

## NEW HAMPSHIRE FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT

### JANUARY 12, 2021 COMMISSION MEETING

Meeting Location: There was no physical meeting location, as this meeting took place via Microsoft Teams.

Chairman Stohl called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. He informed everyone that the public is entitled to listen in by following the instructions below. He reported that no public comment would be taken during the meeting, as public comment would be accepted for 3 consecutive days after the Commission Meeting, via e-mail @ [comments@wildlife.nh.gov](mailto:comments@wildlife.nh.gov), or by sending comments to: NH Fish & Game Department, Attn: Tanya Haskell, 11 Hazen Drive, Concord, N.H., 03301. Comments received within the comment period will be compiled into the January 12, 2021 Commission Minutes.

#### **Participation Instructions:**

### Microsoft Teams meeting

**Join on your computer or mobile app**

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Chairman Stohl read aloud Governor Sununu's Checklist to Ensure Meetings Are Compliant With The Right-to-Know Law During The State Of Emergency:

**“As Executive Director of the Fish and Game Department, and Chairman of the NH Fish and Game Commission, we find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04 as extended pursuant to Executive Order 2020-05, this public body is authorized to meet electronically.**

Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that we are:

*a) Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional possibilities to submit comments via e-mail to: [comments@wildlife.nh.gov](mailto:comments@wildlife.nh.gov), or mailing comments to: NH Fish & Game Department, Attn: Tanya Haskell, 11 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH, 03301. Comments will be accepted for 3 consecutive days after the January 12, 2021 Commission Meeting. All comments received within the comment period will be compiled into the January 12, 2021 Commission Minutes.*

We are utilizing **Microsoft Teams** for this electronic meeting. All members of the **Fish and Game Commission** and the staff of the Fish and Game Department have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through this platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and submit comments as indicated in the above paragraph.

*b) Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting:*

We previously gave notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing the meeting telephonically. Instructions have also been provided on the Fish and Game website and have been posted in the lobby of the Fish and Game headquarters, 11 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH.

*c) Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access:*

If anybody has a problem, please email: [Paul.Sanderson@wildlife.nh.gov](mailto:Paul.Sanderson@wildlife.nh.gov).

*d) Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting:*

In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, the meeting will be adjourned and rescheduled.

Please note that **all votes** that are taken during this meeting shall be done by **roll call vote.**”

At this time, 1:06 p.m., Commissioner Green took a roll call of Commission members participating: P. DeBow, “Yes”, C. Hodgdon, “Yes”, B. Temple, “Yes”, F. Bird, “Yes”, E. Stohl, “Yes”, and R. Green, “Yes”.

Commissioners absent: C. Luppi, M. Lachance, D. Patch, and J. Caveney. P. McInnis was absent during the roll call, however, joined the meeting shortly after.

Executive Director Mason – Present on the call.

At this time, Chairman Stohl asked that everyone remotely join in the pledge of allegiance.

**CTION ITEMS:**

1.) Commissioner Green moved to approve the December 9, 2020 Commission Minutes, as written, and Commissioner Temple seconded.

A roll call vote was taken of all Commissioners participating: P. DeBow, “Yes”, C. Hodgdon, “Yes”, B. Temple, “Yes”, F. Bird, “Yes”, E. Stohl, “Yes”, P. McInnis, “Yes”, and R. Green, “Yes”. 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 Temple moved to approve consent agenda items 2a – 2m, as presented below, and Commissioner DeBow seconded.

2a.) The Commission accepted a \$1,000.00 from James O’Rourke, Deerfield, NH, in memory of Jimmy O’Rourke, Deerfield, NH, to be utilized by the “Let’s Go Fishing” Program.

2b.) The Commission accepted a \$650.00 donation from the below individuals, in memory of Scott Sedgwick, Fairfield, CT, to be deposited into the Fisheries Habitat Account & Small Gifts & Donations Account (as indicated).

Fisheries Habitat Account:

\*Tony Eason, Denver, CO, - \$100.00

Small Gifts & Donations Account:

\*Daryle & Susan Kowalsky, Fidelity Charitable Fund, Westport, CT - \$200.00

\* Edward Baranosky & Family, Monroe, Ct - \$250.00

\*Jared & Marna Schneid, Lyme, CT - \$100.00

Total: \$650.00

2c.) The Commission accepted a \$100.00 donation from the below individuals, in memory of Gregory Sevinsky, to be deposited into the Small Gifts & Donations Account & Inland Fisheries Habitat Account (as indicated).

Fisheries Habitat Account:

\*Jerry & Amy Coppersmith, Erie, PA - \$50.00

Small Gifts & Donations Account:

\*Heather Dry, Oxford, ME - \$50.00

Total: \$100.00

2d.) The Commission accepted a \$200.00 donation from the below individuals, in memory of Wesley Smith, to be deposited into the Small Gifts & Donations Account & utilized by the Inland Fisheries Division.

\*Gerald Smith, Concord, NH - \$100.00

\*Patricia Gavin, Levittown, PA - \$100.00

Total: \$200.00

2e.) The Commission accepted a \$200.00 donation from the below individuals, in memory of Thurston “Harry” Tudor, a long tenured Fish Culturist with the Department, to be utilized for inland fisheries management.

\*Terri Campbell, Kennebunkport, ME - \$50.00

\*Wayne Hill, Ossipee, NH - \$100.00

\*Laurie Olson, San Diego, CA- \$50.00

\$200.00

2f.) The Commission accepted a \$2,933.00 donation from the below individuals, to be utilized by the Law Enforcement Division to help offset expenses outfitting a new canine cruiser for K9 Fin:

*George Tombarello -	\$2,000.00
*Hannah Verville, Loudon, NH -	\$413.00
*Feed NH Great NH Restaurant Charitable Trust-	\$500.00
*Janet Porter -	<u>\$20.00</u>
Total:	\$2,933.00

2g.) The Commission accepted a \$75.00 donation from Judy DuBois, to be deposited into the Operation Game Thief Account.

2h.) The Commission accepted a \$600.00 donation from the below individuals, to be deposited into the Search & Rescue Account, to be utilized to purchase life-saving safety equipment and enhanced training:

*George Prive -	\$100.00
*Chris Forman & Angela Toms -	<u>\$500.00</u>
Total:	\$600.00

2i.) Commission accepted a \$100.00 donation from Daniel Kramer, in memory of District Five Lieutenant, Scott F. LaCrosse, Loudon, NH, who passed away suddenly on April 2, 2019.

2j.) Commission accepted a \$200.00 donation from the below individuals, in memory of Robert McArthur, to be deposited into the Small Gifts & Donations Account.

*Mr. & Mrs. Richard Glispin, Londonderry, NH -	\$50.00
*The Faverty Family, Londonderry, NH -	\$50.00
*Shidokan International, Londonderry, NH -	<u>\$100.00</u>
Total:	\$200.00

2k.) Commission accepted a \$25.00 donation from Verna Dunn, Enfield, NH, in memory of Donald Charbono, to be deposited into the Small Gifts & Donations Account.

2l.) Commission accepted a \$150.00 donation from the below individuals, in memory of Donald Gordon, to be deposited into the Small Gifts & Donations Account.

*Leona Dragon, Pittsfield, NH -	\$50.00
*Tri State Iron Works, Inc., Concord, NH -	<u>\$100.00</u>
Total:	\$150.00

2m.) Commission accepted a \$1,000 donation from David & Grace Mann, Merrimack, NH, to be utilized by the Statewide Boat Access program.

A roll call vote was taken of all Commissioners participating: P. DeBow, "Yes", C. Hodgdon, "Yes", B. Temple, "Yes", F. Bird, "Yes", E. Stohl, "Yes", P. McInnis, "Yes", and R. Green, "Yes". The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

3.) Commissioner Green moved to accept an \$84,000 donation to the Nongame Program from the Sleeper Estate and Commissioner Temple seconded.

A roll call vote was taken of all Commissioners participating: P. DeBow, “Yes”, C. Hodgdon, “Yes”, B. Temple, “Yes”, F. Bird, “Yes”, E. Stohl, “Yes”, P. McInnis, “Yes”, and R. Green, “Yes”. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

3a.) Commissioner McInnis moved to accept a \$60,000 to the Law Enforcement Division’s K9 Program from the Sleeper Estate and Commissioner Hodgdon seconded.

A roll call vote was taken of all Commissioners participating: P. DeBow, “Yes”, C. Hodgdon, “Yes”, B. Temple, “Yes”, F. Bird, “Yes”, E. Stohl, “Yes”, P. McInnis, “Yes”, and R. Green, “Yes”. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

4.) Commissioner DeBow moved to accept a \$14,554 donation to the Nongame Program from Prosit, LLC., for mitigating impacts to New England cottontail habitat and Commissioner Hodgdon seconded.

A roll call vote was taken of all Commissioners participating: P. DeBow, “Yes”, C. Hodgdon, “Yes”, B. Temple, “Yes”, F. Bird, “Yes”, E. Stohl, “Yes”, P. McInnis, “Yes”, and R. Green, “Yes”. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

#### **INFORMATION ITEMS:**

1.) Mark Ellingwood, Chief, Wildlife Division, and Game Management Team, presented initial Draft Rule Proposals to the Commission. (See attached proposals).

2.) Tim Buzinski, Chief, Facilities & Lands Division, thanked the Commission for the opportunity to come before them to provide a brief presentation of the Statewide Boat Access Program.

Tim introduced Garret Graaskamp, Boat Access Coordinator. Garret reviewed the attached presentation with the Commission. (See attached).

3.) Nicola Whitely, Chief, Public Affairs Division, came before the Commission and provided and update on the License Retention Committee as follows:

#### **FACTS & PROGRESS OF LICENSE RETENTION COMMITTEE:**

- Committee established by Director Mason for the purpose of deciding on ways to help retain the “bubble” of people who bought hunting and fishing licenses during the pandemic.
- Through August, NH saw an increase of approximately 22,000 additional fishing licenses sold in 2020 over 2019. This represents a 34% increase.
- The Committee was made up of staff from the Public Affairs, Law Enforcement, Legal Affairs, Business and Licensing, Wildlife, Marine, and Fisheries Divisions.
- The Committee has met several times. As a group we decided on the following first steps.

- We are changing the message people receive when they buy a license online to be an opt -out as far as receiving additional information from Fish and Game instead of an opt in. This change was approved by the attorney general's office.
- Currently there are about 10,000 people for whom we have permission to contact them.
- We will start a series of three emails next week to anglers encouraging them to buy their 2021 license, thank them, and provide them with other resources.
- These will be to first-time license buyers and lapsed anglers who purchased a fishing license in 1, 2, or 3 of the previous 5 years.
- These emails will go to NH residents only who purchased a fishing license or a combo license in 2020.
- There will be data coming from the vendor who manages our licensing database, S3, to help gauge how successful these emails were and where we can make improvements going forward.
- The Licensing Office will also begin having our license vendors across the state ask for people's email address when they purchase a license.
- We will also be using our traditional ways of reaching out to this bubble of people, including social media, our advertising campaigns, and promotions, such as videos, interviews, and events.
- Later on in the summer, we will start targeting hunters with a similar set of emails.
- Email marketing to license buyers is something most other states are already doing so we are very excited to jump into this. We know there will be adjustments to be made and problems to be solved along the way but these are exciting first steps in an important way of reaching our constituents.

In closing, Nicola reported that she would keep the Commission updated on the committee's progress.

**STANDING COMMITTEES:**

**POLICY COMMITTEE:** Commissioner Luppi, Chair; Commissioners: Temple, 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 legislation is still in the LSR stages and not in writing. He reported that as soon as bill language becomes available, he would schedule a meeting.

He further reported that the Department would be providing a presentation before the House Fish, Game & Marine Resources Committee on January 14, 2021, at 1:00 p.m., focusing on what the various divisions of the agency do.

**AWARDS COMMITTEE:** Commissioner Lachance, Chair; Commissioners: Bird, Luppi & Caveney. Commissioner Lachance was absent, therefore, no report.

**RIVERS COMMITTEE:** Commissioner Hodgdon reported that the committee met jointly with the Lakes Management Advisory Committee on January 7, 2021. He reported that the committee discussed ways for the Department of Environmental Service's Dam Bureau & Fish & Game

Department to work together on lake levels & dam maintenance, which requires a high level of coordination.

**LAKES COMMITTEE:** Commissioner Temple. Commissioner Temple reported that he had nothing further to add to Commissioner Hodgdon's River's Report. He reported that the committee would meet again virtually in the spring.

**HANDBOOK & ORIENTATION COMMITTEE:** Commissioner Patch, Chair; Commissioner Green & Caveney. Commissioner Patch was absent, however, Commissioner Green reported that the committee has not met physically to compile the new handbooks due to COVID 19 restrictions. He reported that he expects to have a new handbook for everyone in the near future.

**STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE:** Commissioner Hodgdon, Chair; Commissioners Temple, Stohl & DeBow. Commissioner Hodgdon reported that there was no meeting.

**WILDLIFE HERITAGE FOUNDATION:** Commissioner Hodgdon. Commissioner Hodgdon had nothing new to report.

**OLD BUSINESS:** N/A

**NEW BUSINESS:** Director Mason reported on the formation of a "Hatchery Study/Work Committee", (members most likely appointed by the Governor), to dig deeper into issues, such as the situation with the Powder Mill Fish Hatchery, and to look at future needs for the hatchery stocking program, etc. He asked for 2 volunteers from the Commission to serve on the committee.

Chairman Stohl reported that he, and Commissioner Hodgdon would be happy to serve on the committee.

**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 Temple stated that it was a successful white-tail deer season and commended those that manage the deer herd.

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

Director Mason thanked the staff, the Fish and Game Commission & public for their patience with these virtual meetings during the COVID pandemic. He reported that the department needs to get more familiar with "Teams Platform" and would happily accept tips or suggestions.

He reported that he toured the Milford Hatchery and the Nashua Federal Hatchery with Commissioner Green and Jason Smith, Chief, Inland Fisheries Division. He reported that the Nashua Hatchery is currently raising our landlocked salmon for us as well as the state listed Round Whitefish

He reported that he met Tim Lang, Chairman, House Fish, Game & Marine Resources Committee. He reported that he and Paul Sanderson, Legal Coordinator, introduced themselves and

had brief discussion with Chairman Lang. As mentioned, the Department is slated to go before the House Fish, Game & Marine Resources Committee to provide an overview of the department on Thursday, January 14, 2021, at 1:00 p.m., along with a brief overview from the Fish & Game Commission.

He further reported that he attended & spoke at the Androscoggin Valley Fish & Game Club Meeting, in Berlin, NH, last night, January 11, 2021, and felt it was good meeting all around.

In addition, he reported that the Governor has lifted the hiring freeze, which should help the department fill many gaps.

In closing, Director Mason reported that the Governor is requiring that the department work with State Police for the potential of combined dispatch services, potentially eliminating Fish & Game dispatch all together. He reported that he is concerned the impact could have as far as dealing with wildlife & unique calls. He reported that he will convey to the Governor that this may not be as sound an idea as originally thought.

Paul Sanderson, Legal Coordinator, thanked everyone participating in the meeting for their patience and welcomed any constructive criticism.

Director Mason thanked Paul for taking on this “project”, being the administrator of these “Teams” meetings, and thanked him for his dedication.

**CALL TO THE PUBLIC:** Public comment was not heard, as comments were taken electronically via e-mail to [Tanya.haskell@wildlife.nh.gov](mailto:Tanya.haskell@wildlife.nh.gov), and by mail to: NH Fish & Game Department, Attn: Tanya Haskell, 11 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH 03301, for 3 consecutive days after the meeting.

**Comments Received:**

John Mesick – relative to HB-2021-571, which repeals the OHRV ban on the frozen body of water wholly contained in the Hoit Road Marsh State WMA. (See attached comment).

Commissioner Green moved to adjourn at 3:40 p.m., and Commissioner DeBow seconded.

A roll call vote was taken of all Commissioners participating: P. DeBow, “Yes”, C. Hodgdon, “Yes”, B. Temple, “Yes”, F. Bird, “Yes”, E. Stohl, “Yes”, P. McInnis, “Yes”, and R. Green, “Yes”. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

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Eric Stohl, Chairman  
NH Fish & Game Commission