

**NEW HAMPSHIRE FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT**

**JUNE 8, 2021 COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

Meeting Location: Great Bay Discovery Center, 89 Depot Rd., Greenland, NH

Commissioners Present: J. Caveney, B. Temple, C. Hodgdon, P. DeBow, M. Lachance, D. Patch  
P. McInnis, & R. Green.

Commissioners absent/excused: E. Stohl, & F. Bird

Rockingham County Commissioner – position currently vacant.

Executive Director Mason – Present

Vice Chairman Patch 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 Green moved to approve the May 11, 2021 Commission Minutes, as written, and Commissioner Hodgdon seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.
- 2.) Commissioner Green moved to accept the following donations made to the Hunter Education Program and Commissioner McInnis seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Kearsarge Business Center, Warner, NH -	\$100.00
Ida Kurinkas, Brockton, MA -	\$200.00
Virginia Ladd, Pittsfield, NH (in memory of Paul Carey, Contoocook, NH -	<u>\$100.00</u>
Total:	\$400.00

**INFORMATION ITEMS:**

- 1.) Financial Statement (Director Mason distributed the current financial statement). He reported that it was a very busy time of the year for the Business Division, therefore, Kathy LaBonte would not be attending the Commission Meeting.
- 2.) Marine Division presentations were heard as follows:

**Great Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve:**

Cory Riley, Great Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve Supervisor, gave an overview of the Great Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve. (See attached for full presentation).

Cory reported that the Great Bay Reserve is dedicated to helping New Hampshire citizens enjoy, understand, and protect the Great Bay Estuary so that its benefits may be enjoyed for generations. Established in 1989, we are a place for scientists and decision makers to connect around critical issues, for teachers and students to take science out of the abstract and outside, and for everyone to explore the beauty and wonder of New Hampshire's hidden coast. As part of

the New Hampshire Fish & Game Department, we work with many partners to address urgent, complex problems like how to protect water quality, sustain local fisheries, manage our natural lands, and adapting to a changing climate.

The Great Bay Reserve is a coastal protected area tucked in and among the communities of New Hampshire's Great Bay. The Reserve serves as a platform for long-term research and monitoring programs that study how the bay functions and changes. It is a place where work is done with partners to test, demonstrate, and share effective resource management practices and strategies. There is an outdoor classroom where people of all ages can learn how their actions impact the health of the bay that makes living in this area so special. Through our research, monitoring, stewardship, education, and community outreach programs, we share what we learn at our Reserve with decision makers, educators, students, and citizens throughout New Hampshire. As a member of the National Estuarine Research Reserve System, we work with partners nationwide to protect people and places along America's coasts.

Cory encouraged everyone at the meeting to take some time to tour the grounds & the visitor center.

On behalf of the Commission, Vice Chairman Patch thanked Cory for the presentation and for hosting the Commission Meeting.

**CARES Act Update:**

Cheri Patterson, Chief, Marine Division, provided an update on the CARES Act. (See attached for full presentation).

**NH Aquaculture & Oyster Restoration:**

Robert Atwood, Marine Biologist I, provided an overview of NH Aquaculture & Oyster Restoration. (See attached for full presentation).

3.) Mike Marchand, Nongame Program Supervisor, came before the Commission and provided an overview of the Nongame & Endangered Wildlife Program. (See attached for full presentation).

**STANDING COMMITTEES:**

**POLICY COMMITTEE:** Chair: B. Temple; Commissioners: Lachance & Bird.

Commissioner Temple reported that the committee did not meet.

**LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE:** Commissioner Green, Chair; Commissioners: Hodgdon, Patch & DeBow. Commissioner Green reported that the committee has not met, as the Senate calendar just came out.

**AWARDS COMMITTEE:** Commissioner Lachance, Chair; Commissioners: Bird, & Caveney. Commissioner Lachance reported that the committee did not meet.

**RIVERS COMMITTEE:** Commissioner Hodgdon. Commissioner Hodgdon had nothing to report at this time.

**LAKES COMMITTEE:** Commissioner Temple. Commissioner Temple had nothing to report at this time.

**HANDBOOK & ORIENTATION COMMITTEE:** Commissioner Patch, Chair; Commissioner Green & Caveney. Commissioner Patch reported that all Commissioners should have a copy of the updated Commission Handbook and asked if everyone had an opportunity to review it.

Commissioner Green commented that there was no table of contents that referenced page numbers and would like to see that added. He thanked Heidi Holman, Nongame Wildlife Biologist, for the amount of time & work she contributed to updating the Commission Handbook.

At this time, Commissioner Green moved to approve/adopt the updated Commission Handbook and Commissioner Hodgdon seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

**STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE:** Commissioner Hodgdon, Chair: Commissioners Temple, Stohl & DeBow. Commissioner Hodgdon reported that the Commission was “shrinking down” the number of committees to better align with what the Commission’s statutory duties are. He distributed the attached list of the proposed new committee structure, to include; benefits of updating the committee structure, considerations, current status of Commission participation in multi-agency/multi stakeholder Committees & Organizations, the current statute RSA 206:4-a, and a proposed timeline of committee work to be done through December, 2021. (See attached).

Commissioner Green moved to accept the new committee structure, as presented, and Commissioner Lachance seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

**WILDLIFE HERITAGE FOUNDATION:** Commissioner Hodgdon. Commissioner Hodgdon had nothing to report at the time.

**OLD BUSINESS:** Commissioner Green expressed concerns over the restrictions at the Deering Reservoir, to include a fee for parking for residents only. He stated that he would like to see the department cease stocking that body of water if there is not public access available for all NH residents.

**NEW BUSINESS:** At this time, Commissioner Green moved to hold a July Commission Meeting on the usual 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month, July 13, 2020, and Commissioner Caveney seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner Hodgdon moved to hold the August 10, 2021 Commission Meeting at the Pointer Fish & Game Club in Bedford, NH, and Commissioner DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

**COMMISSIONERS REPORTS:** Commissioners will report on their recent activities as it relates to Fish & Game Commission duties and responsibilities. This is an informational item only.

Commissioner Green reported that he was invited to and attended the “Jakes Day” for kids at the Goffstown Fish & Game Club. He reported that it was a great day and a good time

was had by all 98 kids in attendance. He further reported that he obtained some handouts/supplies from Nicola Whitley, Chief, Public Affairs Division, on short notice and thanked her for doing so.

Commissioner Caveney reported that there was a growing ATV problem in the Southwestern part of the State, with much rogue activity. He further reported that landowners are reaching out to inquire as to what can be done to address the issue. He thanked Director Mason, Colonel Jordan, Captain Eastman, and Lieutenant Boudreau, for taking the time to come and meet with him and have the discussion. In closing he stated, "Since your visit & visible presence, people have been put on notice that they cannot do this or behave like this".

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** The Director will report on recent department activities. This is an information item only.

Director Mason thanked Cheri Patterson, Chief, Marine Division, and staff, for hosting the Commission Meeting and providing informative presentations to the Commission.

He reported that the he has been working on the Hatchery Advisory Committee Technical Report, along with the Environmental Protection Agency and Conservation Law Foundation. He further reported that Tim Buzinski, Chief, Facilities & Lands Division, was also assisting with the Powder Mill Fish Hatchery issues and the general permitting for other hatcheries.

Further, Director Mason reported that 2 candidates were interviewed for the Chief of the Inland Fisheries Division position. He reported that he would keep the Commission updated & inform them once a candidate was selected & has accepted the position.

In addition, he reported that minor revisions were being made to the Wildlife Division Chief position to better reflect the duties/job description. He reported that 3 Supervisors were handling the day to day operations in the Wildlife Division until the position is filled, those being; Dan Bergeron, Game Program Supervisor, Jim Oehler, Habitat Program Supervisor, and Mike Marchand, Nongame Program Supervisor.

He reported that the number of bear complaints this time of year seem to be normal.

In closing, he reported that he met with the Mayor of Berlin to discuss ways to reduce the number of bear conflicts in their community.

**CALL TO THE PUBLIC:**

At this time, 3:57 p.m., Commissioner Green moved to adjourn and Commissioner Hodgdon seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

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Eric Stohl, Chairman  
NH Fish & Game Commission