

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
NJ FISH AND GAME COUNCIL

Central Region Office
Robbinsville, NJ
January 11, 2011

The regular meeting of the New Jersey Fish and Game Council was held on the above date.

The meeting was called to order at 1:06 pm by Acting Chairman Burke.

Roll call was taken. In attendance were:

Councilwoman Barbara Brummer
Councilman Dave Burke
Councilman Agust Gudmundsson
Councilman Jeffrey Link
Councilman John Messeroll
Councilman Robert Puskas
Councilman Dan Van Mater

Absent: Councilman Phillip Brodhecker

Division employees included Director Dave Chanda, Assistant Director Larry Herrighty, Paulette Nelson, Jim Sciascia, Lisa Barno, Tony Petrongolo, Mark Chicketano, Dave Jenkins, Carole Kandoth, Mick Valent and Barbara Stoff.

Members of the public included Dr. Erica Miller and others.

The flag salute and Pledge of Allegiance were completed.

The following was read aloud: In accordance with P.L. 1975 c. 231 notice of this meeting was filed with and posted at the Office of the Secretary of State and delivered to the designated newspapers of the Division, the Newark Star Ledger and the Atlantic City Press on December 21, 2010.

Newly appointed Councilman Jeffrey Link was welcomed as a member.

Acting Chairman Burke noted that there would be an agenda addition today. Community Based Deer Management Permits for Essex County and Bernards Township were to be presented.

Minutes of the December 2010 minutes were reviewed. **A motion was made by Councilman Messeroll, seconded by Councilman Van Mater to accept the minutes as presented. A second motion was made by Councilman Messeroll, seconded by Councilman Gudmundsson to approve the minutes. A vote was taken with all in favor, none opposed.**

Director Chanda addressed the Council. He noted he had missed last month's meeting since he was away at a meeting in Washington, DC.

Director Chanda would like to acknowledge past Council members for their years of service. He added that he would also like a joint meeting of the Fish and Wildlife, Marine Fisheries and Endangered and Non-Game Species Councils in June or July, and this would be a good time to acknowledge these past members.

A training update for the newest Council members was discussed.

Director Chanda noted that preliminary results of the 2010 black bear hunt had been given previously, and that full results would be prepared and presented to the Commissioner and the Council at a later date.

Director Chanda noted the retirement of Chief Cussen from the Bureau of Law Enforcement. Additionally, he spoke of the rumor that the Bureau of Law Enforcement was going to be put under supervision by the State Parks Police Director. Staff met with the Commissioner last Friday on this matter, who advised that nothing would be changing and that someone would be appointed as the Acting Chief in the near future.

The public comment period on agenda items was opened. Acting Chairman Burke reminded those in attendance that the items were the presentation by Dr. Erica Miller and the Community Based Deer Management Permits (CBDMP) noted earlier.

Janet Pizar from Millburn addressed the Council. She noted her concerns that the CMDMP applications were not listed previously as agenda items. Ms. Pizar also had concerns regarding the timeframe of the applications being reviewed today. Additionally, she shared other concerns she had regarding these applications.

Barbara Sauchau from Whitehouse was next to address the Council. She opposed any CBDMP applications. She felt the public should have knowledge of what is occurring at meetings before it happens, and felt that there should be no vote today.

Acting Chairman Burke advised that the agenda format was something that would be worked on for the future.

There was no one else wishing to make comment.

Dr. Erica Miller was introduced to the Council. She was in attendance to present her program "Getting out the Lead: Reducing Lead Poisoning in Wildlife". This gave information such as how lead shot in ammunition and lead fishing sinkers affect wildlife, alternative items that could be used, and state and EPA regulations, and species that have been effected. Dr. Miller, who is a wildlife veterinarian, also noted cases she has seen. The information given today was discussed, and questions from the Council were addressed.

Ms. Sauchau asked to make public comment. She was advised that she could do so at the end of the meeting.

Council Committee reports began. Councilman Puskas reported for the Agriculture Committee. He noted that due to the recent snows farming activities have been quiet, but they are still seeing many geese. Councilman Link also noted many geese in his area.

Councilman Messeroll deferred to Legislative Liaison Nelson for the Legislative Committee report. She noted that A 823, which would allow for a free saltwater registry, had passed the Senate. This was forwarded on to the Governor's Office, but Ms. Nelson was unsure of his intentions on this matter. There was discussion on sending a letter to the Governor regarding Council's opinion that funding for implementation of the registry is necessary.

Councilwoman Brummer reported for the Endangered and Non-Game Species Committee (ENSAC). She noted that they would be having a meeting next week, and had no report. There are plans to have a speaker attend a future ENSAC meeting to discuss endo-toxins in horseshoe crabs, and could advise anyone from this Council who might be interested in attending when that will occur.

Councilman Messeroll reported for the Federation. They are currently working on the Garden State Sportsmen's Show and Deer Classic. The saltwater fishing registry was also discussed at local and the State meeting.

Acting Chairman Burke noted he would like to keep the Committee reports separate from the Bureau reports. It was discussed that the Finance Committee should meet soon. The Fisheries Committee will need to add new members, and anyone presently on the Committee who might be available to attend the Batsto Fisheries Forum on February 27 was asked to do so. The Game Committee is not active at this time, and the Waterfowl Stamp Advisory Committee meeting that was scheduled for this evening has been cancelled.

Division reports began. Chief Barno reported for the Bureau of Freshwater Fisheries. She noted that the Fisheries Committee would be meeting on February 8 at 9 am.

There is a public trout meeting scheduled for February 12 at Pequest, and information from the December fisheries forum at Pequest will be reviewed. Chief Barno noted that the Ponder Lodge ponds were previously added to the stocking program, but were currently on hold pending further information from the contractor doing the building demolition at that WMA as to whether or not they would have their work completed by the opening day of trout season.

A draft handout of the proposed bonus broodstock lakes was reviewed, and a vote will be at a later meeting. Chief Barno noted a 10th lake, Lake Oquittink has been added.

Chief Barno also noted the South Jersey Fisheries Forum at Batsto on February 27, 2011 at 10:00 am.

In the Research and Management Area, staff have been working to complete the Federal Aid reports that are due at the end of the month.

Chief Barno reviewed information that will be discussed at the Lake Hopatcong Commission meeting on January 31, including a lake level management plan. Concerns from the Musconectcong Watershed Association on information that was added to this plan was also discussed.

Chief Petrongolo reported for the Bureau of Land Management. He noted a property closure at the end of the year near the South Branch WMA (Merck property) in East Amwell Township, commonly known as Cider Mill Farm. This 90 acre parcel is a cooperative project with the D & R Greenway and is in the USDA's Conservation Reserve Program. Chief Petrongolo noted other similar parcels, including the plan to purchase the Princeton Nurseries property which totals 1,900 acres to be managed both for Farmland Preservation and grassland bird habitat as a WMA.

Pheasant stocking has been completed for the season. Chief Petrongolo noted that the final Northern and Southern area final stockings did not occur until January 8, 2011 because of the large snowfall that had occurred at the end of the year. Also, he noted some criticism has been received due to the fact that there were fewer birds available at the end of the stocking season than had been predicted.

Captain Chicketano from the Marine Unit reported for the Bureau of Law Enforcement. He noted that officers reported a total of 7,668 hours of duty during this reporting period. Officers also completed 5,944 field inspections, resulting in 339 summonses, 30 warnings and one criminal arrest. Total penalties collected were \$11,500.

Captain Chicketano reviewed some of the highlights from this reporting period. In the Northern Region, Lt. Panico and CO Sutton saw a vehicle that was spotlighting deer after dark during the muzzleloader season. The vehicle was recognized as one where the occupants had been illegally spotlighting and shooting deer the year before. The vehicle was stopped, during which time a firearm was thrown from it. Various summonses were issued.

Also in the Northern Region, Lt. Applegate and CO Holmes apprehended an individual who had shot a residence within 300 feet of that home. Summonses were issued.

In the Central Region, Officers Mutone and Szalaj were patrolling the Greenwood Forest WMA and encountered an individual with seven quail over the legal limit. Another individual was cited for hunting without the proper pheasant and quail stamp.

Officer Szulecki from the Central Region issued summonses to an individual in Colts Neck for hunting within 450' of a school playground. Officers Szulecki and Martiak apprehended an individual in Marlboro Township who was hunting for deer within 450' of a residence, and a second individual from that group who was shooting rabbit using a slingshot. Appropriate summonses were issued.

Chief Sciascia reported for the Bureau of Information and Education. He distributed an end of year summary of the Hunter Education program and reviewed the information for the Council.

Staff are working on compiling sales summaries for the past four years for license, permit and stamp sales.

A handout of a summary of the 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010 fishing license sales was distributed and reviewed. It was noted that a major difference in sales campaigns from 2009 to 2010 was the elimination of the radio advertising. There was additional discussion on this matter, as well as discussion on public service announcements for the future.

The Northern and Southern Region fishing brochures have been completed and will be available for distribution at the Garden State Outdoor Sportsmen's Show.

A trout fishing brochure is being worked on for completion before the Spring season begins.

Councilman Puskas noted concerns of a farmer who has hunted his own property for twenty years, and was unable to purchase a hunting license to hunt elsewhere because he did not have the proper

hunter education certification. Assistant Director Herrighty explained that the statute states this is a requirement, but is something that could be looked in to.

Chief Sciascia noted that the Deer Classic Awards Presentation would be held on Sunday, January 16, 2011 at 2:30 pm.

Principal Biologist Valent from the Endangered and Non-Game Species Program gave an update on bats and the white-nosed syndrome that has been affecting them. He noted that fungus has been identified as the primary cause of the white-nosed syndrome, and it attacks live tissue and can penetrate the bats skin. He also noted a 93% mortality of bats at the Hibernia Mine. Additionally, he noted that only little brown bats seem to be affected, most likely due to their using different hibernating sites than the big brown bat. Additional information on the bat populations and the spread of disease was reviewed for the Council, and there was additional discussion on this matter.

Assistant Director Herrighty reported for the Bureau of Wildlife Management. He noted that a letter has been sent to the Commissioner that Councilman Burke was nominated by the Council at the Acting Chairman. He is waiting for his permanent appoint to this position.

An in-house committee met with representatives of the Federation regarding the use of lead. Assistant Director Herrighty is hoping to have an article from the Hunter Education Section in a future Digest regarding lead shot and alternatives that are available.

The Game Code is moving along. Supervising Biologist Kandoth has scheduled a meeting with the Commissioner's staff for review.

Assistant Director Herrighty noted an article in today's newspaper on toolbox bills for simplifying rulemaking and extending the sunset dates for rules.

Principal Biologist Predl presented two applications for Community Based Deer Management Permits. She briefly reviewed the new legislative amendments which allow counties to apply directly as applicants. The first permit presented was from Essex County, and would allow hunting on County parks property, the South Mountain Reservation, Eagle Rock and Hilltop. This application was reviewed for the Council, noting the dates and times they were requesting for this permit to be in effect. Principal Biologist Predl noted the only Statute exceptions the Council would need to approve would be hunting during daylight hours at designated times only, the requirement to wear hunter orange, and hunting outside of the Game Code established permit shotgun season. There was some additional discussion on this matter, and **a motion was made by Councilman Messeroll, seconded by Councilman Gudmundsson to allow this permit with the noted exemptions.** There was some additional discussion on the timeframe of their application, and the new amendment that is in place, as well as a request to see the results of these permits and whether or not they are having an impact on the deer problem. **A vote was taken with all in favor, none opposed to approve this permit application.**

The second application for a CBDMP was from Bernards Township. Principal Biologist Predl noted this was the same exemptions they have been requesting since 2004, which would be to extend the permit shotgun, muzzleloader and bow seasons through the end of March, and reviewed the application for the Council. **A motion was made by Councilman Messeroll, seconded by Councilman Puskas to accept this application.** There was additional review and discussion, after which **a vote was taken with all in favor, none opposed of approving this application.**

Old and new business was discussed. An updated Council member list was distributed for review.

A letter addressing the Council's thoughts on the saltwater registry was discussed, and will be sent to the Governor.

Acting Chairman Burke presented a draft format of the agenda, and asked for any additional suggestions to be e-mailed to him. There was additional discussion the agenda format and agenda items.

Members were asked to consider which committees they would like to sit on, and assignments will be discussed at the next meeting.

Councilman Puskas inquired about extending the semi-wild permit season because of the snow. Assistant Director Herrighty advised this could be done by vote by the Council. This may be considered again next month.

The public comment period began. Rick Ege from the Musconectcong River Management Council commented on the Bureau of Freshwater Fisheries report today and the lake level management plan that was reviewed by Chief Barno.

Mr. Ege also noted the presentation on lead that was given today, adding that he has not used lead for fishing in over 20 years.

Janet Pizar from Millburn was next to address the Council. She also commented on the presentation given by Dr. Miller today. Ms. Pizar also commented on alleged violations of the no bear feeding law she observed. Assistant Director Herrighty reminded her that she has been asked in the past to forward any information to the Northern Region Law Enforcement Office since this would be their jurisdiction. Ms. Pizar also requested specific information from the bear hunting season, and asked when it might be available. Assistant Director Herrighty advised that the age of bear's harvested could take more than a year to obtain since extracted teeth are sent to a laboratory for aging.

Barbara Sauchau was next to address the Council. She stated her concerns on the agenda for today's meeting. She also objected to Division related travel. Ms. Sauchau made additional comments on the CBDMP applications from today and lead issues. She left some information for the file.

A motion was made by Councilman Messeroll, seconded by Councilman Puskas to adjourn. A vote was taken with all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 4:07 pm.