

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
FISH AND GAME COUNCIL

Central Region Office
Robbinsville, New Jersey
September 9, 2008

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

Acting Chairwoman Jeanette Vreeland
Councilman Dave Burke
Councilwoman Jane Morton-Galetto
Councilman John Messeroll
Councilman Robert Puskas
Councilman Dan Van Mater
Councilman Len Wolgast

Absent: Councilman Richard Culp
Councilman Fred Hough
Councilman Ed Kertz

Division employees included: Assistant Director Larry Herrighty, Paulette Nelson, Jim Sciascia, Lisa Barno, Tim Cussen, Tony Petrongolo, Carole Kandoth, Barbara Stoff, Robert Longcor and Frank Virgilio.

Members of the public included: Representatives from the Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, the United Crossbow Hunters of New Jersey, the Farm Bureau and others.

The meeting was called to order shortly after 10 am by Acting Chairwoman Vreeland.

The flag salute and Pledge of Allegiance were completed.

Roll call was taken.

In accordance with P.L. 1975, notice of this meeting was filed with and posted at the Office of the Secretary of State and sent to the designated newspapers of the Division, the Newark Star Ledger and The Press (Atlantic City) on August 22, 2008.

Acting Chairwoman Vreeland distributed a revision to page 6 of the minutes that the members had received. Chief Barno, from the Bureau of Freshwater Fisheries had not been able to review the minutes before they were distributed to the members, and asked for this change regarding the swamp eel update that had been given at the meeting. This matter was discussed by the members, and Assistant Director Herrighty reminded the members that the minutes are a summary of the items reported on. **A motion was made by Councilman Burke to accept the minutes with this change as presented.** There was no second to this motion. Assistant Director Herrighty pointed

out to the Council that Chief Barno was away and did not have the opportunity to review the draft of the minutes before they were sent to the members, and therefore was requesting this change today. **A motion was made by Councilman Messeroll, seconded by Councilman Puskas to leave the minutes as reported, with the addition of the information given today.** Chief Barno noted that the information reported in the minutes was not totally accurate, and may lead to misinformation being given to the general public. There was discussion on this matter. Councilwoman Galetto asked if the items reported could be corrected so that it would not lead to inaccuracies, and Assistant Director Herrighty added that the minutes could be voted on at the next meeting, giving time to Chief Barno to make the necessary corrections. Chief Barno added that she could review and rework the information reported, and present it to the Council after lunch. This was agreeable to everyone, **and Councilman Messeroll rescinded his motion.**

Acting Chairwoman Vreeland noted that she has been busy with travel, and reviewed some of the places she had been.

Acting Chairwoman Vreeland also reported that she had received information from the Governor's Office on reappointments to the Council. Candidates now have new forms to review and complete, and these are for both reappointments and new appointees. There was further discussion on this matter.

It was noted that the newspapers did a good job on reporting on the controversy regarding the use of crossbows.

Acting Chairwoman Vreeland also noted an article in the Daily Record reporting on bear activity. She added that she did not contribute any information to this article, but had been criticized by the writer of the article for not responding to their phone calls. She noted that she had not been able to receive the calls since she had been away.

Assistant Director Herrighty reported for Director Chanda, who was attending the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Meeting in Saratoga Springs today, and added that Chief Jenkins from the Endangered and Non Game Species Program had left today to attend the Wildlife Diversity Technical Committee Meeting. He noted that within the next few weeks, biologists would be attending different meetings and conferences with associates from other states.

Acting Chairwoman Vreeland noted that the public comment period would be held at the end of the meeting since there were no specific agenda items to comment on today.

Councilman Puskas reported for the Agriculture Committee. He noted that there had been 4" of rain this past month, which would be helpful for the Fall crops.

At last month's meeting, it was reported that a large number vultures had been seen in one area, and Councilman Puskas noted that a calf had been born in his pasture, and there were 26 black headed vultures trying to get to it. He added that he had applied for a permit to shoot the vultures and received it within one week from the Division, and felt that the response time was outstanding, adding he was still waiting for his Federal permit to use for the Canada goose problem he is having.

Councilwoman Galetto clarified that black vultures are known as predators to species that are considered helpless, noting that anyone reading these minutes and not being familiar with the black vulture would better understand why permits to shoot are issued for them. She added that global

warming may be one of the reasons that black vultures are expanding their range into this area, since they were not traditionally a species that had been in New Jersey. She also pointed out that they are a much more aggressive vulture than the turkey vulture. Councilman Burke added that they are not new to New Jersey, noting a pig farmer in Cape May County had a problem with them years ago. There was some additional discussion on this matter and that the black vulture population was increasing.

Acting Chairwoman Vreeland reported for Councilman Hough. He noted that he has seen many turkey poults on his farm. There have also been deer grazing on his corn crops. The bear that was in his area has not been seen lately.

Councilman Messeroll reported for the Legislative Committee. He noted that there is not much going on at this time. Legislative Liaison Nelson added that there is no date yet as to when the Legislature will be going back in session.

Councilwoman Galetto reported for the Endangered and Non-Game Species Committee. She gave a brief review of the minutes from the August 13, 2008 Endangered and Non-Game Species Advisory Committee meeting. Most specifically, she reviewed the Sahara Sands property and the Committee's feeling that it is an inappropriate site for an off-road vehicle park. Councilwoman Galetto noted that it was previously disclosed back in 2003 that her husband's family owns the neighboring property. She abstained from voting on the Committee's motion to send a letter to the Commissioner asking that other locations be looked at for the development of an ORV park.

Councilwoman Galetto also reviewed the State Wildlife Grants (SWG) funding and match those grants (including in-kind work from the Conserve Wildlife Foundation). She also shared that the SWG grants are not competitive, and that the funding is based on a formula that determines New Jersey's apportionment. She felt that this should be kept in mind and to strive for getting New Jersey's share of the funding.

An update was given to the Council on the status of Champagne Island. Paperwork is in place through the Commissioner's and Governor's Offices to provide that the site be administered as part of the Cape May Wetlands WMA. Portions of the area remained open for public use, but nesting success was impacted by the April northeaster and a high spring tide. It was suggested at their meeting that a press release be prepared that would note the high level of compliance and that they appreciate the public taking interest in protecting the species at this area.

It was also reported by Councilwoman Galetto that a moratorium option for the Horseshoe crab harvest was not included in the vote on Addendum 5 by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Council, and this was a true disappointment to the Committee.

Councilwoman Galetto also noted a concern about Japanese stilt grass, and invasive plant species, being trans-located in the Berkshire Valley WMA during timber harvest activities. Assistant Director Herrighty and Chief Petrongolo are aware of this and are making efforts to keep this plant from the upper areas of the WMA.

The Committee also discussed white nose syndrome in bats at their meeting.

Councilwoman Galetto reminded the members that there would be a new representative in January to sit on this Council with the election of the new Chairperson to the Endangered and Non-Game

Species Advisory Committee. There was discussion on this matter, including if an alternate could be appointed to this Council, but the statute would not allow for an alternate person to be able to vote.

Councilman Messeroll reported for the Federation. In the Central Region, they are working to acquire a pontoon boat for use for the disabled hunter's waterfowl hunting program. They are hoping to have this in place by November.

There are currently 15 youths signed up for the waterfowl hunt in the Southern Region, and the Ocean County Federation is making plans for the hunt in the Central Region.

A chairman has been appointed for the youth pheasant hunt in the Central Region on November 1, 2008 and efforts to coordinate this program are underway.

The Convention for next year will be June 12 – 14, 2009 at the Eatontown Sheraton. Some of the activities planned were reviewed.

Councilman Messeroll reminded members that the Federation calendars are on order for 2009.

Councilman Burke reported for the Federation in the Southern Region. Meetings were not held in July and August.

The Cumberland County Federation will be holding its' annual jamboree this Saturday, and the Tuckerton Decoy Show will be coming up soon. Some fishing activities are also still occurring.

Acting Chairwoman Vreeland reported that in the Northern Region the Federation is gathering up strength for future events.

Councilman Messeroll reminded members of the upcoming Governor's Surf Tournament, and advised that they are still looking for judges for this event.

Chief Barno reported for the Bureau of Freshwater Fisheries. She noted that they were hoping that the recent storm would help with the stream flows, but they have not seen any improvement and streams are lower now than they were this time last year. Fall trout stocking will begin on October 7, 2008 and staff will be going out during the week of September 24, 2008 to do spot checks on the streams to check conditions. Changes can be made a day or two before stocking begins if necessary. Chief Barno added that status indicator reports show that this has been the 19th driest Summer since 1895. There was further review and discussion on this matter.

During the storm this past weekend, Burlington County issued a mandate to all their municipalities to lower all Municipal lakes, and the five acre Woolmans Lake in Mount Holly was completely drained and all the fish there were killed. A letter is being sent to Burlington County advising them that they need a permit to lower any waters. Chief Barno added that you gain minimal to any large storage capacity by lowering a lake. There was further discussion on this matter, with Councilman Van Mater noting the concerns in that area because of previous flooding to the Medford Lakes region several years ago. Staff will be working with Burlington County to get the lake refilled, but it may take three to four years for the fishery to repopulate.

Chief Barno reported that at the Hackettstown Hatchery, the channel catfish spawning is done, and they had the best spawn they have had in the last several years. Last year staff decided to release some of the older brookstock and work off the younger stock, and Chief Barno felt that this decision paid off. This year they have 60,000 channel catfish about 3” in size.

Chief Barno noted the monthly report that shows the Research and Management section has been doing stream sampling.

Councilwoman Galetto noted that she had been approached by several fishermen that the fisheries were off at Union Lake compared to previous years, and asked Chief Barno if she was aware of a decrease of the fishery in this lake. Chief Barno noted that Fisheries Biologist Chris Smith had noted a decline in bass fish several years ago, and he has been monitoring the situation and has noted a slight improvement since then. Councilwoman Galetto added that she has seen less eel grass at Union Lake and asked if the vegetation was also being monitored, and Chief Barno noted that Chris Smith may be watching this, but she will check with him.

Chief Petrongolo reported for the Bureau of Land Management. He noted that there were no new lands added to the WMA system this past month.

Chief Petrongolo noted a controversy in Holland Township, Hunterdon County at the angler access project on the Musconectcong River. The recent addition to this property allowed for several small parking areas for the fishermen, but at a meeting he attended on August 20, the local residents had several concerns, including archeology and possible Indian artifacts in the area. That particular concern has been referred to the State Historic Preservation Office. One of the proposed parking areas was very close to a private home, and the homeowner was originally acceptable to the plan, but at the meeting noted they no longer supported the parking area at that location. Chief Petrongolo reviewed the area and the road conditions, noting that roadside parking could be done at that particular site. Councilwoman Galetto asked if it would be difficult to restore these areas, but Chief Petrongolo noted that there was nothing permanent put at these areas so restoration would not be a problem. He added that there was a lot of misinformation being circulated about the sizes and intended use of these parking areas, and that caused concern for the local residents.

Chief Petrongolo noted last month meetings were going to be held with the farmers on changes to the farm lease program. This matter will be worked on with the Office of Leases and Concessions and the Assistant Commissioner’s Office, but due to the amount of work involved for these long term leases, the leases will not become effective until the 2010 season. They hope to have the leases written and sent to the State House Commission for approval in March, 2009 so things can be in place for 2010.

There is a piece of beach access property in Sea Bright that we were not previously aware the Division owned. This acquisition was assigned to us over 20 years ago, and Director Cookingham agreed with Green Acres that we would manage the area. It has been managed by Sea Bright all along, and research is now being done for any previous documentation that may have been completed that would allow Sea Bright to manage the area. Chief Petrongolo noted that it is an excellent site, with parking for 44 vehicles.

Chief Petrongolo reported that staff has been working with the Department of Agriculture’s beneficial insects laboratory who has been putting beetles on WMAs to help control the growth of purple loosestrife. The program has been successful so far. They have recently come out with

another bug that would control the invasive growth mile-a-minute wheat, and that too has been put at several wildlife management areas. They are currently working on a bug to control the hemlock woolly adelgid, a pest that has been killing hemlocks in the Northern part of the state.

As previously mentioned by Councilwoman Galetto, Chief Petrongolo noted the recent timber cut at the Berkshire Valley WMA. He reported that there have been several timber cuts there over the last 15 years, with 20 acres being cut this past winter. They had noticed that seeds from the Japanese stilt grass may have been moved on the tires of the equipment being used, and Senior Biologist Mimi Dunne met with Emile Devito at the site to inspect and spray the area. They will continue to monitor the site. Chief Petrongolo reviewed regeneration concerns that Mr. Devito had, but noted that the older timber cuts are regrowing.

An agreement had been reached with Lower Township to demolish all the buildings at Ponderlodge and restore the site for a variety of wildlife habitats, but a local group has come forward who wants to save the buildings. They have been in contact with local politicians and the Commissioners Office, and the demolition project is now on hold.

Councilman Puskas asked if the Division would be able to write a farm lease different from that being used by the Division of Parks and Forestry, since he had concerns about the lease that they had in place. Chief Petrongolo noted that we can work with a template from the Attorney Generals Office through the Office of Leases and Concessions, and tailor it to our own needs. Due to our lack of personnel, we may be able to discuss options for habitat improvement in lieu of lease fees. Liz Thompson from the Farm Bureau asked if we have been in contact with the Department of Agriculture on this matter, and Chief Petrongolo advised that the Department had been in touch with them. There was some further discussion on this matter.

Councilman Messeroll noted the good job done on road going into Stone Tavern Lake, but noted some concerns about the small amount of parking available during bass tournaments. This will be relayed to the Central Region Superintendent.

Councilwoman Galetto noted the recent awards dinner held by the Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River and its Tributaries, where Division employees Laurie Pettigrew and Greg Honachefsky were presented with awards for volunteerism to their organization.

Chief Cussen reported for the Bureau of Law Enforcement. He noted the recent passing retired Conservation Officer Wayne Bunting, who retired in 2002 as the District III Lieutenant Supervisor. He added that Wayne was a wonderful man who was loved by those who worked for and with him, and noted it is unusual that a supervisor who retires and keeps in touch with their employees as closely as they did when they were working. Chief Cussen added that this shows Wayne was the type of person who looked out for his people, and he will be missed.

The seven Conservation Officer recruits who were in the Cape May County Police Academy all graduated in June. One of the officers, Keith Fox of the Southern Region, was designated as "Most Likely To Succeed" by his fellow recruits at the Academy. Also, Brett Nicklowe had the second highest firearms score in the class. Other graduates included Brian Mascio, Brian Scott, Tom Swift, Kyle Ziegler and Jennifer Ciraolo. These graduates are now completing their Field Training Officer Program.

The Bureau's basic Conservation Officer III class is scheduled to begin in late September, and will include seven recent academy graduates, as well as the three new candidates who were recently selected. These newly selected candidates should be entering the police academy in the early part of 2009.

There were a total of 6,393 hours recorded during this reporting period. Of those hours, 1,049 were for freshwater fishing activities, 1,790 for marine resources, 682 for wildlife management area patrols and 17 for bear patrol and investigations. A total of 7,440 inspections were made, resulting in 461 summonses, 66 warnings and 1 criminal arrest being made. Of the summonses issued, 101 were for freshwater fishing violations, 132 for wildlife management area violations and 117 for marine resource violations.

Chief Cussen reported that the issuance of farmer deer depredation and noisemaker permits are now being done by the Bureau of Law Enforcement. To date, 133 requests for permits have been received.

Three bear feeding complaints were investigated, resulting in two written warnings and one complaint being signed.

Chief Cussen followed up on a report given last month where CO Sutton from the Northern Region was able to save the life of a person who had tried to hang themselves at the Columbia Lake WMA.

Three officers attended the International Hunter Education Association school in Windsor Locks, Connecticut recently. The IHEA teaches forensics information that can be used when investigating hunting accidents. Two officers were students, and one was an instructor.

In the Marine Region, CO Trembley inspected a recreational vessel on August 13 as it returned to a slip at the Anchor Marina on the Maurice River. He found the occupants of the vessel had many undersized fish in their possession, and the operator of the boat admitted that they had used a compact net configuration, which is illegal for recreational use. The appropriate complaints were issued to the operator of the boat, and the illegal nets were seized.

Chief Cussen reported that the Training Unit has been busy with quarterly requalification courses, and three bear response training classes have been scheduled. The basic conservation officer training class is also being planned for the seven recent graduates plus the three newly hired candidates.

There was some additional discussion between Chief Cussen and the members on the items reported today.

At this time, Assistant Director Herrighty introduced Bob Longcor to the Council. Bob has recently transferred to the Trenton Office from the Bureau of Wildlife Control and will be assisting Paulette Nelson.

The meeting broke for lunch at 12:05 pm, and resumed at 1 pm.

Chief Barno distributed a revision to the Freshwater Fisheries section of the minutes from the last meeting. After reviewing the revisions, **a motion was made by Councilman Van Mater, and seconded by Councilman Wolgast to approve the minutes of the August 12, 2008 meeting as**

revised. Councilwoman Vreeland noted one typographical error to be changed, where the name of Wells was listed as Bells. A vote was taken with all in favor, and one abstention from Councilwoman Galetto who was not in attendance at that meeting.

At this time, Paul Wells, President of the United Crossbow Hunters of New Jersey and Mike Mason, Vice President of the UCBNJ made a presentation to the Council. The reviewed the materials that were distributed to the members today, and gave a power point presentation on why they support the use of crossbows being allowed for hunting in New Jersey. After completing their presentation, there was a lengthy discussion between them and members of the Council.

Chief Sciascia reported for the Bureau of Information and Education. He noted that the Fall trout fishing radio advertisements began airing last week. This is part of the renewed contract with the Broadcast Association. Time will be shared for fishing, bear information and recycling for future radio advertising, and there will be some hunting information broadcast in November.

Chief Sciascia reported that he had reviewed license sales numbers as of the second week in August to see if there was any impact from the postcard mailing that was done, and felt that there may have been no impact at all. They will have to wait and see if those persons notified by postcard actually did make a license or stamp purchase after the mailing was sent out. This information should be available in late September or early October. He noted that there was no incentive attached to the purchase, which other states have done, and added this may be something that is considered for next year.

Staff has been working with the Press Office to generate coverage for the Fall trout season.

The 2007-2008 license databases are being reviewed on a three tier basis based on the purchases made. They may try to do a mailing to these licensees to promote the Fall trout season.

Several large events are coming up. The Wildlife Heritage Festival will be held at the Pequest Hatchery on September 27 and 28, 2008 and the Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament will be held at Island Beach State Park on October 5, 2008. There will be a meeting with the Pequest angler education volunteers this weekend at the Pequest Hatchery, and Chief Sciascia noted the importance of the Division's volunteers in our ability to continue to provide public programs.

Chief Sciascia noted that they are looking at the possibility of developing a request for proposal (RFP) to hire a professional Volunteer Coordinator. He explained that this person would work with Division staff and coordinate how best to use the volunteers available. This person would also be responsible for recruitment, training and maintaining database information for the Volunteer Program. It was discussed that this would be a year to year position, because of the current hiring freeze and the fact that there is no State title for this type of position. Councilwoman Galetto added that the Endangered and Non-Game Species Program already has a group of volunteers who work with various staff, and asked if the ENSP staff would continue to work directly with these volunteers, or would those efforts be done through this new position. Chief Sciascia felt they would have less involvement, noting that the current burden would be taken off of the staff. Councilwoman Galetto also pointed out to be sure that the database would be the property of the Division, and to be sure it is a database that is affordable and accessible as needed, noting that the ENSP had recently looked into some volunteer tracking databases that proved to be quite costly.

A summary of the work done by Michelle Ruggerio of the Black Bear Education Program was distributed to the Council. Chief Sciascia briefly reviewed this with them. He also discussed ideas that are being looked at for 2009 where they can maximize the audience reached with the funding available to promote bear awareness and education.

Trout in the Classroom teacher training will begin next week with assistance from Trout Unlimited.

The National Archery in the Schools program training for new teachers will be held in October and the equipment loaner kits for each county are available and being promoted to schools and teachers who may be interested in bringing NASP to their schools.

The current Hunter Education numbers were not available, but Chief Sciascia noted that the numbers were the same if not higher than this time last year. All courses currently posted on the Division's website are either full or oversubscribed.

Councilwoman Vreeland asked about the status of the Bear DVD. Chief Sciascia noted that both he and Assistant Director Herrighty had reviewed the DVD, and it would need to be edited before it could be presented to the DEP Communications Office along with the script specific to the New Jersey segment of the DVD.

Councilwoman Vreeland asked about the status of the Bear CD. Chief Sciascia noted that both he and Assistant Director Herrighty had reviewed the CD, and it would need to be edited to include the script specific to New Jersey.

Councilman Messeroll added that the 2009 Garden State Outdoor Show would be held January 8th through 11th, 2009

Supervising Biologist Barbara Stoff gave a brief review of the permit sales. She noted that the lottery for the Fall turkey and special area deer zones would be run tomorrow. The numbers of applicants are up slightly. The farmer and over the counter permits sales will be available on October 6. Bob Longcor will be assisting with reviewing reports and editing information in the database as needed.

Assistant Director Herrighty reported for the Bureau of Wildlife Management. He advised that Principal Biologist Sue Predl has been working with those townships who traditionally apply for Community Based Deer Management Permits. There may be applications to review at the October Council meeting.

Assistant Director Herrighty reported on a deer herbivory study being done by Principal Biologist Predl working with Dr. George Zimmerman from Stockton University. This is a continuation of a project Dr. Zimmerman has been working on to study the white cedar swamps. The Division was able to provide grant monies to create deer exclosures for the white cedar stands, and deer fencing will be put up in the Wharton and Brendan Byrne State Forests. He noted that they will be reaching out to the Federation and local gun clubs for assistance with fence maintenance.

The Game Code was sent to the Department and the Attorney General's Office one week after the last Council meeting.

Dr. Roscoe reported at the Bureau's staff meeting yesterday that he has received several reports of deer in the Hillsborough, Chester and Bernards areas with swollen heads and hanging tongues. Assistant Director Herrighty noted that this could be Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD). Dr. Roscoe was in the field this past week but was unable to locate any deer carcasses, but did have a report of a deer that was alive and may have been sick, and he was trying to track that down. He will need to have samples to determine if this is EHD and to see if this is a carry over or a new strain of the disease.

Assistant Director Herrighty also noted that Dr. Roscoe reported that there were 13 cooper's hawks brought in from the Raptor Trust that had neurological disorders and had died. Two of these were determined to have had West Nile virus, and the others appeared to have had chlordane poisoning. They were trying to determine if these were from one or several different areas.

Councilman Wolgast noted that Michigan has now banned baiting for deer because of Chronic Wasting Disease.

Assistant Director Herrighty noted on the bear activity report that the number of complaints were higher than last year at this time. The Category One complaints are up by 125%, and the Category Two complaints are up by 87% compared to last year. He added that Principal Biologist Kelcey Burgess has received well over 2,000 complaints so far this year. There was additional discussion on recent bear activity in the Vineland and Mullica Township areas. Acting Chairperson Vreeland asked if the local police departments were unhappy with the extra work they have because of the bears. Assistant Director Herrighty noted that some of them were, and reviewed a recent incident where the bear was in the police department's dumpster, and they wanted Division personnel to respond. Division personnel were not available due to other bear activity, and since it was determined to be a Category One bear, they were advised to have their trained personnel handle the situation. Councilman Wolgast asked if the Commissioner's Office had responded to the Council's recent correspondence, and Assistant Director Herrighty noted that they are working on a response. Principal Biologist Burgess will begin bear trapping next week, and any members of the Council who would like to assist with running trap lines should contact him.

Assistant Director Herrighty referred to the monthly report, noting the Upland Game Survey done by Principal Biologist Andrew Burnett. He took advantage of the new license system to calculate the demographics and statistics for this report.

The pheasant production is going very well, with 68,500 birds as of August 20, 2008. Additionally, 11,000 quail have been contracted for purchase for the Fall hunting program. Assistant Director Herrighty noted that they had met several times with staff from the Department of Corrections about the possibility of them raising quail at their Bayside Prison. He had offered to purchase up to 1,000 quail from them, however, he received a call last week that they will not be developing this type of a program.

Councilman Burke asked about a recent report of an alligator in the Green Bank/Lower Bank area. Principal Biologist Stoff explained that she had received a call from someone who claimed to have found it in a cage on the side of the road, and that its mouth was taped shut. She reviewed the details of the matter with the Council, and the alligator is now at the Cape May County Zoo and will eventually go to Florida.

Councilwoman Galetto noted her recent visit to California, where someone was walking exotic African/Domestic crossed cats down the street on a leash, and shared details of her experience with the members.

Councilman Wolgast reported on the recent Becoming an Outdoors Woman program that was held in Cape May, noting that despite the stormy weather conditions, many of the instructors stepped in to provide more programs and activities for the attendees to cover outdoor programs that had to be cancelled. Overall, the program went very well.

Councilman Wolgast noted the recent death of former Councilman John Kuser. He briefly reviewed Dr. Kuser's background and activities for the Council.

Acting Chairwoman Vreeland noted that she would not be in attendance at the October meeting, nor would Councilwoman Galetto. The dates of the meetings for the rest of the year were reviewed, with the November meeting scheduled for Wednesday, November 12, and the December meeting being scheduled for Tuesday, December 16.

Councilman Puskas noted that several Federation clubs have recently asked him about dove hunting. He asked the status of dove hunting in the State, and Councilman Wolgast noted he had spoken with Ed Cuneo about this matter. Assistant Director Herrightly added that he has discussed this at Federation meetings in the past year, noting that the Division recommends not moving forward on this matter.

The public comment period was opened. Janet Pizar from Millburn spoke about black bears in Branchville. She noted that she felt this area was prime bear habitat, and presented photographs of several areas and their trash storage. She also referenced that residents in Barry Lakes continue to put out bird feeders when the bears are not denning. Ms. Pizar also reviewed trash dumpster photographs from Blairstown, Bloomingdale and Highland Lakes. She noted that next month she would be bringing photographs on the bear resistant trash cans in Millburn, and reviewed how feels these are being incorrectly used by some residents who put trash out in bags and regular trash cans along with their bear proof cans. She noted that she felt this may affect the results of the Rutgers survey that was done. Councilman Wolgast commented to Ms. Pizar that you are never going to be able to control the garbage, noting the problems that he has on the boundary of his own farm. Additional discussion continued on this matter, and Councilwoman Galetto noted that Ms. Pizar brought up some good points, but sometimes one trash can is not enough for someone and this may lead to them having additional bags or regular trash cans next to the bear proof cans. She added that all the problems with bears are going to take a multitude of aspects to control. Ms. Pizar and Councilwoman Galetto shared additional discussion on this matter.

Jim Soden also asked to make public comment. He noted that he stopped hunting several years ago due to health reasons, but the presentation on crossbows today got him excited to the possibility he may be able to bow hunt again. He also noted that he has fished many times at Union Lake, and wanted to add that he has seen a downturn in the fishery at Union Lake and supports any efforts of the Division to bring it back to how it was ten years ago. Additionally, he noted that he is familiar with computers, and that there are several databases that could handle the volunteer program needs.

Chief Cussen asked for the Bureau of Law Enforcement to have thirty minutes next month for Executive Session.

Councilman Wolgast asked if a Finance Committee meeting was being planned, noting that Director Chanda had previously mentioned he would like to have one. Assistant Director Herrighty will remind the Director of this.

There was no additional business. **A motion was made by Councilman Messeroll, seconded by Councilman Van Mater to adjourn.** Meeting adjourned at 2:40 pm.