

NEW HAMPSHIRE FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT

FEBRUARY 14, 2018 COMMISSION MEETING

Meeting Location: NH Fish & Game Department, 11 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH 03301.

Commissioners Present: E. Stohl, R. Phillipson, T. Baldwin, E. Millette, B. Carr, W. Morse, B. Temple, C. Hodgdon, F. Clews, D. Patch & J. Ryan

Commissioners absent/excused:

Executive Director Normandeau – Present

Chairman Phillipson called the meeting to order at 1:00 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 by the chairman, the public may speak on any item on the agenda. The Chair reserves the right to limit comment to the extent necessary for the orderly conduct of the meeting.

ACTION ITEMS:

1.) Commissioner Stohl moved to approve the January 17, 2018 Commission Minutes as written, and Morse seconded. The motion was unanimous in the affirmative.

2.) Consent Agenda - The following items were grouped together and were noticed as consent agenda items to expedite action on routine matters, which may not require public discussion. The Commission voted to approve these matters as presented. Commission members may remove certain items if further public input or discussion is deemed necessary.

Commissioner Carr moved to approve the below consent agenda items as presented and Commissioner Patch seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

2a.) Commission accepted the below donations totaling \$625.00, made to the Aquatic Education Program:

David & Grace Mann, Merrimack, NH -	\$500.00
Elise Howe, Center Barnstead, NH -	\$ 75.00
David Detscher, Meredith, NH -	<u>\$ 50.00</u>
	\$625.00

2b.) Commission accepted the donation of a walleye fish mount from Mary Johns, Concord, NH, to be displayed at the Region 4 Fish & Game Office in Keene, NH.

2c.) Commission accepted the donation of \$100.00 from Gerald Flanders, Amherst, NH, made to the Hunter Education Program, in memory of Ed “Duke” Rasckiewicz.

2d.) Commission accepted the following donations totaling \$135.00, in memory of Steven

Courchesne, made to the Let's Go Fishing Program:

Gloria & Penn Schooley, Milford, NH -	\$ 35.00
Pennichuck Water, Merrimack, NH -	<u>\$100.00</u>
	\$135.00

2e.) Commission accepted the donation of \$1.00 from Gregory Duggan, Free Spirit Bass Masters, Pelham, NH, to be utilized by the Inland Fisheries Division.

3.) Mark Ellingwood, Chief, Wildlife Division & Game Project Leaders came before the Commission seeking approval of the adoption of the Department's initial rulemaking proposals per below (see attached for full proposals).

Deer

Dan Bergeron, Deer Project Leader, presented the deer season proposals to the Commission.

Commissioner Morse moved to approve part 1 of the deer proposals as presented and Commissioner Patch seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner Patch moved to approve part 2 of the deer proposals as presented and Commissioner Stohl seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Moose

Kris Rines, Moose Project Leader, presented the Moose season proposal to the Commission.

Commissioner Morse moved to approve the moose season proposal as presented and Commissioner Carr seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Bear

Andy Timmins, Bear Project Leader, presented the bear season proposals to the Commission.

Commissioner Baldwin moved to approve the bear season proposals as presented and Commissioner Carr seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Turkey

Ted Walski, Turkey Project Leader, presented the turkey season proposal to the Commission.

Commissioner Stohl inquired as to why there was no fall turkey season offered in units A&B?

Ted advised that the game management team does not believe that there are enough turkeys in those units to sustain a more liberal harvest.

Commissioner Patch moved to approve the turkey season proposal as presented and Commissioner Morse seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Furbearer

Pat Tate, Furbearer Project Leader, presented the furbearer proposals to the Commission.

Pat reported that the department has been finding distemper in the fisher & fox population. He reported that the department has been working with The University of New Hampshire to get a better understanding of the situation. He stated, "Before people blame trapping pressure alone for the decline, they should know that national inputs affect populations on the landscape."

Chairman Phillipson inquired as to the fox & fisher population having distemper. He inquired as to how many animals were tested for distemper. Pat reported that up to 18 fisher were tested. He reported that he did not have the results back yet. Pat reported that it cost approximately \$200.00 per animal for testing. He further reported that the University of New Hampshire has secured a grant to assist with testing fisher.

Commissioner Stohl moved to approve the furbearer proposals as presented and Commissioner Clews seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Pheasant & Small Game

Karen Bordeau, Pheasant & Small Game Project Leader, presented the pheasant & small game proposals to the Commission.

Commissioner Carr moved to approve the pheasant & small game proposals as presented and Commissioner Patch seconded. The vote carried with 9 in favor, 1 opposed (E. Stohl).

Commissioner Stohl stated, "I am not comfortable with live trapping."

Other Proposals

Kent Gustafson, Wildlife Program Supervisor, presented additional wildlife proposals to the Commission.

Commissioner Baldwin moved to approve the additional wildlife proposals as presented and Commissioner Millette seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

The public hearings for the biennial wildlife rulemaking proposals will take place at **6:30 p.m.**, on the following dates:

March 30, 2018 – Region 1 Fish & Game Office, 629B Main Street, Lancaster, NH

April 2, 2018 – Keene High School, 43 Arch St, Keene, NH (LGIA Room)

April 3, 2018 – NH Fish & Game Department, 11 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH

INFORMATION ITEMS:

- 1.) Director Normandeau reviewed the monthly financial statement dated January 31, 2018.
- 2.) Dwayne Blow, representing National Hunt of a Lifetime, a nonprofit organization with a mission to grant hunting and fishing dreams for children who have been diagnosed with life threatening illnesses, came before the Commission and provided a brief overview of the program and what it has to offer.

Dwayne reported that New Hampshire was the only State that requires the NH tag be utilized only by a resident of New Hampshire. Dwayne reported that Hunt of a Lifetime has put approximately 1,005 kids through the program. He stated, "Let us open that door and welcome some other child to this State."

Commissioner Stohl stated, "Thank you for coming. Several years ago I co-sponsored the Hunt of a Lifetime bill. I do recall that the verbiage in that bill required that it be a child from New Hampshire. National Hunt of a Lifetime was thrilled and thought it was a great idea and applauded Representative L'Heureux. Are you now changing your ideas on that?"

Dwayne responded that he was just looking to open up an opportunity for other children; as well.

Commissioner Carr stated that he read the statute to mean it was a requirement that it be a New Hampshire tag, not a national tag. He stated, "We are bound by legislation and we cannot change that today."

Representative L'Heureux, audience member, spoke to the fact that he sponsored HB-1527, establishing the Hunt of a Lifetime. He reported that has been a State Representative for 22 years and on the Fish & Game Committee for 22 years as well, having been Chairman & Vice Chairman at some point. He stated, "This legislation was mine. I was the prime sponsor of the bill in 2007 and Commissioner Stohl was the co-sponsor, along with former Commissioner Greco." He reported that this came about when the Make a Wish Foundation no longer sponsored hunts. He reported that with the cooperation of former Division Chief, Steve Weber, who contacted various organizations to see who would & could administer the program, Steve found the Hunt of a Lifetime, a very fine organization. He reported that Tina Patterson, Hunt of a Lifetime Representative, came to New Hampshire and met with Fish & Game staff and ironed out the details of the proposal/permit. He reported that the major requirement of the bill was that the permit only be used for a New Hampshire resident child, 21 and under, terminally or seriously ill.

Representative L'Heureux encouraged the Commission to keep the bill the way it is. Buck Mercier, audience member, stated, "Keep it like it is, there is no way like the New Hampshire way!"

STANDING COMMITTEES:

POLICY COMMITTEE: Commissioner Clews, Chair: Commissioners Carr & Millette. Commissioner Clews reported that the committee did not meet.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE: Commissioner Morse, Chair; Commissioners Stohl, Hodgdon, Patch, & Baldwin.

Commissioner Morse reported that the committee did not meet.

Paul Sanderson, Legal Coordinator, reported that the department was working with Senator Waters, sponsor of SB-451, relative to wildlife trafficking, and reported that there would be a substantial amendment to the bill, as they are addressing the Commissions concerns.

RIVERS COMMITTEE: Commissioner's Ryan & Hodgdon.

LAKES COMMITTEE: Commissioner Clews reported that the committee met last month, however, he was not able to attend the meeting.

HANDBOOK & ORIENTATION COMMITTEE: Commissioner Patch, Chair; Commissioner Carr. Commissioner Patch reported that there would be a meeting in the near future with an update for the handbook.

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE: Committee is sunset at this point.

WILDLIFE HERITAGE FOUNDATION: Commissioner Hodgdon reported that there was no meeting.

AWARDS COMMITTEE: Commissioner's Baldwin, Chair; Commissioners Carr & Millette. Staff members: Nicola Whitley, Chief, Public Affairs Division, Allison Keating, Federal Aid Program Specialist, Jim Oehler, Habitat Biologist, and Colonel Kevin Jordan, Chief, Law Enforcement Division.

Commissioner Carr reported that the committee met the morning of the February 14, 2018, Commission Meeting to review Commission Award Nominations. Selections were made for the 2017 Commission Awards of Excellence and the list of winners was distributed to the full Commission for a vote.

Commissioner Baldwin moved to approve the 2017 Commission Awards of Excellence recipients as presented and Commissioner Carr seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative. The Commission Awards of Excellence will be presented at the April 18, 2018 Commission Meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS: Commissioner Patch questioned whether there has been discussion as to the reintroduction of the Eastern Cougar.

Director Normandeau reported that the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service has removed the Eastern Cougar from the endangered species list and deemed that sub species extinct. Director Normandeau stated, "I am not aware of anywhere in the country looking to do that."

COMMISSIONERS REPORTS:

COMMISSIONER BALDWIN: Commissioner Baldwin had nothing to report.

COMMISSIONER CARR: Commissioner Carr had nothing to report.

COMMISSIONER TEMPLE: Commissioner Temple had nothing to report.

COMMISSIONER PHILLIPSON: Commissioner Phillipson introduced and welcomed Commissioner Millette, who is replacing former Commissioner McGonagle, representing Belknap County.

Commissioner Millette thanked Commissioner Phillipson and stated, "I'm very enthused and excited, it's humbling and I hope to do a good job!"

COMMISSIONER MORSE: Commissioner Morse had nothing to report.

COMMISSIONER RYAN: Commissioner Ryan had nothing to report.

COMMISSIONER PATCH: Commissioner Patch had nothing to report.

COMMISSIONER MILLETTE: Commissioner Millette had nothing to report.

COMMISSIONER CLEWS: Commissioner Clews reported that he attended a meeting on the seacoast relative to Atlantic Menhaden rules & method of take. He reported that Doug Grout, Chief, Marine Division and Cheri Patterson, Marine Supervisor, would be reviewing data & developing guidelines and will meet again next month.

COMMISSIONER HODGDON: Commissioner Hodgdon had nothing to report.

COMMISSIONER STOHL: Commissioner Stohl had nothing to report.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Director Normandeau reported that he attended the recent funeral of Steve Courchesne, an unfortunate situation. He stated, "We all knew Steve and will miss him and send our sympathy & our best to his wife, Karen."

He reported that air guns have been discussed a lot lately. He reported that he and members of the House Fish & Game Committee visited Sig Sauer and enjoyed some air rifle shooting. He stated, "It should be interesting to see how things develop".

He further reported that he attended a meeting of the Sunapee Commission the morning of the Commission Meeting, as it relates to the Wild Goose boat access site. He reported that when he left the meeting things were still ongoing and without resolution. He stated, "It's safe to say, there remains to be a division of opinion as to what should happen with that site."

He reported that the President's budget would greatly affect the department's marine finances, in addition to cutting in half the state wildlife grants the department receives for the nongame program, etc.,

In closing, he reported that he would be attending the North American Wildlife & Natural Resource Conference, where there is a great deal of interaction with federal agencies. He stated, "I expect by then some of this may be sorted out and we may know what the future may bring on the federal side of things."

Director Normandeau reported that Paul Sanderson, Legal Coordinator, has done an outstanding job over at the legislature. He stated, "It's been rather smooth this far."

CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

Jason Smith, Chief, Inland Fisheries, invited the Commission to attend a public informational hearing tonight, the evening of the Commission Meeting, at 6:00 p.m., to review the bass tournament process.

Mark Ellingwood informed the Commission that he would be bringing forward an Action Item at the March 14, 2018 Commission Meeting, to request to expend \$6,900 to fund a Bear Tech position.

An audience member voiced concerns over outbursts made at the last Commission Meeting by other attendees. It was expressed that everyone should be respectful and refrain from name calling.

At this time, 3:31 p.m., Commissioner Morse moved to adjourn and Commissioner Carr seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Respectfully submitted,

Barry Carr, Secretary

Approved: _____
Robert Phillipson, Chairman