson, M. Kalter R. Rowan, T. Tichy, S. Guaraldi, G. Normandeau and S. Nottonson.

Commissioners Absent: P. Costa

Acting Executive Director Clarke - present

Chairman Phillipson called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m., and asked the audience to join in the pledge of allegiance. He informed the audience that the public is entitled to attend all Commission meetings and when recognized may speak on any item on the agenda.

Chairman Phillipson asked that the audience join him for a moment of silence honoring the passing of Carl Hoyt Sr., avid outdoorsmen and supporter of the department. Carl attended many meetings of the Commission and will be missed by all.

ACTION ITEMS

1.) Commissioner Hubert moved to approve the December 19, 2007 Commission Minutes with the following revision and Commissioner Kalter seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Page 5 - fourth paragraph - **COMMISSIONER PHILLIPSON**: Commissioner Phillipson reported that he scheduled a follow-up meeting on January 15, 2008 at 7:00 p.m., with the pheasant volunteers, ~~at Fish and Game Headquarters in Concord,~~ *at the Region 4 Office in Keene.*

2.) Commissioner Normandeau moved to approve the retroactive expenditure of \$240,392.00 from the turkey, waterfowl, moose, black bear and wildlife habitat accounts to cover the cost of administrative fees assessed to these accounts for fiscal years 2004 – 2007 and Commissioner Kalter seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner Normandeau moved to approve the retroactive expenditure of \$16,400.00 from the waterfowl account to cover the cost of dam registration fees assessed to this account for fiscal years 2004 – 2007 and Commissioner Carney seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner Normandeau moved to approve the retroactive expenditure of \$478,156.40 from the turkey, waterfowl, moose, black bear and wildlife habitat accounts to cover the cost of reimbursement fees assessed to these accounts for fiscal years 2004 – 2007 and Commissioner Carney seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Chairman Phillipson clarified that these expenses should come before the Commission for approval on an annual basis.

- 3.) This item was postponed until the February Commission Meeting.
- 4.) Commissioner Carney moved to approve the purchase of 13,500 pheasants for the 2008 pheasant season, and up to 500 additional pheasants to be used in a pilot youth pheasant hunting program and Commissioner Hubert seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Karen Bordeau, Pheasant Project Leader, reported that this would provide an opportunity for youth to get out in the field with less crowded conditions. Much discussion ensued.

Commissioner Hubert stated that he could not speak on behalf of the Sullivan County Sportsmen's Club without conferring with them first, however, felt very confident that the club would like to be involved with the project.

Commissioner Phillipson stated that he was confident that the Cheshire County Sportsmen's Club would also like to participate and would get back to the Commission with an answer.

Commissioner Carney reported that this project has been done in Massachusetts and was very successful. He stated that coordinating the event with bird dog clubs would be a good idea and provide a better experience for youth.

- 5.) Commissioner Normandeau moved to approve the expenditure of \$9,235 from the Fisheries Habitat Fund in FY08 to cover the cost of administrative fees assessed to this account; and retroactive approval to expend a total of \$39,648 from the Fisheries Habitat Fund to cover the cost of administrative fees assessed to this account during FY 04 - FY 07 and Commissioner Carney seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

LATE ACTION ITEMS:

- 1.) Commissioner Kalter moved to approve the expenditure of \$1,250 from the Game Management Account to support the GRANIT program and Commissioner Morse seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative. Steve Weber, Chief, Wildlife Division, reported that GRANIT, is the state's GIS program and is used in a wide variety of ways to support land conservation and management programs within the department.
- 2.) Commissioner Morse moved to approve the expenditure of up to \$11,500 from the Game Management Account, to fund ongoing and new research on nuisance bear abatement techniques and Commissioner Hubert seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative. Steve Weber reported that this was the second year of a 2-year study evaluating different aversive conditioning methods on nuisance bears in Northern New Hampshire.

He further reported that the second study involves new work with bears in Durham. He reported that project investigators will capture bears to mark them, determine movements and travel corridors, and to work with the community to develop an on-line database program which will allow residents to enter sighting information directly into the database.

INFORMATION ITEMS:

1.) Kathy LaBonte, Chief, Support Services, provided the monthly financial statement dated December 31, 2007. (See attached)

2.) Acting Director Clarke provided an overview of the Performance Audit. He stated that from his point of view he felt the audit was about change and encouraged the department and Commission to embrace the changes. He reported that the department identified what could be done to try and implement the necessary changes, however, was careful to not over promise. He further reported that the senior staff met to compile a matrix chart for tracking the changes and their status. Commissioner Rowan requested that a copy of the matrix be sent to each Commission so they are kept abreast of the status.

At this time, Chairman Phillipson stated that he wished to form a committee to review the Commission handbook. Commissioner Phillipson asked Commissioner Rowan to Chair the committee, with Commissioners Kalter and Carney serving on it as well. In addition, he reported that this committee would be responsible for developing a process for compiling the strategic plan.

Buck Mercier, audience member, questioned why the audit team never reached out for public input, such as sporting clubs, hunters and fishermen.

3.) Major Tim Acerno provided an overview of the OHRV rules pertaining to agents, reciprocity, and snowmobile sound testing procedures and levels.

4.) Steve Weber, Chief, Wildlife Division, provided the 2nd quarterly financial reports for the Game Management, Wildlife Habitat, and Pheasant dedicated accounts to the Commission. (See attached)

5.) Steve Weber thanked the Commission for moving the January Commission Meeting back one week in order to allow the necessary time to prepare for the review of the 2008 & 2009 hunting seasons. Steve and the project leaders provided a review of the preliminary proposals for hunting season rules for 2008 & 2009 as follows:

Kent Gustafson, Deer Project Leader, provided an overview of the Deer Season. (see attached)

Pat Tate, Wildlife Supervisor, provided an overview of the Furbearer Trapping Season. (see attached)

Kristine Rines, Moose Project Leader, provided an overview of the Moose Season. (see attached)

Andy Timmins, Bear Project Leader, provided an overview of the Bear Season. (see attached)

Ted Walski, Turkey Project Leader, provided an overview of the Turkey Season. (see attached)

Karen Bordeau, Pheasant Project Leader, provided an overview of the Pheasant Season. (see attached)

Fred Shepard, Trapper's Association, thanked the Commission for the opportunity to speak and reported that the Trapper's Association would be working with Steve and staff on the proposals.

Buck Mercier, audience member, stated that he felt bear baiting permits could be increased in the North Country. He stated, "A fair number would be 80, not 20".

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

POLICY COMMITTEE: Commissioner T. Hubert, Chair; Commissioners; Nottonson, Kalter, Rowan, and Costa. Commissioner Hubert reported that the committee would be meeting the morning of the February 20, 2008 Commission Meeting at 10:00 a.m., in the Director's Conference Room, to further discuss communication methods amongst the Commission to address emergency issues, such as legislation.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE: Commissioner S. Guaraldi, Chair; Commissioners Tichy, Carney, and Morse. Commissioner Guaraldi reported on the following legislation:

Commissioner Guaraldi moved to oppose SB-469, allowing fish and game license agents to collect an additional convenience fee, and Commissioner Normandeau seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner Guaraldi moved to oppose SB-476, relative to operation of OHRV's on state highways in Coos County, and Commissioner Carney seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner Guaraldi moved to support HB-1338, as amended, relative to establishing an arboviral illness task force and relative to mosquito control and abatement, and Commissioner Normandeau seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner Guaraldi moved to support a legislative proposal to combine two biennial reports and Commissioner Hubert seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner Guaraldi moved to support a legislative proposal to implement #13 of the audit report, relative to Fish and Game billing for all missions where the Office of the Attorney General concurs the rescued person's reckless or negligent actions created a situation requiring an emergency response, and Commissioner Kalter seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner Guaraldi requested that the committee leave the morning of the February 20, 2008 Commission Meeting open for a potential meeting. She stated that she would send a notice if there was a need to meet.

RIVERS COMMITTEE: Commissioner Morse; Commissioner Morse reported that the committee was charged with developing a long-range management plan for rivers.

LAKES COMMITTEE: Commissioner Kalter; Commissioner Kalter reported that the committee was still active on the HB 710 Study Commission. He reported that the Lakes Management and Rivers Committee had a joint meeting last month and agreed on a draft of the Sustainability Initiative.

REVENUE COMMITTEE: Commissioner Nottonson, Chair; Commissioner Nottonson reported that the committee has been busy with the subject of search and rescue and establishing a level to bill qualifying individuals who were negligent.

COMMISSIONERS REPORTS:

COMMISSIONER HUBERT: Commissioner Hubert reported that he had little phone activity. He reported that he attended Commissioner Phillipson's follow up meeting regarding the volunteer pheasant program in Keene. He further reported that he has spent a great deal of time recently reviewing the performance audit.

COMMISSIONER KALTER: Commissioner Kalter reported that he recently had a liaison meeting. He stated that he hoped to use the pheasant volunteer stocking program as a model to develop a similar program for fish stocking.

COMMISSIONER NORMANDEAU: Commissioner Normandeau had no comments at the time.

COMMISSIONER CARNEY: Commissioner Carney reported that he received a few calls relative to the beaver season. He further reported that he received a call from a single mother wanting to attend the winter Becoming an Outdoor Woman program, however, did not have the \$50.00 to attend. Colonel Gray graciously stated that he would be happy to sponsor the woman and asked Commissioner Carney to provide him with the necessary contact information. The Commission thanked Colonel Gray for his kind gesture.

COMMISSIONER MORSE: Commissioner Morse reported that he attended a meeting of the Deering Fish and Game. He further reported that he attended Commissioner Phillipson's follow-up meeting regarding the volunteer pheasant program.

COMMISSIONER COSTA: Commissioner Costa was absent, therefore, no report.

COMMISSIONER GUARALDI: Commissioner Guaraldi reported that she attended a meeting with the Enfield Outing Club, who would like to schedule an event where Fish and Game brings staff to discuss issues of concern.

COMMISSIONER ROWAN: Commissioner Rowan reported that he also received calls relative to the beaver season. He reported that he recently visited sporting good shops and talked with ice-fishermen and snowmobilers. He stated that he was questioned why New Hampshire could not come up with a 5-day registration for OHRV's, for people who do not visit but only once a year for the fishing derby. He further reported that he attended a houndsmen meeting in Ossipee.

COMMISSIONER NOTTONSON: Commissioner Nottonson stated that things have been quiet.

COMMISSIONER TICHY: Commissioner Tichy reported that a truck recently went through the ice in Milan, New Hampshire. He stressed how important education is and for people to take the proper steps to determine whether ice is safe. He reported that he received a few calls regarding ice-fishing and the hare season.

COMMISSIONER PHILLIPSON: Commissioner Phillipson reported that he held a follow-up meeting in Keene regarding the volunteer pheasant-stocking season. He thanked Commissioner Hubert and Morse, Director Clarke, Mark Ellingwood, Ted Walski, and Chuck Miner for attending the meeting.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Acting Director Clarke reported that he has been spending much of his time responding to the audit. He reported that he has been conducting meetings to try to develop a plan to track the status of audit changes.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

There were no public comments.

At this time, 5:50 p.m., Commissioner Hubert moved to adjourn and Commissioner Nottonson seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Respectfully submitted,

Patti Costa, Secretary

Approved: _____
Robert Phillipson, Chairman

Date: _____