

NEW HAMPSHIRE FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT

JANUARY 9, 2019 COMMISSION MEETING

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

Commissioners Present: R. Phillipson, T. Baldwin, R. Green, B. Carr, P. McInnis, D. Patch, C. Luppi, & E. Stohl.

Commissioners absent/excused: C. Hodgdon, E. Millette & B. Temple

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 December 12, 2018 Commission Minutes as written and Commissioner Luppi seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Due to time constraints in staff schedules, The Legislative Committee report was heard at this time.

Commissioner Stohl reported that the committee met the morning of the Commission Meeting to review and address pertinent legislation as follows:

Commissioner Stohl reported that during the morning Legislative Committee Meeting, the committee unanimously agreed to oppose HB-282, relative to the authority of fish and game officers to search without a warrant.

Commissioner Stohl moved to oppose HB-282, relative to the authority of fish and game officers to search without a warrant and Commissioner Baldwin seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative. Commissioner Stohl stated, "This would require Conservation Officers to obtain a search warrant when conducting certain enforcement operations and would greatly handicap our Conservation Officers to a certain degree."

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 consent agenda items 2a – 2c, as presented below, and Commissioner Green seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

- 2a.) Commission accepted the donation of \$50.00 from Dan Dockham, Jr., Gilmanton, NH, in memory of Bill Austin, Gilmanton, NH, to be utilized by the Game Management Account.
- 2b.) Commission accepted the donation of \$50.00 from Mike & Jan Morin, Manchester, NH, in memory of Randy Helie, Londonderry, NH, to be utilized by the Game Management Account.
- 2c.) Commission accepted the donation & installation of the below equipment, valued at \$27,312.00, from George Wells, Walpole, NH, to be utilized by the Law Enforcement Division.

48 Trijicon front site posts @ \$55.00 = \$2,640.00
48 Inforce tactical white lights @ \$195.00 = \$9,360.00
48 Vortex spitfire AR prism scopes @ \$250.00 = \$12,000.00
48 Rear back up sites @69.00 = \$3,312.00

Colonel Jordan reported that Mr. Wells has graciously donated to many law enforcement agencies in the past. He stated, "This is a great gift and the Conservation Officers will definitely benefit and utilize the equipment."

- 3.) Mark Ellingwood, Chief, Wildlife Division, and Kent Gustafson, Program Supervisor, came before the Commission seeking approval to fund a biological aide for up to 9 weeks (May – June), from the Game Management Account, who will work under the supervision of the bear biologist, to educate and provide technical assistance to the public in order to prevent and resolve bear/human conflicts.

Chairman Phillipson inquired whether the same individual that assisted in this area in the past would be assisting again.

Mark responded that it was not the same individual. Mark reported that Andy Timmins, Bear Project Leader, would be conducting a search in the near future for this biological aide position.

Commissioner Carr moved to approve funding a biological aide position for up to 9 weeks (May – June), from the Game Management Account, who will work under the supervision of the bear biologist, to educate and provide technical assistance to the public in order to prevent and resolve human/bear conflicts and Commissioner Green seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

INFORMATION ITEMS:

- 1.) Kathy LaBonte, Chief, Business Division, reviewed the monthly financial statement dated December 31, 2018.
- 2.) Jason Smith, Chief, Inland Fisheries Division, came before the Commission and provided an overview of a future action item to expend \$10,000 from the Fisheries Habitat Account for seasonal employees to preform work related to the Eastern Brook Trout Venture's conservation strategies in the Androscoggin River Watershed.

Commissioner Carr moved to act on this information item today, to approve the expenditure of \$10,000 from the Fisheries Habitat Account for seasonal employees to perform work related to the Eastern Brook Trout Venture's conservation strategies in the Androscoggin River Watershed and Commissioner Baldwin seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

3.) Mark Ellingwood & Dan Bergeron, Deer Project Leader, provided a presentation on Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) and CWD Best Management Practices.

Dan Bergeron gave a presentation to the Commission regarding the history and science of CWD and its active spread in North America over the past 60 years. Key points in Dan's presentation included: the rapid spread of CWD facilitated by the captive deer industry and natural deer movements; the delayed development of symptoms in deer, even while they actively spread infectious prions through their urine, saliva, and feces; the persistent nature of prions as an infectious agent on the landscape (upwards of from 10 to 20 years); the ability of prions to bind to soil and to be taken up in growing vegetation; the high cost and challenges associated with CWD containment; and the negative implications of CWD to our hunting and wildlife viewing traditions, our agency finances, and the future viability of our moose and deer populations.

Mark Ellingwood followed up with a presentation on the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) best management practices for the prevention of CWD. Key preventative measures covered were: the regulation of deer whole carcass movements; the control of captive deer movements; the regulation of natural deer product use such as natural (vs. synthetic) deer urine; and the management of unnaturally high deer concentrations stemming from deer feeding and baiting.

Mark advocated for preemptive action in order to prevent the spread of CWD into New Hampshire. He encouraged a collaborative effort amongst staff, the Commission, and constituents to establish action thresholds and to identify protective measures now, for adoption and implementation before rather than after CWD has established itself in New England.

Chairman Phillipson recognized members of the House Fish, Game & Marine Resources Committee that were present at the Commission Meeting. He invited the Committee to a future breakfast at the Fish & Game Department to interact with each other and to review and discuss any concerns and/or expectations. Director Normandeau reported that the Department would be having an orientation meeting with the Committee next Tuesday, January 15, 2019, in the Legislative Office Building, Room 307, and invited the Commission to attend as well. Director Normandeau reported that this meeting would consist of each Division Chief speaking as to what their respective divisions consist of and are responsible for.

STANDING COMMITTEES:

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

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

Commissioner Stohl reported that the committee met and discussed a few bills. He reported that the committee gave Paul Sanderson, Legal Coordinator, a direction to go in to address some of the bills that may arise between now and the next Commission Meeting.

Commissioner Stohl reported that HB-218, relative to the use of deadly force by a law enforcement officer was being heard today. He stated, "I suspect it will be heavily weighted by other forms of law enforcement, in addition to our Law Enforcement personnel."

RIVERS COMMITTEE: Commissioner Hodgdon was absent.

LAKES COMMITTEE: Commissioner Millette was absent.

HANDBOOK & ORIENTATION COMMITTEE: Commissioner Patch, Chair; Commissioner Carr. Commissioner Patch reported that he & Commissioner Carr plan to start the yearly update on the handbook the first of the New Year. Commissioner Patch encouraged any Commissioners who have suggested changes/updates that they would like to see be put in the handbook to get them to he or Commissioner Carr.

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE: Commissioner Hodgdon, Chair: Commissioners Temple, Baldwin & Stohl. Commissioner Hodgdon was absent.

WILDLIFE HERITAGE FOUNDATION: Commissioner Hodgdon was absent.

AWARDS COMMITTEE: Commissioner Baldwin, Chair; Commissioner Carr. Commissioner Baldwin reported that the Committee met briefly and each member received a packet consisting of all the award nominations. He reported that the committee would be meeting again in the near future to review the nominations.

OLD BUSINESS: Nothing heard at this time.

NEW BUSINESS: Nothing heard at this time.

COMMISSIONERS REPORTS:

COMMISSIONER PHILLIPSON: Nothing to report.

COMMISSIONER BALDWIN: Nothing to report.

COMMISSIONER CARR: Commissioner Carr reported that he attended the recent memorial event honoring Ellis Hatch, former long term Strafford County Commissioner, and reported that it was very nice and well attended.

COMMISSIONER TEMPLE: Nothing to report.

COMMISSIONER GREEN: Nothing to report.

COMMISSIONER PATCH: Nothing to report.

COMMISSIONER MILLETTE: Commissioner Millette was absent.

COMMISSIONER MCINNIS: Commissioner McInnis reported that he attended a public hearing on the update of the menhaden rules and then attended the Advisory Committee on Marine Fisheries Meeting afterwards.

COMMISSIONER HODGDON: Commissioner Hodgdon was absent.

COMMISSIONER STOHL: Commissioner Stohl reported that he would be meeting with the Groveton Fish & Game Club at their Annual Dinner on January 10, 2019, to get to know some new & different faces.

COMMISSIONER LUPPI: Commissioner Luppi reported that she would be attending a “Co-existing with coyote presentation” by Chris Schadler, on Friday, January 11, 2019, at 7:00 p.m., in Chester, NH.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT: Director Normandeau reported that he attended the recent Inauguration of Governor Sununu. He reported that things are getting busy legislatively. He reported that he and Paul Sanderson, Legislative Coordinator, were both spending a great deal of time addressing bills. He reported that the budget process would be getting underway shortly after the Governor’s Budget Address on February 14, 2019.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

Kristina Snyder, audience member, invited the Fish & Game Commissioners, Director Normandeau, as well as the Representatives present at the meeting, to attend the “Co-existing with Coyote” Presentation on Friday, January 11, 2019, at the Town Offices (multi-purpose room) in Chester, NH, at 7:00 p.m. She encouraged everyone to attend and learn more about the coyote.

Chris Schadler, audience member, informed the Commission that she conducts coyote talks all over the State and offered to include some talking points provided by the Fish & Game Department relative to CWD in her presentation in order to better inform the public about the disease.

At this time, 2:40 p.m., Commissioner Carr moved to adjourn and Commissioner Stohl seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Respectfully submitted,

Barry Carr, Secretary

Approved: _____
Robert Phillipson, Chairman