

NEW HAMPSHIRE FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT

JANUARY 17, 2018 COMMISSION MEETING

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

Commissioners Present: E. Stohl, R. Phillipson, T. Baldwin, J. McGonagle, B. Carr, W. Morse, B. Temple, & C. Hodgdon

Commissioners absent/excused: F. Clews, D. Patch & J. Ryan.

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, 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.

He welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Commissioner Stohl, representing Coos County, Commissioner Hodgdon, representing Merrimack County, and Commissioner Temple, representing Sullivan County.

ACTION ITEMS:

1.) Commissioner McGonagle moved to approve the December 13, 2017 Commission Minutes as written, and Commissioner Baldwin seconded. The motion was unanimous in the affirmative.

INFORMATION ITEMS:

1.) Kathy LaBonte, Chief, Business Division, reviewed the monthly financial statement dated December 31, 2017. She also reviewed the 2nd quarter FY'18 Commission Expense to Budget Report dated December 31, 2017.

2.) Mark Ellingwood, Chief, Wildlife Division, came before the Commission and presented the Game Management team's draft wildlife rulemaking proposals (see attached).

After listening to all the proposals, Commissioner Stohl moved to remove the eastern coyote proposal from consideration in this proceeding and Commissioner Carr seconded.

The coyote proposal would have closed the coyote hunting season during the period of April 1 – July 14.

Much discussion ensued.

Commissioner Stohl stated, "The protection of coyotes could negatively impact deer because the packs take fawns as they are born."

Commissioner Carr stated, "I have to reject the petition with no supporting data."

Commissioner Temple stated, "We need more data on the subject."

Commissioner McGonagle stated, "Success for deer means the current system works."

Director Normandeau stated, "This is a social issue, not a biological one."

Commissioner Baldwin stated that he would like a study to better understand the population.

The motion on the table was unanimous in the affirmative.

To address expiring rules, Commissioner McGonagle moved to readopt Fis. 300 & Fis. 1100 without change, and Commissioner Morse seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

STANDING COMMITTEES:

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

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

Paul Sanderson, Legal Coordinator, reviewed the attached legislation with the Commission. No action was taken. (See attached)

RIVERS COMMITTEE: Commissioner's Ryan & Hodgdon. Commissioner Ryan was absent, therefore, no report this month.

LAKES COMMITTEE: Commissioner Clews was absent, therefore, no report this month.

HANDBOOK & ORIENTATION COMMITTEE: Commissioner Patch, Chair; Commissioner Carr. Commissioner Patch was absent from the meeting, therefore, Commissioner Carr reported that there was no meeting this month.

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 & Carr. Nicola Whitley, Chief, Public Affairs Division, will also be joining the committee, replacing Jon Charpentier, former Public Affairs Division Chief. Chairman Phillipson reported that there was no meeting, however,

reported that the committee would be meeting the morning of the February 14, 2018, Commission Meeting to review Commission Award Nominations.

OLD BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS: Commissioner Carr inquired as to the how the Hunt of a Lifetime works. This hunt is typically offered to a terminally ill child in New Hampshire. He reported that New Hampshire was the only State that does not allow a non-resident to fill that tag if there is nobody from New Hampshire available. Director Normandeau reported that Representative L'Heureux was the initial prime sponsor of this bill and has testified against allowing other states to apply.

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 felt that the Youth Muzzleloader language in the hunting digest needed clarification as it pertains to tag and license requirements.

Commissioner Phillipson thanked Commissioner McGonagle for his service on the Commission and serving on various committees. He thanked him for securing over \$10,000 in materials for upgrades to Barry Conservation Camp. He stated, "John was always willing to help out in any way he could and was a great asset to the Commission."

COMMISSIONER MORSE: Commissioner Morse had nothing to report.

COMMISSIONER RYAN: Commissioner Ryan was absent from the meeting.

COMMISSIONER PATCH: Commissioner Patch was absent from the meeting.

COMMISSIONER MCGONAGLE: Commissioner McGonagle had nothing to report.

COMMISSIONER CLEWS: Commissioner Clews was absent from the meeting.

COMMISSIONER HODGDON: Commissioner Hodgdon had nothing to report.

COMMISSIONER STOHL: Commissioner Stohl had nothing to report.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Director Normandeau reported that Tanya placed Financial Disclosure Forms in front of all Commissioners. He asked that Commissioners fill them out today so she can get them to the Secretary of State by the January 19, 2018 deadline.

He reported that the legislature is in session and that he has been spending time over there addressing numerous bills.

He further reported that Representative Hansen has a bill in to help secure the funding for the Sunapee Boat Access Proposal. Director Normandeau is a member of the Sunapee Commission, who's looking at alternative sites, etc., he stated, "I'm not sure where that will go."

CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

Lindsay Hamrick, NH State Director, Humane Society of the United States, spoke to protocol questions. She inquired as to what the Commission's responsibility was as it pertains to being petitioned by the public to consider opening up rulemaking & to read the comments received.

Paul Sanderson, Legal Coordinator, responded that the comments were compiled for the Commission and they were universally supportive of the petition & the request. "We reported that to the Commission."

She inquired as to how many comments were received.

Paul responded that the Department received 124 comments.

Lindsay stated, "It sounds like the reasoning to not open public hearings on the issue is that there is no research or data to support what's been asked. In our 4 page comments, we had no less than 16 research references on coyote biology. I have concerns about the process, as the Commission did not review the research. I recognize we will agree to disagree on what's best for coyotes, however, when you have not considered what those comments say, that message is not appropriate from my perspective. I think squashing this today was very disappointing for many."

Paul Debow, President, NH Trapper's Association, stated, "We appreciate that the Fish & Game Department biologist look at research and & consider legitimate studies when considering their game management."

Christina Snyder, audience member, inquired as to whether other species will be open to public comment.

Director Normandeau responded that there would be an official proposal that goes out to the public for comment, with public hearings to follow.

Linda Dionne, stated, "I mirror Lindsay's comments. How can you make a decision without reading all the comments?"

Dave Poole, audience member, spoke to legislation that was discussed today.

Rose, audience member, inquired as to whether the studies Lindsay Hamrick refers to were done here in New Hampshire.

Lindsay responded that the studies were both from the northeast & the west coast.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Barry Carr, Secretary

Approved: _____
Robert Phillipson, Chairman