

# NEW HAMPSHIRE FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT

## AUGUST 14, 2019 COMMISSION MEETING

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

Commissioners Present: R. Phillipson, F. Bird, P. DeBow, P. McInnis, R. Green, B. Temple C. Luppi, M. Lachance, C. Hodgdon & E. Stohl.

Commissioners absent/excused: D. Patch

Executive Director Normandeau – Present

Chairman Phillipson called the meeting to order at 1:02 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.

Chairman Phillipson introduced and welcomed 2 newly appointed Commissioners, Paul DeBow, representing Grafton County, and Fred Bird, representing Strafford County.

### ACTION ITEMS:

1.) Commissioner McInnis moved to approve the June 12, 2019 Commission Minutes and Commissioner Green seconded. The vote 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 Hodgdon moved to approve the consent agenda items 2a.-2i., as presented below, and Commissioner Temple seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

2a.) The Commission accepted the following donations in memory of John D. Grace, Jr., of Hudson, NH, totaling \$690.00, to be deposited into the Small Gifts & Donations Account:

Jim & Teresa DeWitt, Syracuse, NY -	\$ 25.00
Tamposi Foundation, Inc., Nashua, NH -	\$250.00
Katherine Canady, Marco Island, FL -	\$ 50.00
Brian Myrick, Acton, MA -	\$ 50.00
Tom Morin & Friends at Morin, Hollis, NH -	\$ 50.00
Scrap Metals, Inc., Nashua, NH -	\$100.00
Candace Allard, Satellite Beach, FL -	\$ 25.00
Brox Family & Brox Industries, Dracut, MA -	\$100.00
Kevin & Dianne Slattery (Etchstone Properties), Nashua, NH -	<u>\$ 40.00</u>
Total:	\$690.00

2b.) Commission accepted a donation in the amount of \$10.00 in memory of David Robinson, Sr., North Woodstock, NH, from Ruth & Suzan Ballmer, North Woodstock, NH, to be deposited into the Small Gifts & Donations Account.

2c.) Commission accepted the following donations totaling \$875.00, made to the Let's Go Fishing Program:

Colleen Giambarrezi, Newton, NH -	\$100.00
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Donations made in memory of David Lanctot, of Manchester, NH.

Carolyn Fiori, Dracut, MA -	\$ 25.00
Brian & Michelle Tyler, Manchester, NH -	\$ 25.00
David Odell, Hampden, ME -	\$100.00
Robert & Eleanor Chapman, Weare, NH -	\$ 50.00
Roger & Louise Lanctot, Kittery Point, ME -	\$500.00

Donations made in memory of Ray Angers, Contoocook, NH.

Michele Angers & Tom Dooley, Contoocook, NH -	<u>\$ 75.00</u>
Total:	\$875.00

2d.) Commission accepted the following donations totaling \$170.00, in memory of David Ellis, Jr., Troy, NH, to be utilized by the Hunter Education Program:

William & Kim Chaffee, Troy, NH -	\$ 50.00
Surell Accessories, Inc., Troy, NH -	\$100.00
Norman Hart, Weston, VT -	<u>\$ 20.00</u>
Total:	\$170.00

2e.) Commission accepted a donation in the amount of \$50.00 from Robert & Sandra Barry, Bow, NH, to be utilized by Barry Conservation Camp.

2f.) Commission accepted a donation in the amount of \$9.00 from Neil Nicholson, Northwood, NH, to be utilized by the Inland Fisheries Division. (Mr. Nicholson overpaid his OHRV registration and chose to donate the remainder to the Inland Fisheries Division).

2g.) Commission accepted a donation in the amount of \$200.00 from Scott & Leann Johnson, North Richland Hills, TX, in memory of Lieutenant Scott LaCrosse, who passed away on April 2, 2019, to be utilized by the Search & Rescue Equipment Account.

2h.) Commission accepted a donation in the amount of \$1,000 from Ms. Janis Dietz, Reading, MA, to be utilized by the Search & Rescue Team for training and equipment purchases.

2i.) Commission accepted a donation in the amount of \$250.00 from Ashish Shah, North Andover, MA, for assistance he received after becoming disoriented and lost while hiking, to be deposited into the Search & Rescue Account.

## **INFORMATION ITEMS:**

- 1.) Director Normandeau reviewed the financial statement dated June 30, 2019.
- 2.) Mark Ellingwood, Chief, Wildlife Division, came before the Commission to provide additional data, as requested by the Commission, such as cost, practicality, etc., relative to the petition submitted by the Voices of Wildlife, requesting that the Department establish rules requiring coyote hunters to submit an annual mandatory report, summarizing certain information regarding all coyotes taken while hunting.

Mark reported that after review of the proposal by Wildlife Division staff members, the conclusion was made that the proposal does not meet the typical standards of biological data collection that the department adheres to. He reported that the proposal is essentially a voluntary proposal, as there is no ability to affectively enforce the requirement from an undesignated component of our constituencies to submit a report card. As a consequence, the harvest tally would fail to provide the department with meaningful biological data. He stated that the information the petition is requesting be reported could reflect on the extent and timing of coyote harvest by coyote hunters. He further reported that more typically, the Wildlife Division accesses population status with certain criteria in mind. He stated, "If we were looking for that kind of input, there would be a requirement that animals be registered and sealed".

Commissioner McInnis asked to get some input & direction from Paul Sanderson, Legal Coordinator.

At this time, Paul Sanderson advised the Commission that now that they have sought information from the Wildlife Division, their obligation is to respond in writing to address the petition. He stated, "You will need to build a record to write a letter to the Voices of Wildlife describing the action you took." He informed them that they would need to provide specific reasons as to why or why not to go forward with rulemaking.

Commissioner Green moved to go forward in addressing the petition and Commissioner Stohl seconded.

Much discussion ensued.

Commissioner Green stated, "I have taken all thoughts into consideration. I do not feel that the way the petition is written will provide us with any valuable data."

A vote was taken on the above motion and was unanimous in the affirmative to move forward in addressing the Voices of Wildlife's petition.

Commissioner Luppi thanked Mark Ellingwood and staff for putting such extensive data together to help the Commission make an informed decision.

At this time, Commissioner Stohl moved to deny an action requested in the petition, supported by the information submitted by Director Normandeau and the Wildlife Division, and Commissioner Green seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner Stohl stated, “There is plenty of data in this package and reasons as to why what The Voices of Wildlife are requesting wouldn’t work.” He reported that Commission Hodgdon questioned whether the trappers report provides accurate data on coyote and was told, in fact, that it does. He stated, “We have plenty of data on coyote to deny any further action.”

3.) Jason Smith, Chief, Inland Fisheries Division, came back before the Commission with an overview of a future action item, requesting a donation from the Fisheries Habitat Account to conserve 256 acres along the Ammonoosuc River in Bethlehem, NH.

Jason reported that the Department owns an access site about ½ mile to the east of the property that anglers currently use and that this project would significantly expand angler access to fishing opportunities in the Ammonoosuc River. He further reported that this opportunity is a unique one and reported that account has approximately \$1,000,000,000, 1,000,000 in the account, for use in this type of project, if Commission so desired.

Tom Howe, Senior Director, Society for the Protection of NH Forests, reported that the property is appraised at \$780,000. He reported that \$560,000 is required to purchase the property, with approximately \$170,000 to cover additional conservation easement costs.

Much discussion ensued.

Potential restriction concerns on the property were discussed and addressed.

Commissioner Green inquired as to whether the Commission could visit the property. They were told they could visit the property after making arrangements with Andy Smith, of Peabody & Smith Realty.

Chairman Phillipson thanked Jason and Tom for the presentation.

On behalf of the Commission, Chairman Phillipson thanked and congratulated Kent Gustafson, Biometrician/Wildlife Programs Supervisor, for his long term service in the Wildlife Division and wished him well on his retirement from the Fish & Game Department.

### **STANDING COMMITTEES:**

**POLICY COMMITTEE:** Commissioners Luppi, Temple, Lachance & Bird. Tanya reported that the committee did not meet. Chair of this committee to be determined at next Commission Meeting.

**LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE:** Commissioner Stohl, Chair; Commissioners Green, Hodgdon, Patch & DeBow.

Chairman Stohl reported that the committee did not meet.

**RIVERS COMMITTEE:** Commissioner Hodgdon reported that the committee met on August 2, 2019, and reviewed 2 proposals for the sale of State lands. He reported that one proposal consisted of a land swap between the Town of Hopkinton & State of New Hampshire. The Town of Hopkinton would receive just under 30 acres that abut Rte. 127 & Rte. 9, and the State

of New Hampshire would receive just under 100 acres that abut the Mast Yard State Forest. He reported that the committee recommended the property for sale without any limiting recommendations.

He reported that the second proposal was the sale of 87 acres by the Liquor Commission. He reported that the land is currently occupied by the North & Southbound liquor stores, just north of the Taylor River & MA border. He reported that the Liquor Commission would retain ownership of the footprint of the new buildings, with the remaining to be developed for use similar to the Hooksett Plazas. The committee recommended the property for sale with the limitation that upon the completion of the sale that all wetlands be placed in a conservation easement.

**LAKES COMMITTEE:** Commissioner Temple reported that the committee met on July 30, 2019, at the Squam Lakes Association HQ. He reported that it was a very hot day and the committee took a tour of a section of Squam Lake on a pontoon boat and saw some loon nesting areas and discussed the topic of milfoil and what is being done to eradicate the issue. He reported that the next meeting would be in October.

**HANDBOOK & ORIENTATION COMMITTEE:** Commissioner Patch, Chair; Commissioner Green. Commissioner Patch was absent. Tanya reported that the committee did not meet.

**STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE:** Commissioner Hodgdon, Chair: Commissioners Temple, Stohl & DeBow. Commissioner Hodgdon had nothing to report.

**WILDLIFE HERITAGE FOUNDATION:** Commissioner Hodgdon.

**AWARDS COMMITTEE:** Commissioner Luppi, Chair; Commissioners Bird & Lachance. This committee has been sunset.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

**NEW BUSINESS:** Commissioner Green moved to present a Resolution and jacket to past Commissioners Baldwin & Carr and Commissioner Hodgdon seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

### **COMMISSIONERS REPORTS:**

**COMMISSIONER BIRD:** Nothing to report at this time.

**COMMISSIONER DEBOW:** Nothing to report at this time.

**COMMISSIONER TEMPLE:** Commissioner Temple expressed concern over the number of press releases he is seeing relative to Search & Rescue. He stated, "I'm not sure the public is aware of the tremendous efforts & time our Conservation Officers put in making rescues." He inquired if it was possible to have a presentation done at a Commission Meeting with some statistics. Colonel Jordan agreed to do a presentation before the Commission.

**COMMISSIONER PHILLIPSON:** Nothing to report at this time.

**COMMISSIONER GREEN:** Nothing to report at this time.

**COMMISSIONER LACHANCE:** Nothing to report at this time.

**COMMISSIONER HODGDON:** Nothing to report at this time.

**COMMISSIONER LUPPI:** Nothing to report at this time.

**COMMISSIONER PATCH:** Commissioner Patch was absent.

**COMMISSIONER MCINNIS:** Nothing to report at this time.

**COMMISSIONER STOHL:** Nothing to report at this time.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** Director Normandeau introduced Dan Bailey, Wildlife Damage Specialist, Wildlife Services. He reported that Dan has replaced Rob Calvert, former Wildlife Damage Specialist, who recently retired.

Director Normandeau reported that the trailer the Commission recently authorized the Wildlife Division to purchase was parked on the side of the building for viewing if anyone wished to see it.

He further reported that the Wildlife Division has a few vacancies that they are trying to fill due to retirements. He reported that the budget situation has put a crunch on the department in terms of filling other positions, including a few unfunded Conservation Officer positions. He further reported that he was unsure if there would be another Continuing Resolution.

In addition, he announced that the Commission may be traveling off site to hold a Commission Meeting in the near future and that we would keep the website updated relative to that information. He reported that he would provide a budget overview the morning of the off-site Commission Meeting so that new Commissioners can get a feel for how the budget works.

He reported that the access project is underway at Downing's Landing, Alton Bay. He reported that the first step was putting in a coffer dam so work can continue to be done properly in the dry.

**CALL TO THE PUBLIC:**

Bob Switcher, Sullivan, NH, voiced his support for the Voices of Wildlife petition relative to the limiting of hunting during the coyote pup season.

Representative Cathryn Harvey was present at the meeting and voiced her agreement with Commissioner Temple relative to the public's lack of knowledge as it relates to Search & Rescue. She reported that she talked with Colonel Jordan and asked him to provide a presentation before the House Fish, Game & Marine Resources Committee, when they reconvene in January, 2020. She reported that the meeting will be posted and the public is welcome to attend. She further reported that she inquired whether Director Normandeau could arrange for a conservation project presentation before the committee, as well, such as the cottontail project.

In addition, Representative Harvey inquired about a youth award nomination under the Commissioners Awards category. Commissioner Luppi informed her how to obtain the award nomination information on the F&G website and reminded everyone that the submission deadline must be postmarked by December 31, 2019. Commissioner Luppi reported that she had some new ideas on how to better promote the Commission Awards Program.

Representative Harvey further reported that she received a response letter from Commissioner Stewart, Department of Natural & Cultural Resources, relative to the Pisgah State Park Management Plan. She provided Chairman Phillipson with a copy of the letter for his knowledge. She reported that Commissioner Stewart answered all her questions and her constituent's questions, which she was very happy with. She reported that the conclusion was that there would be no reconvening of any committees at this time.

Julia Sinclair, Newmarket, NH, thanked Colonel Jordan for visiting Jim Spillane and educating him on proper behavior. She stated, "I'm sure that wasn't the easiest thing to do." She also thanked Commissioner Green for his "Think Tank" idea that was discussed. She reported that she wasn't directly involved in the discussions, however, loved the idea of him promoting working together, rather than against. Further, she reported that she participates at trail heads in hopes of encouraging hikers to be more responsible. She offered her assistance in any way to assist in education efforts for hiking & rescues.

Kristina Snyder, Chester, NH, reported that there has been some power line work in the area and there has been a great deal of discussion amongst abutters about serious OHRV issues and violations taking place on the power lines. She reported that boulders were placed to block access, however, violators disregard and use the abutter's property to access the area.

Colonel Jordan reported that it was an issue, however, in order for it to be effective Ever source and homeowners would need to testify and have refused to so in the past.

Commissioner Luppi suggested putting up game cameras to catch the offenders ATV information to share with law enforcement.

Brad Watson, NH Trapper's Association, reported that the fall Trappers Rendezvous would be held on August 23rd & 24th at the Belknap County Fairgrounds. He reported that there would be kid's games, demonstrations and a good time had by family & friends!

At this time, 3:45 p.m., Commissioner Stohl moved to adjourn and Commissioner Green seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Respectfully submitted,

Ray Green, Secretary

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Robert Phillipson, Chairman