



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, Bonnie Booth/Secretary, Bob Durand, Ernest W. Foster IV, Dr. Brandi Van Roo, Ron Amidon/Commissioner/DFG, Mary-Lee King/Deputy Commissioner/DFG, Mark S. Tisa/Director, Jon Regosin/Deputy Director, Kris McCarthy/ Associate Director/Finance and Administration, Eve Schlüter/Assistant Director/NHESP, Michael Huguenin/ Assistant Director/Wildlife, Trina Moruzzi/Assistant Director/Operations, Todd Richards/ Assistant Director/Fisheries, Marion Larson/Chief/Information and Education, Jason Zimmer/Supervisor/ Southeast Wildlife District, Joe Rogers/Supervisor/Conn. Valley Wildlife District, Pat Huckery/Supervisor/ Northeast Wildlife District, Todd Olanyk/Supervisor/Central Wildlife District, Elizabeth Wroblicka/Chief/ Wildlife Lands, Nicole McSweeney, Steve Wright/Wildlife Manager/SEWD, Dave Wattles/Project Leader/ Black Bear and Furbearers, Captain Terry Davis/OLE; PUBLIC: Laura Hagen

DATE: October 29, 2019

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

Chair Larson opened the October meeting of the Fisheries and Wildlife Board at 3:05 p.m.

### Acceptance of Minutes

A motion was made by Vice Chair Roche to accept the minutes from the September meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Secretary Booth. The motion passed unanimously.

### Chair's Comments

Chair Larson pointed out handouts he thought would be of interest in the Board's meeting packets.

### Commissioner's Comments

Commissioner Amidon reported on his schedule from the previous month, noting that the Mass Outdoor Expo was a great day, as usual, with wonderful weather and about 3,000 children and adults participating in all the outdoor activities. He also reported a very successful walk with the public at the new Townsend WMA. He stated that it was a very nice project and a nice turnout for the walk.

### Director's Comments

Director Tisa reported that Chief of Hatcheries Ken Simmons had retired the previous Friday after 34 years with the agency, and that Dr. Simmons had been with the agency since the beginning of the Director's tenure. The Director noted that he had talked Dr. Simmons into taking the Hatchery Chief job initially because he thought Dr. Simmons had all the qualities necessary for that position, and the Director noted that he still thinks that, of anyone in the country, if he could hire anyone, the best person would be Ken. Early in his career, Dr. Simmons served as the stream biologist and took critical steps toward standardizing fish collection methodologies and database development. Dr. Simmons served a leadership role in developing and implementing fish health criteria that have been adopted regionally as

the Northeast Fish Health Guidelines. He also worked on baitfish importation regulations and helped enforce them, and received the Investigative Achievement Award from the United States Attorney's Office and the Department of Justice for investigative work that led to convictions on both MESA and Lacey Act violations. Dr. Simmons took on the task of aquaculture facility inspection to ensure that new regulations he helped develop were being followed, and most importantly, he managed a staff of 27 professional hatchery employees and helped them keep their five facilities running smoothly despite severe winter storms, power outages, well failures, and the simple fact that most of the facilities are 100 years old. The Director also noted that Mr. Durand had helped to get funds to improve the McLaughlin Hatchery, so that the agency was able to repave the facility and give it a real boost. And Director Tisa closed by reporting that the improvements in output during Dr. Simmons' tenure have been unmatched in the Northeast.

Mr. Durand added that he had requested that Dr. Simmons investigate the Assabet River with a view to possibly stocking it with trout. Dr. Simmons did and started stocking it, and staff is still stocking the Assabet today. Director of Fisheries Richards noted that Dr. Simmons wanted no spotlight, now and throughout his career. Mr. Durand stated it would be nice for the Board to be able to acknowledge Dr. Simmons service in some way. Vice Chair Roche added that he had participated in many stocking events run by Dr. Simmons, and that he knew him well because they lived in same area. He stated that Dr. Simmons is a person who did what he loved, and that it was not just a job. Director Tisa stated that Dr. Simmons had been an outstanding employee and a real asset to the agency who would be very hard to replace.

Chair Larson asked Mr. Durand if he would work with staff to arrange for a suitable tribute.

The Director reported that the agency's licensing system had been knocked out the previous Friday, and that the vendor's whole system nationwide was affected. He stated that the system had intermittently begun working around mid-morning, and that it went back down several times since then. Director Tisa stated that he had had no written confirmation from the vendor yet, so staff was not making any official announcement that the system is fixed yet. He added that the Board and the public will be notified when the situation was resolved.

The Director provided the Board with a brief outline of initial meetings being planned to gather information on the next generation of online licensing software and the vendor that will design, supply, and support it. Major vendors from around the country have submitted responses to a Request for Information (RFI) and will be making presentations to staff from the various divisions on the products and services they offer. Director Tisa noted that many of the vendors are already working with states around the country, so he will be able to get direct information on benefits and performance from other state directors.

#### Law Enforcement Comments

Captain Terry Davis provided the report for Office of Law Enforcement. He stated that Captain Scott Amati had asked him to relate that the Fitchburg bear, which had been hanging around and returning more boldly despite efforts to discourage it, had had to be destroyed. He also reported that on opening day of archery deer season, persons were caught hunting over bait; he also reported briefly on an incident on Ashby WMA that involved pheasant hunting violations and problem with verifying when bag limits are reached. He stated that Captain Amati had started a program where officers can keep track of bag limits. The Captain also reported that three moose had recently been in the Worcester area; two were hit by vehicles, two of them were able to be relocated, and one had to be euthanized with a broken leg. He also reported on an incident of hunter harassment in Winchendon, where hunters were in conflict over other hunters' tree stands). In Captain Davis' own area, the Berkshires, he reported a

baiting situation that was under investigation. He also cited a case of his involving DNA testing, where two individuals had taken deer in Massachusetts, took them over the line and checked them in Vermont, and the OLE was able to use DNA to show that the deer were from Massachusetts.

Chair Larson thanked the Captain for attending the meeting and providing the Board with his report.

#### Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Advisory Committee Report

Dr. Larson reported that the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Advisory Committee's October meeting had had an excellent presentation from NHESP Land Protection Specialist Lynn Harper on a platform called iNaturalist. MassWildlife is developing projects in the app to encourage public access of our WMAs to find interesting species or habitats. The Chair noted that every member of the Advisory Committee was very interested in and excited about iNaturalist, and he thought that the Board would also appreciate seeing Ms. Harper's presentation and learning about the agency's use of the app.

#### Board Elections

At this time, Chair Larson asked for a motion to turn the meeting over to the Secretary for the purpose of holding the annual election of officers. Dr. Van Roo so moved; Mr. Foster seconded the motion; and the vote in favor was unanimous.

Secretary Booth called for nominations for Chair. Mr. Durand nominated Joseph Larson; Dr. Van Roo seconded. Secretary Booth asked if there were any other nominations. Hearing no more nominations, the Secretary asked for a motion to close the nominations. Dr. Van Roo so moved; Mr. Foster seconded the motion; the vote to close the nominations for Chair was unanimous. The vote for Joseph Larson for Chair was unanimous.

Secretary Booth opened the nominations for Vice Chair. Mr. Foster nominated Michael Roche; Dr. Van Roo seconded. Secretary Booth asked if there were any other nominations. Hearing no more nominations, the Secretary asked for a motion to close the nominations. Dr. Larson so moved; Mr. Foster seconded the motion; the vote to close the nominations for Vice Chair was unanimous. The vote for Michael Roche for Vice Chair was unanimous.

Vice Chair Roche opened the elections for Secretary. Mr. Durand nominated Bonnie Booth; Dr. Van Roo seconded. Vice Chair asked if there were any other nominations. Hearing no more nominations, Mr. Durand moved to close the nominations; Dr. Van Roo seconded; the vote to close the nominations for Secretary was unanimous. The vote for Bonnie Booth for Secretary was unanimous.

Secretary Booth then returned the meeting to the Chair.

#### Confirm and Set Meeting Dates

Members confirmed the date and time of the November monthly meeting: Tuesday, November 19, 2019, at 10:00 a.m., at the Field Headquarters, and confirmed the December date of Wednesday, December 18, 2019, at 10:00 a.m., at the Field Headquarters.

#### Member's Comments

Dr. Van Roo and Mr. Foster reported no comment.

Vice Chair Roche reported that he took the longest vacation he's taken this fall, for 16 days of bird hunting. He said the trip and the hunting were excellent and he felt very refreshed.

Secretary Booth reported a very enjoyable safari in the Northwest Province of South Africa.

Mr. Durand reported meeting with the Essex County League, and offered thanks to Supervisor Pat Huckery for introductions. He had attended the Kent's Island Bridge celebration, and also attended the Mike Moss boat launch dedication in Wareham. Both were great events.

A motion was made by Vice Chair 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

Chief of Wildlife Lands Wroblika presented three proposed acquisitions, which were each reviewed and all unanimously approved by the Board.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie Booth  
Secretary

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

October Agenda

Draft September meeting minutes for review

Copies of the hearing notice and the proposed regulations for the public hearing scheduled at 7:00 p.m. the evening of the meeting

Newspaper article: *Daily Hampshire Gazette*, October 9, 2019; "Ecosystem engineers: UMass, state team up to help native mussels return to rivers"

MassWildlife/NHESP Handout: Starting Out with iNaturalist; Lynn Harper, NHESP

Email: *News from the Department of Environmental Conservation (UMass/Amherst)*: "Renewed commitment to climate change leadership: NE CASC continues to bring climate science to resource managers for informed decision-making"

Spreadsheet of Natural Heritage Fund Taxpayer Donations (1992 to 2019)

Documentation for the executive session