

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
NJ FISH AND GAME COUNCIL
Central Region Office
Robbinsville, New Jersey
April 11, 2017**

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

The meeting was called to order at 10:12 a.m. by Chairman David Burke.

The flag salute and pledge of allegiance were completed.

Chairman Burke read aloud the following notice: 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 on March 30, 2017 and delivered to the designated newspapers for the Division, the Newark Star Ledger and the Atlantic City Press; published on April 6, 2017.

Roll call was taken in attendance:

Councilwoman Cathy Blumig
Councilman Phillip Brodhecker
Councilwoman Barbara Brummer
Chairman David Burke
Councilman Joseph DeMartino
Councilman James DeStephano
Councilman Agust Gudmundsson
Councilman Robert Pollock
Councilman Frank Virgilio

Absent:

Councilman Jeffery Link

Division employees included: D. Golden, A. Ivany, F. Panico, T. Nichols, Lisa Clark, Chris Smith, A. Quirk and S. Coltrain.

There were numerous members of the public in attendance.

Chairman Burke noted that Councilman Link informed him that he would not be able to attend this meeting and that this would be Dr. Barbara Brummer's last meeting as a councilwoman. He gave his appreciation for all that she had done while on the Council. Dr. Brummer stated her replacement will be Rick Lathrop from Rutgers. She also expressed appreciation for the learning she received from the meetings. She stated she has experienced things that have broadened her understanding of the whole natural world. Endangered species are one thing but it's a lot larger than that and it has been a very good learning experience to see how this group works and how we can work together.

Chairman Burke also noted Acting Director Larry Herrighty, Assistant Director Paulette Nelson and Bureau Chiefs are attending a conference. Acting Assistant Director David Golden will fill in.

Chairman Burke asked if there were any changes to the minutes and asked for a motion to approve. Councilman Virgilio noted there needed to be a correction to the type of rifle referred to in the minutes. It should be AR-15.

A Motion was made by Councilman Gudmundsson to approve the February 14, 2017 minutes with corrections and seconded by Councilman DeMartino. Vote taken, all were in favor; motion carried.

Chairman Burke asked Acting Assistant Director Golden to give his report on behalf of the Director. Acting Assistant Director Golden reported the New Jersey Supreme Court ruled to deny the Animal Protection League's appeal on the Appellate Court Decision for the encapsulated foothold trap on March 31, 2017. The Appellate Court upheld the Council's rule of passing it in the recent Game Code.

Chairman Burke noted there are no agenda items to vote on, but if one arises, there will be a public comment period.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Agriculture Committee Report:

Councilman Brodhecker reported there was about two feet of snow in his area. As the snow thawed, deer were forging the open areas of grass. He reported there are still a lot of deer around, but they are becoming nocturnal, changing their patterns of where and when they travel. There has been no bear sightings yet. He also reported water is late getting into the fields. Farmers thought it would be early, now it is going to be late.

Councilman Link reported to Chairman Burke in a phone call that his area has been seeing a lot of turkey and is expecting a good turkey year. Councilwoman Blumig reported seeing lots of Canada geese. She also stated the bees are active and seedlings have been planted.

Dr. Sebastian Reist from New Jersey Department of Agriculture stated they have been working with farmers on some humane issues which may have some cross over to wildlife hunting. The Department is distributing educational material to farmers so they know what their responsibilities are to livestock they own and work with. Chairman Burke asked if he knew about an avian flu outbreak in the mid-west. Dr. Reist stated there was a single high path in the south and two low paths in the mid-west of avian outbreaks. The solution was from lessons learned in the past, once one bird was found dead, the whole house was depopulated.

Chairman Burke stated Texas approved a feeder with computerized recognition technology that poisons feral hogs. The feeder will not harm deer, raccoons or other animals that may access the station.

State Federation Reports:

Councilwoman Blumig Middlesex County has received a response from Assistant Director Nelson to their November 2016 letter request in wanting to get stiches fix regarding sales, licenses and where things come from.. They were very appreciative of her response and the information she provided. One member did an analysis, as he is interested in breaks for seniors, and processed out some numbers. The Federation will discuss with the Division. The Federation recognize it requires legislative approval, but would like to have something prepared in advance. They were very joyful to hear Pequest now being able to accept credit cards as a form of payment and are looking forward to having someone designated to sell licenses at the conclusion of Hunter's Education classes.

Councilman DeStephano reported attending the opening day of fishing. He spoke to an individual who did very good in spite of the high water levels on the river. Parking spaces were hard to find along the Pequannock, Pompton and Ramapo rivers.

Councilman Gudmundsson reported the Morris County Federation is having a dispute dealing with the Hopatcong State Park. The Park Service wants individual to have a special permit to fish from the beach. Councilman Virgilio stated the issue has now been resolved. He attended a meeting with Deputy Commissioner Glass, Assistant Commissioner Boornazian, Chief of Parks, Acting Director Herrightly, Superintendent NJOA and Federation Representative. The resolution that came out of the meeting is a permit will be issued to the Division of Fish and Wildlife. The permit will cover the 170 thousand anglers in the State of NJ. The regulation is on the Division's website. During the same meeting, Councilman Virgilio also discussed the Wharton State Forest hunting access permit. The permits were being issued illegally. He stated Assistant Commissioner Boornazian said he would get to the bottom of the permits.

Councilman Gudmundsson stated Warren County is interested in seeing the actual deer numbers in order to make comments on the Game Code Proposal. He also reported the dinners went well and were well attended. Councilman Gudmundsson reported fishing was difficult, but there were a lot of anglers out fishing at various sites. There were some comments of the fish being smaller than seen in previous years.

Councilman Virgilio reported that southern counties are soliciting candidates for the Fish and Game Council. Two candidates have moved their application forward for approval to go through the process. One is Kevin Broderick, a former DEP employee who worked in Coastal Resources and Riparian Rights and Kenneth Weldon former Lieutenant of the Department of Corrections. He is currently a beekeeper. Cumberland, Gloucester and Camden are really opposed to one of the game code proposals. Councilman Virgilio noted that in one document proposal number 36 is the same as the published document on the Division website proposal number 35. The proposal address the regulation set zero. They are both the same and should be treated equally when receiving responses. The Counties are very concerned about this issue and are having a deer committee meeting on April 12th.

Councilwoman Blumig stated she has asked that her name be withdrawn from serving a second term on the Council due to major changes in her life. She made it clear that she is not resigning.

Councilwoman Blumig reported receiving a call from someone who takes his granddaughter turkey hunting. He was not able to pick up her youth license, even though the Digest says that a youth who is 15 years old on January first can hunt on a youth license for that year. The Digest did not state the youth had to apply for it. Councilwoman Blumig thanked Acting Director Herrightly and Assistant Director Nelson for their help getting the youth her license.

Chairman Burke had 340 attendees at their dinner on President's Day in February. The youth sporting clay was delayed due to bad weather. He also stated there is a lot of fishing going on, even before the trout were stocked.

Finance Committee: No Report

Fish Committee:

Councilman Gudmundsson reported the committee will meet on May 31st to primarily discuss gross regulation changes. Chief Lisa Barno and staff are scheduled to attend various meetings to present the proposed changes that were discussed. Councilman Gudmundsson than the Bureau of Freshwater Fisheries as they are reaching out to sportsman in order to get input before the proposal is made, instead of trying to catch up after public comments.

Acting Assistant Director Golden stated there is a need to better tie in the Federation in the Game Code changes. Through the Division Rep program, there may need to be a way to help the Federation members better understand what the process looks like so that they can be given the opportunity to comment earlier in the process.

Councilman Gudmundsson noted the Fish Forums that are held is a great opportunity to give information and get information. Chairman Burke noted the Batsto Fish Forum was very good. At that Forum, it was noted that a youth trout fishing day is wanted as well as an earlier stocking for South Jersey.

Councilman Virgilio stated that Pennsylvania has a youth trout mentor day. There is also a program were a volunteer would purchase a voluntarily license for \$1.00 - \$2.00, then through Pitman Robinson¹ money, \$4.00 is refunded for the volunteer license. Councilman Gudmundsson noted we would have to be careful that the program is not abused with people buying the mentoring license and never having a youth with them.

Chairman Burke stated it would be nice for a conservation officer to attend federation meetings once or twice a year, Spring or Fall. He stated the group is interested in hearing from law enforcement.

Game Committee:

Chairman Burke reported for the Game Committee that the amendments to the Game Code were published on April 3rd and comments can be taken until June 1st. The most complaint he has heard was regarding the one to three day shotgun permit.

Legislative Committee:

¹ Should have stated Dingell-Johnson Funds

The legislative activity report was distributed. There were no comments or questions.

Endangered & Non-game Species Advisory Committee:

Councilwoman Brummer reported the ENSAC meeting was rescheduled to April 19th. The meeting will focus on the red knot population and an update on the large taskforce working on the aquaculture adaptive management plan. The taskforce is trying to balance the aquaculture of oysters along the Delaware Bay with population of red knots and horseshoe crabs so they don't interrupt the cycles of the migrating red knots and horseshoe crabs. The kick off meeting for this went well.

Councilwoman Brummer reported she happily attended the bobcat released at Wawayanda. A young male bobcat had been hit by a car last November. He was rehabbed at Woodlands Rehab, Tracey Lieber. Ms. Lieber was present as well as the surgeon who did the surgery on the bobcat. Nature Conservancy shared the cost with Conserve Wildlife Foundation to film the release in order to help raise the awareness level of endangered and threaten species.

Councilwoman Brummer reported on her involvement with the program of Endangered Species Group and Conserve Wildlife Amphibian Crossing Project. She has volunteered to help cross the amphibians to the vernal pool or back to the hillside located in Waterloo. There is a transportation fund grant in the works to build tunnels under the road. Another part of her volunteering is to document the species found dead on the road to help justify the need for the underground crossing. While doing crossing work on a rainy night, along the Musconetcong River, a large group of the newly identified frog species was found and the location recorded.

Councilwoman Brummer once again thanked the Council for the opportunity to serve and stated Rick Lathrop will be voted in as the next chair for ENSAC in an acting capacity. She also stated the Commissioner will not approve any new appointments until the next governor is in place.

Waterfowl Stamp Advisory Committee:

Chairman Burke reported a Committee meeting was held on March 21st. Three offerings from Green Acres were reviewed. The Committee agreed to contribute to one offering which had a very high rating. Lately, the Committee is partnering with other groups to obtain land. More information was needed on the other two properties before making an offer. The annual income from stamp sales is \$65,000 – \$75,000. The Committee has committed, for the next several years, to contribute \$25,000 to a Ducks Unlimited project in Quebec. Updates were given on previous acquisitions. The Committee is working on phase three of the Southeast New Jersey Coastal Initiative which is part of the North America Wetlands Conservation Act. The goal is permanent preservation of about 270 acres of wetlands habitat in New Jersey.

Wildlife Rehabilitators Advisory Committee:

Councilman Brodhecker reported the committee's next meeting is scheduled for April 26th.

Public Member Comments:

Councilman Pollock reported receiving an email from a representative of the local Lions Club in Allentown complementing the Division stocking fish in Colliers Mills and for the fishing derby that will be held in July. Councilman Pollock also reported PSE&G has 900 miles of overhead wide powerline rights of way that provides unique habitat for the State's endangered and game

species. PSE&G has opportunities to do public/private partnerships with various groups to promote connectivity between WMAs or between larger hunting lands. A meeting was held in Trenton to discuss a management plan that may be able to be passed on to all the electric and gas providers in the state. This has been done on a small scale with the Audubon and as a result PSEG manages certain rights of way for gold winged warbler. A public education component would be added offering a field guide identifying certain species, staying away from T&E species.

Acting Assistant Director Golden stated, it is a good opportunity for the Division and the properties it manages for the benefit of wildlife.

DIVISION REPORTS

Barbara Stoff, Licensing and Permits, was not present and will be out until the beginning of May. Acting Assistant Director Golden reported a new employee has started and will work with Ms. Stoff.

Chief Lisa Barno, Bureau of Freshwater Fisheries was attending another function and staff member Chris Smith made a report on her behalf. Due to a number of issues over the past few months with the Treasury Print Shop, the printing and shipping of the 2017 Trout Regulation Signs was greatly delayed this year. CO's have been working with volunteers to post waters giving priority to those waters with Special Regulations and In-Season Closures. This information has been posted on the Division website to assure anglers waters have been stocked unless indicated otherwise.

Opening day had a lot of rain creating high muddy conditions. Opening Day success in 2017 was varied the average angler's success rate was far lower than past opening days. The average angler's catch rate was 0.22 fish per angler on streams and rivers. This is much lower than the average angler success rate of 0.53 fish per angler fishing ponds and lakes. Survey clerks recorded 1,084 anglers on 28 lakes statewide (an average of ~39 anglers per waterbody). This is slightly better than the 37 anglers per waterbody recorded on 18 lakes and ponds last year. Mountain Farm Pond (Hunterdon), Silver Lake (Sussex) and South Vineland Park Pond (Cumberland), to name a few, were by far the place to be on opening day as anglers had the highest catch rates per angler at 2.10 fish per angler, 1.30 and 0.94 fish per angler respectively. Mr. Smith gave a report on the number of anglers surveyed and their catch at various locations stocked by the Division.

Mr. Smith reported Hackettstown is in the midst of its broodstock collection. High water within the coves and dropping lake temperatures impacted the success rates of the Walleyes broodstock collection which started March 24th. With the warming trend over the weekend the staff was able to collect 219 Walleye ranging in size from 0.7 to 9.58 pounds, measuring from 12 to 20 inches. Broodstock collection for Northern Pike is also completed. The Hackettstown staff are now collecting Muskies

Mr. Smith reported there was fish kill on the south branch of the Raritan River. The Raritan Headwaters Association reported White Perch mortality in the South Branch downstream of

Budd Lake. It is believed to be a continuation of a fish kill that was investigated at Budd Lake on June 1, 2016. At that time, Division Fish Pathologist, Dr. Jan Lovy, determined the cause of the kill was related to columnaris disease caused by *Flavobacterium columnare*, a bacterial infection in the gills and skin. This bacterium causes necrosis of skin and gill tissue. The bacterium is found throughout the aquatic environment and can cause disease in stressed fish populations. With Budd Lake being a relatively shallow lake and sudden increase to above average temperatures, it was likely that the predisposing stressor was the quick warming of water temperatures that occurred just prior to the kill that led to the columnaris outbreak. Such reports have been reported in this waterbody before and dead fish have been periodically noticed since last summer. Mr. Smith noted that whole area has a high population of White Perch most around the same size.

Mr. Smith reported on the Flat Brook Telemetry Project. On April 12th, a telemetry project will begin on the Flat Brook within the Catch and Release Area to document the movement of stocked trout within the stretch. Today, radio transmitters will be surgically implanted in 20 Rainbow Trout. After a 24 hour holding period the trout will be stocked within the Catch and release Only section of the Flat brook. Monitoring will be accomplished by both manned and unmanned receivers. Despite Catch and Release Only regulations and a weekly stocking regime, trout appear to be moving fairly quickly once stocked. The study is to provide further data on the low numbers of trout that are found within this section of stream. Signs will be posted alerting anglers to the potential for catching trout with transmitters they are asked to return them to the water.

Mr. Smith reported the potential changes to the state's Wild Trout Streams has been posted on the Division website. The information includes the PowerPoint presentation presented at the Public Trout Meeting along with files of the handouts. A link to an email for anglers to provide comments is also provided. Mr. Smith encouraged the Council to take a look at the information and feel free to provide comments directly back to Scott Collenburg, Pat Hamilton or Ross Shramko. After incorporating feedback, the potential regulations will go to the full Council in June for a vote to be included into formal amendments to the Fish Code.

Chief Al Ivany, Bureau of Information and Education reported the Bureau held a successful Outdoor Writers Workshop at Assunpink with Commissioner Martin being the Keynote Speaker on March 30th. The Commissioner presented a proclamation from Governor Christie acknowledging the Division's 125th anniversary. Chief Ivany is working to get it framed and will put a picture of it on the website. Chief Ivany asked if anyone knew of outdoor writers who would like to be included in the workshop for next year, please let him know and he will make contact.

The Pequest open house was postponed for the first time due to snow cover, rain and mud. The new date will be June 3rd and 4th. The Division will work to plan Pequest open house in June from this point forward if things work well and as the weather is typically better that time of year. June 3rd is also the kick off of National Fishing and Boating Week. June 10th is the first free fishing day of the year. Councilman Gudmundsson asked if it were possible to have the open house on the free fishing day. Chief Ivany responded that it could be an option and will look into it for next year.

Chief Ivany also reported on trout season opening. There were approximately 100 veterans from Project Healing Waters, Wounded Warriors and some Active Military who attended the pheasant hunt back in December. They caught a lot of fish. Everyone was permitted to take four home. Deputy Commissioner David Glass was also in attendance at Pequest, fishing for the day. There was excellent opening day press with front page articles in several newspapers and radio interviews. Chief Ivany reported he has been working with radio station WNNJ and Clear Channel Communications to develop a statewide hunting and fishing license sales event promotion. Radio ads were put out to buy fishing licenses and trout stamps online or at local license agents and was heard by Deputy Commissioner Glass.

Chief Ivany gave an update on the Mobile Conservation Outreach Trailer. Staff has met with the design team. Staff member Jessica Griglak is the coordinator for working with them and putting together the exhibits. As long as the Bureau keep to a tight schedule, the trailer should be ready for the Expo in September. Ms. Griglak is reaching out to all the bureaus to ensure all funded programs are covered.

Chief Ivany announced May 21st is the Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament. This year there will be a high school fishing club category. All information is on the website. The Facebook Contest "Send in your best fish" is on now. A Facebook live "behind the scenes at the Pequest Fish Hatchery" will be produced soon.

Chairman Burke moved the agenda to new business in order address the re-establishment of the Farmer/Sportsman Relations Committee before Councilwoman Blumig left the meeting. He is recommending Councilmen Brodhecker to be the Chair with Councilmembers Link, Virgilio, Blumig and DeStefano as members. Everyone present agreed.

Acting Assistant Director Golden reported on behalf of the Bureau of Land Management. He reported improvements to the Millville Shooting Range have begun. The range is closed indefinitely as they work to realign it. The improvements will include tree clearing, building of new berms for the muzzle loading range and the trap range will be realigned. Everything will be pulled south along the Ackley Road in Millville. There will be over \$1 million over the next two years in the improvements to the outdoor shooting facilities. Each muzzle loader range will be upgraded with a covered shooting station and improvement of the berms, which will help with safety and the management of lead.

In Southern New Jersey, the Green Acres program help acquire the Shepherd's Mill Girl Scout Camp in Greenwich. This will become a part of the Cohansey WMA. It is 457 acres with a 50 acre lake. Freshwater Fisheries will do an assessment for stocking.

In North New Jersey the Sparta Mountain WMA Forest Stewardship Plan is moving forward. A public meeting will take place in May.

The Bureau is in the final stages of the WMA Survey. 70% of the people that are interviewed support active management on WMAs.

The Sparta Mountain Forest Stewardship Plan has been having a vocal outcry by the minority who are against the work being proposed. It is important that supporters come out to the public meeting. A website called "Sparta Facts" will be launching soon that will get the information out without any distortion.

April will be the last month of the WMA Area User Survey. The Survey began the first week of May in 2016. April 30th will be the final survey day. The results will be available in the near future. As part of the contract, Stockton will hold two focus group meetings. Stakeholders have been identified from many non-profits, state and federal agencies. The meeting is on May 11th at the Assunpink office by invitation only. The first meeting will be in the morning with Division staff only and the evening meeting will consist of individuals from non-profits, state and federal agencies. Council members will be invited to the meeting.

Acting Chief Matthew Brown was attending the North East Conference and Deputy Chief Frank T. Panico made a report on his behalf. Conservation Officer Bryan Mascio of the Central Region Office is being awarded Operation Officer of the Year Award at the conference.

Deputy Chief Panico reported Law Enforcement took over the issuing farmers shoot to kill permits. It is a goal to get the turnaround time quicker. Law Enforcement took delivery of three brand new patrol boats. The North, Central and Southern region each received a G3-boat. It is the first new patrol boat in over 20 years.

In March Franklin Township, Somerset County, Amwell Road, there was a report of a diesel sheen smell on the canal water. After inspection there were above ground diesel tanks found, serving as a filling station, leaking into the Delaware and Raritan Canal. Hazmat was notified and a Notice of Violation in the amount of \$3,000 is being issued to the company.

In the Northern Region on opening day of Trout, Law Enforcement made 367 inspections with 14 summons issued ranging from fishing with bait in a conservation area, wrongful procurement of residence license and six summons for no licenses.

The last few years the Bureau has been trying to get ahead of the spring panfish runs. It's a fish not stocked by the Division. Patrols are made for panfish, yellow perch runs, scrappy runs as there are quite a few summons for over the limits on them. Striped bass runs made on Sunday with 22 inspections and 10 summons. Central Region – Delaware River there were 5-6 inspection and 5-6 summons.

All regions have been using camera technology in WMAs. The camera will email the officer when a picture comes in. In the Southern Region on April 8th the camera captured a party of 20 vehicles with over 30 people. As a result over 60 summons issued. The trail cameras have been very useful in other areas helping to identify dumping cases.

The Bureau was informed there was going to be a very large 4-wheel event taking place in the south at the Peasey WMA in Millville. Law Enforcement was proactive and tracked down the organizers and they cancelled the event. Officers went to the site on the day of the event in case everyone did not get the word that the event was cancelled and apprehended 13 dirt bikes and

ATVS that was unrelated to the proposed event. There were 20 – 30 summons issued on that day. WMA and ATV off road vehicles use is a very big issue that Law Enforcement tries to get ahead of, but it is very challenging.

Chairman Burke asked about two cases concerning convicted felons a couple of months ago regarding having crossbows and whether or not a felon is allowed to use them. Deputy Chief Panico stated it depends on what they are convicted of and also depending on the interpretation by the County Prosecutors Office.

Acting Assistant Director Golden stated Chief Stanko is at the Northeast Conference and the only thing to report for Wildlife Management is there will be a deer season report at the next meeting in May. Chief Jenkins is also at the conference and reports the Bureau is still actively working on the State Wildlife Action Plan and on track to have it submitted by the deadline in June.

Lunch: 12:00 pm – 1:03 pm

Captain Anne Quirk read the statement for revocation appeal for Mr. Paul Verdorosa convicted of a violation of negligent discharge of a firearm while hunting. The summons was issued by Conservation Officer Riviello. Captain Quirk read the officer's statement and a statement from Mr. Verdorosa.

Chairman Burke offered Mr. Verdorosa the opportunity to give his statement to the Council. Mr. Verdorosa gave his accounting of the incident to the Council. After being questioned about his previous five violations, Councilman Virgilio noted that the Council should not judge him on his previous violations, but on what he is appealing for today. Councilman Virgilio asked Mr. Verdorosa what are the five basic rules of hunter safety. Mr. Verdorosa could not accurately answer the question.

Chairman Burke asked for a motion to open the floor for discussion.

Councilman Gudmundsson made a motion to open the floor for discussion, seconded by Councilman DeStephano, all were in favor, motion carried.

Councilman Gudmundsson started the discussion stating it has been less than three months since the conviction and asking the suspension to be removed seems a bit early. Three months is a short penalty for such a severe case where someone got hurt.

Councilman Virgilio noted that this is a personal injury violation which was enacted by legislation in 1990 "Comprehensive Sportsman Responsibility Package" where the Legislators and the Governor saw fit to put enhanced penalties with additional time in suspension. It is considered to be a very serious violation. In addition to that seriousness, officers had the opportunity, if they desired, to charge him with a criminal violation of assault. Had the officer used the criminal charge, he would not be able to have a firearm. He further stated he believes the officers distance accounting was more accurate, because if it were further (200 feet), the pellet would not have penetrated because it would have exhausted its energy. Since the

legislation saw this as an important violation, enhanced its penalty that the Council should let the violation stand and have privileges be reinstated on February 1, 2022.

Councilman DeStephano agreed with the above stating it's only been three month.

Councilman Brodhecker asked Captain Quirk to specify the violation again. Captain Quirk read the violation 23:9A-1 entitled Negligent Use of A Weapon.

Councilman Gudmundsson made a motion to close the discussion, second by Councilman DeStephano. Chairman Burke moved the hearing to restore or not restore.

Councilman Brodhecker made a motion not to restore, second by Councilman Gudmundsson, all were in favor, none opposed, motion carried unanimously.

Captain Anne Quirk read the statement for revocation appeal for Mr. Rusen Senyurt who has one violation for possession of marine finfish written by CO Woerner and one violation for hunting pheasants during the closed season written by CO Driscoll. Captain Quirk read the officer's statements. Mr. Senyart was not present at the hearing. Captain Quirk noted Mr. Senyurt has been pheasant hunting since 2010.

Chairman Burke asked for a motion to open the floor for discussion.

Councilman Gudmundsson made a motion to open the floor for discussion, seconded by Councilman DeStephano, all were in favor, motion carried.

Councilman Gudmundsson stated he is more forgiving of the fish incident, but hunting over an hour and a half while everyone else is in the parking lot waiting is less forgivable.

Councilman Virgilio stated opening day is special, if sportsmen are following regulation, seasons or bag limits, they take unfair opportunity in an un-sportsman manner. He does not see how the Council can reinstate this hunter because he takes what he wants to fit his needs.

Councilman Gudmundsson made a motion to close the discussion, second by Councilman Brodhecker. Chairman Burke moved the hearing to restore or not restore.

Councilman Gudmundsson made a motion to not reinstate, second by Councilman Brodhecker, all were in favor, none opposed, motion carried unanimously.

Staff member Ted Nichols, Supervisor, Waterfowl Program, Bureau of Wildlife Management, introduced Lisa Clark, Wildlife Biologist, hired in September 2016. Ms. Clark introduced herself to the Council.

Mr. Nichols passed around classic black duck wing and a classic mallard wing giving details on the difference. Mr. Nichols gave a presentation on how the migratory bird seasons are selected. He passed around a chart listing the proposed dates and locations for the 2017 pheasant hunt days.

Chairman Burke opened the floor for public comment for the Migratory Bird Season Dates limited to three minutes per person.

Barbara Sachau, Whitehouse Station, NJ commented there is a decline in many species of bird and Mr. Nichols job is to make sure they get killed and it is sad.

Chairman Burke asked for a motion on the proposed migratory bird season.

Councilman DeMartino made a motion to accept migratory bird season as proposed by Mr. Nichols, seconded by Councilman Gudmundsson, all were in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Chairman Burke stated there was a Game Committee Meeting this morning. Acting Assistant Director Golden made a presentation on the pheasant season and the pheasant farm. He stated the farm is having staffing issues. Last year the farm had six employee and now is down to three full time staff members. The farm had a goal to raise 60,000 birds but with such a limited staff, it is too much to ask of them. The Division is looking into buying adult birds in order to relieve the pressure of the staff having to raise that many birds. In the meantime, there appeared to be an early spring and the birds began to lay eggs in early January. Patrick Carr has returned as an hourly staff to help the farm. He has determined the number of eggs the birds will lay based on his study he performed in the past. There will not be enough eggs to grow the birds needed for this year. The Bureau is proposing to purchase day old chicks to help out.

Acting Assistant Director Golden stated this year's goal is to put out 60,000 birds. 45,000 birds will be raised at the farm. Due to the bird's early start in laying eggs, the Division is proposing to buy 9,000 day old chicks in order to meet the 45,000. In addition to the 45,000 birds being raised on the farm, the Bureau would like to purchase 15,000 adult birds that will make up for the staffing shortage on the farm. Acting Assistant Director Golden passed out a chart with the various scenarios and cost.

Chairman Burke asked if everyone was in agreement with the proposed plan.

Councilman Brodhecker made a motion to approve the plan to purchase day old and adult birds for the pheasant farm, seconded by Councilman DeStephano. All were in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Acting Assistant Director Golden presented stocking calendar to be approved for printing in the Digest. This will help hunters make better choices in where to hunt based on where birds are stocked. After a discussion of how the birds are stocked and the dates conflicting with trapping seasons that may cause harm to hunting dogs, Chairman Burke open the floor for public comment on the stocking calendar to be printed in the Digest.

Barbara Sachau, Whitehouse Station, NJ commented on how there is no advance notice on what is going to be discussed at the meeting and there needs to be a better procedure in notifying the

public. Ms. Sachau also stated she was not pleased with how her comments are being transcribed.

Paul Verdorosa, Skillman NJ, asked what is the percentage of mortality rate on the day old chicks. Acting Assistant Director Golden responded in order to raise 60,000 chicks, 80,000 eggs are set. Mr. Verdorosa also asked where the quail were going to come from this year. Response, quail will come from Trace but the pheasants will be put out for bid.

Councilman Gudmundsson made a motion to use the standard stocking schedule as proposed, second by Councilman Brodhecker, all in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Councilwoman Brummer stated she would hope the Division would look at the economics of buying the birds.

PUBLIC COMMENT (3MINUTES)

Barbara Sachau, Whitehouse Station, NJ commented logging on Sparta Mountain is anti-environmental and should be stopped. There has never been a large population of golden warblers. The public member comment on PSEG and NJ Audubon using spaces around their poles does not mention the chemicals they put down to kill vegetation around the poles. She also stated minutes should be made available to the public even if the meeting is canceled. Minutes should be put up online in draft format. It is a waste of time in reporting the number of fish caught by each person. All meetings should be public where the general public is invited to come.

Paul Verdorosa, Skillman, NJ commented he has been hunting Greenwood since its inception. The State of New Jersey did a super job in there. One would think they are in North Carolina while there. The bottom line of everything is dollars and cents. Forty dollars for quail and pheasant permit is nothing. Why can't it be raised to \$50, it will make a lot of money. There will be opposition, but in the long run they will love you.

Janet Pizar, Millburn, NJ as a point of reference called attention to the report wildlife services section, black bear unit, page 7. After reviewing 7 years of monthly reports, specifically looking for black bear unit, noticed most of them had black bear control lethal and non-lethal. However, for years under the non-lethal control, the public is hearing nothing about the techniques of aversive conditioning, the pyrotechnics, the black mouth curse, enforcement of garbage laws, all strategies that fit in to black bear management plan. It seems as if all the resources are going into the lethal management of bears. Where are the non-lethal reports of managing the bears? Acting Assistant Director Golden commented that effort had been dialed back due to it not being effective. In looking at the recent update in the Comprehensive Black Bear Management Plan, located on the Fish and Wildlife Website, the information is summarized in the plan.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Brummer and seconded by Councilman DeMartino to adjourn the meeting at 2:56 pm. Vote taken, all in favor, none-opposed; motion carried.