

NEW HAMPSHIRE FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT

DECEMBER 14, 2021 COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

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

Commissioners Present: M. Lachance, B. Temple, P. DeBow, M. Hodgson, E. Stohl, S. Price, J. Caveney & C. Hodgdon, A. DeRosa & R. Green.

Commissioners absent/excused: P. McInnis

Executive Director Mason – Present

Chairman Stohl 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 Temple moved to approve the November 9, 2021 Commission Minutes, as written, and Commissioner Green seconded. The motion carried with 8 in favor, 2 abstentions (S. Price & C. Hodgdon).

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 Green moved to approve consent agenda items 2a.-2h., as presented below, and Commissioner DeRosa seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

2a.) The Commission accepted the anonymous donation of one slightly used enclosed clamshell snowmobile trailer, valued at \$500.00, to be utilized by the Conservation Officers of District Four.

2b.) The Commission accepted a \$25.00 donation from Robert & Donna Witcher, Penacook, NH, in memory of Ron Batistelli, Penacook, NH, to be deposited into the Wildlife Habitat Account.

2c.) The Commission accepted a \$100.00 donation from the Papale Family, to be deposited into the Search & Rescue Account.

2d.) The Commission accepted a \$100.00 donation from Kristine Barker, to be deposited into the Search & Rescue Account.

2e.) The Commission accepted the donation of fishing materials & tackle from Leonard Stabile, Salem, NH, to be utilized by the “Let’s Go Fishing” Program.

2f.) The Commission accepted the following donations totaling \$450.00 in memory of Paul Chevrette, Weare, NH, to be deposited into the Small Gifts & Donations Account:

- Jay & Suzanne Printzlau, Manchester, NH - \$100.00
 - Robert Thompson & Andrea Carney, Weare, NH - \$ 50.00
 - Dorothy A. Kruger Revocable Trust, Pembroke, NH - \$200.00
 - Deborah Palmer, Barrington, NH - \$100.00
- \$450.00

2g.) The Commission accepted a \$20.00 donation in memory of Michael Robinson, to be deposited into the Small Gifts & Donations Account.

2h.) The Commission accepted a \$30.00 donation from Margaret Kilrain, Manchester, NH, to be deposited into the Small Gifts & Donations Account.

3.) Dianne Timmins, Chief, Inland Fisheries, came before the Commission requesting approval of a parcel of land in Success, NH, from the Conservation Fund.

After much discussion, Commissioner Hodgdon moved to accept the parcel of land in Success, NH, from the Conservation Fund and Commissioner Hodgson seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

INFORMATION ITEMS:

1.) Kathy LaBonte, Chief, Business Division, came before the Commission and reviewed the financial statement.

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE:

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE: Public policy development & recommendations, as well as Commission advocacy before legislature.

Commissioner Green, Chair; Commissioners: DeBow, Price & Hodgson

Staff members: Kevin Jordan

Chairman Green reported that the Legislative Committee met the morning of the Commission meeting and discussed the following:

Commissioner Green moved to monitor HB-1052, relative to the number of rounds of ammunition allowed for hunting regardless of firearm capacity and Commissioner Hodgson seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner Green moved to oppose HB-1901, relative to search warrants for individuals engaged in fish and game activities and Commissioner Hodgson seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner Green moved to oppose HB-1108, relative to the prescribed manner of posting land and Commissioner DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner Green moved to oppose HB-1201-FN, relative to damage by bears and Commissioner Hodgson seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

AMENDMENT

Page 3 of December 14, 2021 Commission Minutes, third paragraph should read:

Commissioner Green moved to oppose **HB-1230-FN**, as written, relative to permitting online presentation of deer for registration, and adding the language, “with consent of the Commission”, and Commissioner Hodgson seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

~~Commissioner Green moved to oppose HB-230-FN, as written, relative to permitting online presentation of deer for registration, and adding the language “with the consent of the Commission”, and Commissioner Hodgson seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.~~

Commissioner Green moved to oppose HB-1297, relative to taking lobster while engaged in recreational scuba diving and Commissioner DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner Green moved to oppose HB-1299, relative to the process for the importation of wildlife and creating an appeal process for denials of permits and Commissioner Hodgson seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner Green moved to oppose HB-1308, relative to prohibiting the capture, possession, and propagation of hares and rabbits for hunting dog training and field trials and Commissioner DeBow seconded. The vote carried with 10 in favor and 1 opposed (E. Stohl).

Chairman Stohl stated, “I’m opposed to being opposed to this bill, as I do not believe in taking an animal out of the wild for training purposes. A wild animal belongs in the wild.”

Commissioner Green moved to oppose HB-1323, relative to hike safe cards and Commissioner Hodgson seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner Green moved to oppose HB-1356, relative to the taking of gray squirrels and Commissioner DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner Green moved to monitor HB-1014, relative to allowing public meetings to be conducted virtually and Commissioner Hodgson seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner Green moved to monitor HB-1036, relative to nonpublic meetings concerning public employees and Commissioner DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner Green moved to monitor HB-1109, relative to approval for off highway recreational vehicles use on class V and class VI roads and Commissioner Hodgson seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner Green moved to monitor HB-1128, relative to financial liability for damage caused by OHRV use of class VI roads and Commissioner DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner Green moved to monitor HB-1188, relative to establishing a commission to study OHRV use in the state, with a recommendation to urge greater geographic representation and Commissioner Hodgson seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner Green moved to oppose HB-1310, relative to prohibiting the discharge of a firearm in the direction of a building, livestock, or pets and Commissioner DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner Green moved to oppose HB-1498-FN, as written, relative to establishing a safety program for off highway recreational vehicles and snowmobiles and Commissioner Hodgson seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Chairman Green reported that the next meeting of the Legislative Committee would be on December 29, 2021, at 1:00 p.m., at the Region 1 Fish & Game Office, 629B Main Street, Lancaster, NH.

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE: Commission professional development, education & policy recommendations related to Commission conduct & activities.

Commissioner Caveney, Chair; Commissioners: Green & Temple.
Staff member: Cheri Patterson

This committee has not met.

SUSTAINABILITY & STRATEGIC PLANNING: Agency funding, development & oversight of strategic plan.

Commissioner Hodgdon, Chair; Commissioners: Caveney, Hodgson & DeRosa.
Staff member: Scott Mason

Chairman Hodgdon reported that the committee would be meeting today, December 14, 2021, immediately after the adjournment of the Commission Meeting.

RESOURCES & INFRASTRUCTURE: Policy recommendations related to agency infrastructure; including facilities, public access, habitat & wildlife.

Commissioner Temple, Chair; Commissioners: McInnis, Lachance & Caveney.
Staff member: Dianne Timmins

Chairman Temple reported that the committee has not met, however, would be scheduling a meeting in the near future.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT & EDUCATION: Engagement, partnership, awards, public recognition & education strategies for the public & interest groups.

Commissioner DeBow, Chair; Commissioners: Hodgdon, Price & DeRosa.
Staff members: Dianne Timmins, Kevin Jordan & Cheri Patterson

Chairman DeBow reported that the committee has not met, however, would be meeting in the near future to discuss nominations for the Commission Awards of Excellence.

OLD BUSINESS: Nothing heard.

NEW BUSINESS: Nothing heard.

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 Price reported that she attended the Becoming an Outdoors Woman Program meeting on December 15, 2021, at F&G HQ. She reported that the program continues to struggle with financial support and is currently funded through donations and user fees. She reported that she is trying to assist with finding long-term sponsorships.

She further reported that she has joined the Wildlife Society and encouraged everyone to read it, as it contains great information & enables you to see trends that are happening.

Commissioner Temple reported that he would be meeting with Representative Edith Tucker, tomorrow, December 15, 2021, at 1:30 p.m., at the Claremont Beagle Club to discuss field trials and have an on-site visit.

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

Director Mason reported that the following:

- The AOT (Alteration of Terrain) rules would go before the JLCAR (Joint Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules) on Thursday, December 16, 2021.
- He, along with Colonel Jordan & Commissioner Stewart of DNCR (Department of Natural & Cultural Resources), met with the OHRV & Snowmobile Dealers on December 7, 2021.
- There will be another joint meeting of DNCR & F&G staff this year, to discuss collaborative efforts on subjects of mutual interest.

- He would be attending the Guide's Association Meeting on January 10, 2022.
- The Department hosted the Health & Human Services Vaccination Van, here, at F&G HQ, on December 1, 2021, with 70 people participating.
- He swore in three new Conservation Officers on December 3, 2021.
- Daniel Bergeron promoted to the Chief of the Wildlife Division.
- Rebecca Fuda recently hired as the Deer Project Leader.
- Announcement of the Downing's Landing Boat Access Site, Alton, NH, to be closed throughout the winter to allow proper time for the pavement to harden. He reported that the Town of Alton has indicated that they will allow constituents to utilize/access the Town ramp to get bob-houses on the water & to accommodate ice fishing.
- Interviews for the Chief of the Facilities & Lands Division will take place on December 28, 2021.
- Legal Coordinator interviews will take place in the near future.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

Cathryn Harvey, Senior Ranking Minority Member, House Fish, Game & Marine Resources Committee, Chesterfield, NH, stated, "I'm glad you're back in Concord." She reported that she has always enjoyed coming to the Fish & Game Commission Meetings in Concord, NH.

The Commission fielded a few questions she had relative to beagle clubs.

Weldon Bosworth, Gilford, NH, stated that he was inspired by the deliberation over the snowshoe hares and wished the same could be done regarding furbearing animals.

Eric Orff, Vice President, NH Wildlife Federation, inquired as to the possibility of keeping the Downing's Landing Boat Access site open at Alton Bay for public access for ice fishing. It was reiterated that the Town of Alton would be allowing constituents to use the town ramp.

Kristina Snyder, Chester, NH, spoke to the fact that the Commission never reviewed the testimony/comments submitted relative to the squirrel bill, however, still voted against the bill.

She further reported that she found the article in the Hawkeye Magazine, "Eye on the Anti's", to be extremely offensive and politically biased & inquired as to whether it should even be in a government lobby.

Buck Mercier, Pointer Fish & Game Club Member, Manchester, NH, reported that the law relative to possessing a firearm in a car was very confusing. Colonel Jordan responded that you cannot have a loaded long gun in a car that is moving, only stopped, and you can shoot from a standing car.

He further reported that he would support the reintroduction of the 3-point antler restriction and stated, “I’d like to see that rule come back.”

He further reported that there should be an avenue for individuals with legitimate reasons to obtain their moose points back, if missed due to medical reasons.

Steve Angers, Conway, NH, reported that the revised stocking program that was presented at the May 11, 2021 Commission Meeting seems to be working well. He reported that he is hearing that anglers are catching larger brook trout than they have caught in years. He stated, “The effort has paid off with our constituents and will do well for the future of NH’s Brook Trout.”

Stacey Ober, Legislative Analyst & Community Outreach Coordinator, AKC (American Kennel Club), stated, “We will be opposing HB-1308, as a well-trained dog is the best conservation tool you could have.”

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Eric Stohl, Chairman
NH Fish & Game Commission