



MASSWILDLIFE

DIVISION OF FISHERIES & WILDLIFE

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COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
DIVISION OF FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE
FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

PRESENT: Dr. Joseph Larson/Chair, Michael Roche/Vice Chair/Acting Secretary, Bob Durand, Ernest W. Foster IV, Stephen Sears, Dr. Brandi Van Roo, Mark Tisa/Director, Jon Regosin/Deputy Director, Kris McCarthy/Associate Director/Finance and Administration, Eve Schlüter/Assistant Director/NHESP, Michael Huguenin/Assistant Director/Wildlife, Todd Richards/Assistant Director/Fisheries, Marion Larson/Chief/Information and Education, Jason Zimmer/Southeast Wildlife District Manager, Todd Olanyk/Central Wildlife District Manager, Nicole McSweeney/Marketing and Promotion Manager, James Burnham/Program Coordinator, James Pollock/Facilities Specialist, Col. Sean Santos/OLE, Major David Loos/OLE

DATE: February 18, 2020

LOCATION: Division of Fisheries and Wildlife Field Headquarters
Westborough, Massachusetts

Chair Larson opened the February meeting of the Fisheries and Wildlife Board at 10:00 a.m.

Acceptance of Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Durand to accept the minutes from the December meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Dr. Van Roo. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Mr. Durand to accept the minutes from the January meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Dr. Van Roo. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair's Comments

Chair Larson reported that the latest issue of *Massachusetts Wildlife* was one of the best he's ever read. He noted particularly the article on MassWildlife's forest management and the sequestration of carbon on its lands. He stated that it was done extremely well, and that he will be reading it all the way through because the magazine as a whole is so well done.

Commissioner's Comments

Director Tisa reported that Commissioner Amidon sent his regrets and was not able to attend the meeting.

Mr. Durand stated that he knew the Commissioner was planning to announce a lobby day for the sporting community at the State House on April 28, 2020, Room 428, 2-4:00 p.m. Mr. Foster stated that the organizers want the county leagues to bring their club members to the event.

Director's Comments

Director Tisa reported that the staff is requesting that the annual migratory bird hearing be held as soon as possible at an upcoming Board meeting. He reported that, as is our usual practice, the Board will have its presentation in the morning during the meeting, and the hearing will be held that afternoon at 2:00

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p.m. He explained that the Board will receive the proposed regulations as soon as possible via email. He also noted that the Western Massachusetts Duck Hunters are already engaged and will be given the opportunity to comment. The Director stated that the timing was unavoidable and not of our choosing, but rather due to the reporting requirements of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Mr. Sears moved that the annual migratory bird hunting regulation hearing be held on the same day as the April Board meeting, currently scheduled for Tuesday, April 14, 2020, at 1:00 p.m.; Dr. Van Roo seconded the motion; it carried unanimously. [Secretary's note: the April meeting was subsequently rescheduled to Thursday, April 23, 2020, at 10:00 a.m.; therefore, the hearing will be held on that day at 11:00 a.m.]

Law Enforcement Comments

Major David Loos reported on the Office of Law Enforcement's recent Calls for Service log, reporting 15 calls to Assist MassWildlife, no bear calls, 25 coyote-related calls, 25 deer calls, 77 freshwater fishing inspections, 12 freshwater fishing violations cited, 1 hunting accident, 95 hunting complaints, 48 hunter inspections, 64 hunting violations, 4 ATV safety inspections, 4 moose-related calls, 2 non-powered boat accidents, and 1 non-powered boat inspection.

The Major also gave the meeting a reminder of the upcoming Springfield Sportsmen's Show, beginning the following Friday at noon to 3:00 p.m. Sunday afternoon, where OLE officers were scheduled to be exhibiting. Major Loos briefly described a criminal complaint the OLE brought in Fall River, with a successful search warrant and a dozen other related cases. He also described the work of a special unit of the MEP.

The Major also introduced Colonel Sean Santos, who is the new head of the MEP. Colonel Santos said a few words, stating that he is formerly of the Lowell Police Department, an agent with the DEA more recently, and an attorney with a background in constitutional law and best practices. The Colonel stated that the sustainability of the state's natural resources is a focus of his office. The Board Chair and members bid him congratulations on his appointment and welcome. Chair Larson invited the Colonel to attend any meeting he has time for.

Personnel Report (Kris McCarthy)

Associate Director of Administration Kris McCarthy submitted the following personnel report for the Board's consideration and vote:

New Hire

<u>Employee</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Location</u>
Leslie Gabrilkska	Northeast District Clerk Clerk IV	Ayer

Promotion

<u>Employee</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Location</u>
Caleb Slater	Chief of Hatcheries Environmental Analyst V	Westborough
Timothy Nye	Assistant Hatchery Manager Fish Culturist II	Sunderland

Vice Chair Roche moved acceptance of the report, Dr. Van Roo seconded the motion; the vote in favor was unanimous.

Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Advisory Committee Report

Dr. Larson reported that the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Advisory Committee's February meeting was held on Thursday, February 13, 2020. It included a report from Assistant Director Schlüter on plans and milestones to celebrate the MESA's first 30 years. He reported that Massachusetts tax-return donations are already at \$300,000, and he stated that staff cannot determine the reason for the fund's rising popularity because donor data is not forthcoming from the Department of Revenue.

The Chair noted that a synopsis of the duties and role of the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Advisory Committee was included in the Board's packets for the days' meeting; he stated that he would be welcoming suggestions and comments from the Board at the next meeting.

Mr. Foster asked for a presentation on the new version of licensing software, wondering where staff was in the process of choosing a vendor and asking about the RFR [request for responses] advertising that had been done to solicit proposals. CFO McCarthy reported that the RFR will be put on CommBuys, the state procurement web page, and, based on the information responses the agency received, she expects responses from the roughly eight major vendors that came in and provided detailed information in response to the original RFI [request for information]. Director Tisa stated that the Board will be given a full report when the vendor was secured and the software had taken shape.

Set Meeting Date

Members confirmed the March Fisheries and Wildlife Board meeting on Tuesday, March 31, 2020, at 10:00 a.m., at the Field Headquarters.

The members discussed dates for the April meeting. Members selected April 14, at 10:00 a.m., at the Field Headquarters. [Secretary's note: the April meeting was subsequently rescheduled to Thursday, April 23, 2020, at 10:00 a.m., and the hearing will be held on that day at 11:00 a.m.]

Member's Comments

Mr. Sears reported he had met with Western District Manager Andrew Madden and Western District Land Agent Peter Milanese on potential land purchases and that it went very well.

He also reported on the EPA-GE announcement on the rest of river settlement agreement on the Housatonic, including a PCB dump in Lee. Director Tisa reported that he has not been apprised of the settlement agreement, and he is still operating under a confidentiality agreement and cannot elaborate on the Housatonic situation at this time. Mr. Sears asked whether MassWildlife had a seat at the table. He stressed that it's an important topic because this is a big public issue in Western Mass., and the question that has come up is where is MassWildlife on the issues. He also asked about the new DFG [Department] General Counsel, and Director Tisa reported that Bev Vucson has been appointed Acting General Counsel and that her replacement has been advertised.

Mr. Sears also reported a request from the Berkshire County League for better boating access to the Stockbridge Bowl, and that he was very happy with the response and help received from Western District Manager Madden. He also noted that the Conte Sportsman of Year award ceremony banquet is April 25, 2020; he stated that he will send details for the Board members.

Dr. Van Roo reported that her students were in the audience, and more would be attending at succeeding meetings.

Vice Chair Roche reported that he shared the Chair's praise for the carbon article in the latest magazine and has learned from Advisory Committee member David Small that a presentation will be given at the Millers River Environmental Center on carbon sequestration and forest management. He reported that there would likely be 40-50 people from the North Quabbin region in attendance.

Mr. Foster and Mr. Durand reported no further comments.

A motion was made by Secretary Roche to move into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing certain land acquisitions and to not return to open session. The motion was seconded by Dr. Van Roo. The motion passed unanimously.

Executive Session

Director Mark Tisa presented six proposed acquisitions, which were each reviewed and all unanimously approved by the Board.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Roche

Vice Chair, Acting Secretary

List of documents presented to the Board in its February meeting packets

February Agenda

Draft December and January meeting minutes for review

Personnel Report

Spreadsheet of Natural Heritage Fund Taxpayer Donations (1992 to 2018)

Description of the composition and role of the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Advisory Committee

Documentation for the executive session