

NEW HAMPSHIRE FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT

DECEMBER 17, 2008 COMMISSION MEETING

Meeting Location: New Hampshire Fish and Game Department, 11 Hazen Drive, Concord, New Hampshire 03301.

Commissioners Present: J. Ryan, E. Orff, R. Phillipson, M. Kalter R. Rowan, T. Tichy, S. Guaraldi, P. Costa, T. Hubert and W. Morse.

Commissioners absent: none

Coastal Commissioner: vacant

Executive Director Normandeau - present



Chairman Phillipson called the meeting to order at 1:04 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, may speak on any item on the agenda.

ACTION ITEMS:

1.) Commissioner Morse moved to approve the December 17, 2008 Commission minutes as written and Commissioner Ryan seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

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.

Commissioner Hubert moved to approve items 2a-2c as presented below and Commissioner Costa seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

2a.) \$800.00 donation from Ms. Dorothy Blanchard, to be deposited into the Search & Rescue Account.

2b.) \$128.71 donation from Rebekah Blanchard for search and rescue charges, to be deposited into the Search & Rescue Account.

2c.) \$1,172.65 donation from the Lakeview Neurorehabilitation Center for assistance in the recovery of a patient.

3.) Commissioner Kalter moved to approve the expenditure of up to \$20,000 a year for 3 years from the Game Management Account for turkey technical assistance and habitat enhancement and Commissioner Orff seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner Kalter kindly reminded staff of the Commission's policy for a 15-day notice to vote on items \$7,500 or more.

4.) Commissioner Tichy moved to expend funds from the Wildlife Habitat Account on an annual basis to cost share salary and benefit expenses for a Wildlife Management Area Technical position within the Wildlife Division and Commissioner Kalter seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner Tichy suggested having this person work on putting signs on Wildlife Management Areas to help identify them. Steve Weber, Chief, Wildlife Division, responded that putting signs up would be one of the first activities this person is engaged in.

5.) Commissioner Costa moved to expend up to \$2,495 from the Game Management Account to contract services to provide property acquisition packages for transferring properties from The Nature Conservancy to the Fish and Game Department, as a part of the Great Bay Resources Protection Partnership and Commissioner Kalter seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Charlie Bridges, Habitat & Diversity Coordinator, reported that since 1995/1996, the department has acquired over 8,000 acres to date.

6.) After a brief presentation by Emily Brunkhurst, Wildlife Biologist, Commissioner Costa moved to approve the expenditure of \$1,250 from the Game Management Account to support the statewide GIS system and Commissioner Guaraldi seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative. Emily demonstrated how to obtain certain information from GRANIT, the state's GIS program. She explained that this program is used in a wide variety of ways to support land conservation and management programs within the department.

7.) This item was postponed until the January 21, 2008 Commission Meeting.

LATE ACTION ITEM:

1.) Commissioner Costa moved to approve the donation of a ring-necked pheasant mount, to be maintained by the Law Enforcement Division and used for educational purposes and exhibits and Commissioner Ryan seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

INFORMATION ITEMS:

1.) Kathy LaBonte, Chief, Support Services, read the monthly Financial Statement dated November 30, 2008. (See attached statement)

Information Items 2 & 3 were heard out of sequence.

3.) Kent Gustafson, Deer Project Leader, reported that department staff attended a meeting in July 2008 with landowners of Governor's Island to discuss some of the options to address the deer population on the island. He reported that the department proposed to institute a hunt, similar to the one on Long Island, by proposing a special deer permit. Kent stated that the proposal would be moving forward to rulemaking in the near future.

4.) Steve Perry, Chief, Inland Fisheries Division, provided a presentation, including a 3 part video regarding "Changing Times". The video discussed staying relevant during the 21st century. He stated that the department's challenge was to increase its capacity to adapt to change so it can effectively fulfill its purpose. He provided statistics and keys to the challenges, such as; establishing a clear identity, opening information & communication pathways, and developing strong relationships. Further, he discussed the need to look at the long-term direction of the Department and assess and establish priorities. He stated that requirements for change involve leadership, sacrifice, dedication, and creativity. Steve stated, "Creating change is extremely difficult; nevertheless, isn't it our obligation to set the stage that allows future generations to fully enjoy all the benefits New Hampshire's wildlife resources provide?"

In addition, he stated that a crucial first step was a commitment by the Fish and Game Commission to provide policy guidance intended to increase the Fish and Game Department's capacity to adapt to change so it will continue to effectively fulfill its purpose. He provided a draft copy of a resolution/policy entitled, "Adapting to Change". The policy read as follows:

Whereas, New Hampshire's wildlife resources are deeply ingrained in its rich heritage and are highly valued by both the State's residents and its visitors; and,

Whereas, there is a need to have a fully functional state agency focused on sustaining the health of New Hampshire's wildlife resources for the benefits they provide to all; and,

Whereas, an organization has to be adaptive and resilient, rather than rigid and resistant, if it wants to remain viable in a fast paced world where change is the new norm; and,

Whereas, the presence of a clear identity makes an organization less vulnerable to shifts in its environment since it provides the basis for deciding how the organization will respond to change; and

Whereas, open communication and exchange of information is crucial to an organization's ability to gain a comprehensive understanding of the issues, thereby allowing it to be better positioned to respond to the relevant impacts; and,

Whereas, the strength of an organization is determined by its capacity to work within a broad network of inter-dependent relationships because it forms the basis for connecting with people;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Fish and Game Commission directs by policy that the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department facilitate, and engage in, processes that: 1) develops a clear identity for the agency; 2) creates greater access to information and reduces those functions that restrict its flow; 3) builds support by fostering strong relationships

among diverse groups; 4) establishes a set of shared values within the agency; and 5) embraces inclusive participation in management decisions.

Steve stated that it would be beneficial for a member of the Commission to serve on the “Guiding Coalition Team”. He reported that the team currently consists of the Executive Director and 6 Division Chiefs. Director Normandeau scheduled the Management Assistance Team to provide a workshop at Fish and Game Headquarters in late March. Steve stated that there would be an opportunity for 3 members of the Commission to participate in that workshop.

Director Normandeau reported that a topic of discussion at the recent Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Meeting was, “Where fish and wildlife is going”. The discussion was relative to how fast times are changing and how to preserve things. He reported that Steve Perry attended a meeting that explored deeper into the issue. He stated that the workshop along with the audit recommendations lead to reaching out to the Management Assistance Team. He stated that it was clear that this was the last biennium the department could survive at the rate things are going. He stated that we would be spending 2 million dollars more in unrestricted revenues a year than the department is taking in. He assured everyone that the department is taking action to see it does not result that way. He spoke for the need to expand the department’s customer base, get people involved that have not been involved, and learn what we do and its value to them. He estimated there was approximately 2 ½ years to accomplish this goal. Director Normandeau reported that the training would take place on March 25th & 26th.

Commissioner Rowan reported that the Commission’s Handbook Committee met last week and Director Normandeau informed the group of what this workshop entailed. He reported that the committee got a more in depth overview from Steve Perry and agreed it was parallel to what the Handbook Committee proposes to implement. Commissioner Rowan proposed that the draft resolution be reviewed by the Policy Committee, edited if necessary, then be presented before the Commission for a vote at the January 21, 2008 Meeting. The Chairman referred the resolution to the Policy Committee for review.

Commissioner Kalter volunteered to serve on the “Guiding Coalition Team” with the Director and Division Chiefs.

STANDING COMMITTEES:

POLICY COMMITTEE: Commissioner T. Hubert, Chair; Commissioners; Kalter, Orff, Costa, and Ryan. Commissioner Hubert reported that there was a brief joint meeting of the Policy and Handbook Committees to discuss the Free-Flowing Stream Policy. He reported that the group drafted some amended language based on language Steve Perry provided. Commissioner Hubert reported that it would be distributed to Division Chiefs and the Executive Director for review and comment. He further reported that the committee continues to work on the handbook regarding Commission policies and are in the process of categorizing them. In closing, he asked that any Commissioner that had comments on the proposed resolutions to contact him by the next meeting.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE: Commissioner Guaraldi, Chair; Commissioners Tichy, Rowan and Morse. Commissioner Guaraldi reported that the committee met the morning of the Commission Meeting.

Commissioner Guaraldi moved to support amending RSA 214-A:4, proposal by the New Hampshire Snowmobile Association to increase the fee for snowmobile registrations and Commissioner Morse seconded. The vote carried with 8 in favor and 1 opposed. (T. Tichy)

Commissioner Guaraldi moved to support amending RSA 210:9, relative to beaver pipes or fences and Commissioner Rowan seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

She distributed a list of LSR's being monitored to Commissioners and stated that there would be a Legislative Meeting the morning of the January Commission Meeting, time to be announced.

RIVERS COMMITTEE: Commissioner Morse; Commissioner Morse reported that the committee met on December 15, 2008 to discuss items coming up with the legislature. He stated that the next meeting would take place on January 9, 2009.

LAKES COMMITTEE: Commissioner Kalter; Commissioner Kalter reported that the committee met in November and would be meeting every other month. He reported that the committee reviewed the public input received relative to the Coordinated Lakes Management Shore Protection Plan Guidebook. He stated that generally the review was favorable, with some recommendations regarding examples and some additional guidelines pertaining to how to go actually go about it. Further, he reported that the document was available on the Department of Environmental Services website. In closing, he reported that work is ongoing for a management plan for the Ossipee Natural Area and the Surface Water Sustainability Initiative.

HANDBOOK COMMITTEE: Commissioner Rowan, Chair; Commissioner's Kalter and Orff. Commissioner Rowan reported that he already addressed the handbook report prior in the meeting and had nothing to add at this time.

OLD BUSINESS:

Commissioner Guaraldi reminded the Commission that the deadline was approaching for the Commission Awards of Excellence. She stated that all nominations must be postmarked by December 31, 2008.

COMMISSIONERS REPORTS:

COMMISSIONER HUBERT: Commissioner Hubert reported that he received calls regarding a local Wal-Mart and the concern for non-residents being unable to purchase licenses because they did not have a previous state license number. Much discussion ensued. Several other Commissioner's reported receiving similar complaints from constituents with Wal-Mart concerns. In closing, he reported that his Mother was doing well after heart surgery and thanked everyone for the well wishes.

COMMISSIONER KALTER: Commissioner Kalter reported that he attended the informational meeting regarding the pending saltwater license legislation that is coming forward and the marine guide proposal. He reported that he attended the Advisory Committee on Marine Fisheries and stated that the JEA video was well received by that group.

COMMISSIONER ORFF: Commissioner Orff reported that he attended the Wildlife Federation Meeting, NH Trapper's Association Meeting, and the Guide's Association Banquet.

COMMISSIONER COSTA: Commissioner Costa reported that she received the usual deer calls this month. She reported that she distributed a new Treasure's Report to the Commission. In closing, she reported that she would be attending Denise Richard's Retirement Party on December 19, 2008.

COMMISSIONER GUARALDI: Commissioner Guaraldi reported that she received a few deer calls this month and recently attended the Wildlife Federation Banquet.

COMMISSIONER ROWAN: Commissioner Rowan reported that he received calls relative to the low deer take in Carroll County.

COMMISSIONER MORSE: Commissioner Morse reported he received the routine calls this month. He reported that one caller questioned the new regulations in the fishing digest.

COMMISSIONER RYAN: Commissioner Ryan reported that he received deer calls as well. He reported that he attended the Marine Advisory Meeting and the Handbook Committee Meeting. He reported that the ramp at Lucas Pond in Northwood was in need of repair.

COMMISSIONER TICHY: Commissioner Tichy reported that at his December 8, 2008 liaison meeting constituents were upset about the deer season. He received complaints that the check stations were not getting much business and that people do not like the antler restriction. He reported that the people that pushed for the restriction were very happy. Further, he stated that there was discussion for the potential of a Youth/Adult License offered at a reduced rate, targeted for people between the ages of 16-21 and are still in school. He stated that this might enhance license sales with young adults. He stated that he would like to see some clarification relative to assisting a youth after an adult has taken deer. Colonel Garabedian clarified that an adult could assist a youth (under 16 years of age) without a weapon, if adult has already taken a deer. In closing, he reported that there was discussion for extending the archery season until the end of the year, which would allow an extra 2 weeks in Unit M.

COMMISSIONER PHILLIPSON: Commissioner Phillipson reported that calls have slowed down. He reported that his last liaison meeting was not well attended due to a large number of power outages.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS: Director Normandeau reported that he signed the wetlands application for the Sunapee Boat Access Project and would be delivering them to the Town Office tomorrow, with a copy to the Lake Sunapee Protection Association. He further reported that there was a meeting with Outdoor Central, the company that handles the department's online

licensing. He stated, "Together we are working to insure things are running efficiently". He reported that other agencies, such as the Department of Resources and Economic Development and the Department of Agriculture were involved in the meeting as well to determine whether Outdoor Central could assist their agencies as well with fire permits, campground reservations, etc.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

No public comments.

At this time, 3:37 p.m., Commissioner Orff moved to adjourn and Commissioner Costa seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Respectfully submitted,

Patti Costa, Secretary

Approved: _____
Robert Phillipson, Chairman

Date: _____