



DIVISION OF FISHERIES & WILDLIFE

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MASSWILDLIFE

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, 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, Trina Moruzzi/Assistant Director/Operations, Todd Richards/Assistant Director/Fisheries, Marion Larson/Chief/Information and Education, David Scarpitti/Turkey and Upland Game Biologist, Pat Huckery/Northeast Wildlife District Manager, Todd Olanyk/Central Wildlife District Manager, Jason Zimmer/Southeast Wildlife District Manager, Andrew Madden/Western Wildlife District Manager, Joe Rogers/Conn. Valley Wildlife District Manager, Captain Scott Amati/OLE

DATE: February 16, 2022

LOCATION: Zoom

Chair Larson was unable to join the meeting immediately, so Vice Chair Roche opened the meeting at 1:35 p.m.

Acceptance of Minutes

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.

Vice Chair Roche: yes

Secretary Booth: yes

Dr. Van Roo: yes

Mr. Foster: yes

Mr. Sears: yes

Mr. Durand: yes

The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Larson was not able to join the meeting until later, so his comments were tabled for further in the agenda when he could participate.

Commissioner's Comments

Commissioner Amidon reported that he had no formal comments.

Director's Comments

Director Tisa reported that Chief of I&E Marion Larson would be retiring from state service before the next Board meeting. The Director stated that Ms. Larson had done an outstanding job in her tireless work with the public and the press and would be missed. He invited Ms. Larson to say a few words if she

wished, and she spoke briefly about highlights of her career, complimenting her wonderful staff and all the great work they would continue to do for the Commonwealth and conservation. Ms. Larson closed by saying she was proud to leave the I&E Section in such capable and dedicated hands. Director Tisa also reported that Ms. Larson would be back in March to present to the Board her report about the diversity, equity, and inclusion work of the agency.

The Director reported that Wildlife Biologist Susan McCarthy of the Wildlife Section in Westborough has been given the Governor's Carballo Award for exemplary service to the Commonwealth. He reported that Ms. McCarthy is an excellent, enthusiastic employee who contributes to all the work being done in the section. Director Tisa reported that he also had a story about Ms. McCarthy, not unlike the story he told at a previous meeting about Mr. Lagacy. Ms. McCarthy had been driving to work on Church Street in Northborough when she came upon a slowdown in the traffic. She saw blue lights ahead, and then noticed ducks wandering around in the road. Part of her duties as Wildlife Biologist is in assisting with duck-banding, so she is adept at wrangling them. She could tell they were domestic ducks and saw a pickup with crates in the back that had been hit in an accident. As Ms. McCarthy joined the vehicle owner in gathering up the ducks, another bystander pointed out a dead rabbit in the road. The vehicle owner stated that it also was his, that he had been rabbit hunting that morning, so Ms. McCarthy picked it up off the road and handed it to him. Ms. McCarthy had noticed his camouflage gear and the excited beagles in the front seat of the truck, and, as he thanked her for her expert help with the ducks, she thanked the gent for buying a license and hunting in Massachusetts. Director Tisa hailed Ms. McCarthy as another example of the great customer relations work that MassWildlife employees exhibit – on and off the job.

Director Tisa also reported that Outreach and Marketing Manager Nicole McSweeney had applied for and has received a \$20,000 competitive grant for MassWildlife's marketing efforts, noting that the application and the preparation of the marketing plan to craft outreach to Spanish-speaking people involved a lot of hard work by I&E staff.

Law Enforcement Comments

Captain Scott Amati reported that the previous month was extremely busy for the MEP working on enforcement issues for the sister agencies. He provided the Board with an overview of actions connected to the current hunting and other recreational seasons; a detailed report on recent OLE activities, including numerous fish-and-wildlife-related examples of calls for service that Environmental Police officers had responded to in the previous month, both inland and marine; and the outlines of ongoing and recently completed investigations of suspected violations and infractions.

The Chair and Board members thanked Captain Amati for his detailed report.

Personnel Report (Kris McCarthy)

CFO Kris McCarthy introduced Hatchery System Manager Caleb Slater, who had been involved in the interview process for the nomination being presented for acceptance. Dr. Slater proposed the following nomination:

New Hire:

<i>Employee</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Location</i>
Keith Wernert	Fish Hatchery Technician Wildlife Technician II	Sandwich Hatchery

Hatchery System Supervisor Caleb Slater noted that this hire was a backfill of an existing critical position at the Sandwich Hatchery, and provided the Board with a brief synopsis of Mr. Wernert's qualifications

and professional background. A motion was made by Mr. Sears to accept the Personnel Report as presented. The motion was seconded by Dr. Van Roo.

Vice Chair Roche: yes

Secretary Booth: yes

Dr. Van Roo: yes

Mr. Foster: yes

Mr. Sears: yes

Mr. Durand: yes

The motion passed unanimously.

Migratory Game Bird Hunting Regulations (Michael Huguenin)

Assistant Director for Wildlife Michael Huguenin gave the Board members a brief PowerPoint that outlined the staff's projections and expected recommendations for the 2022-2023 migratory bird hunting seasons. Mr. Huguenin reported that the Atlantic Flyway Council meetings would not be held until later in the month (February), but that staff was confident of about 90% of the expected federal frameworks that would determine what was possible in Massachusetts. He stated that, if the request for a public hearing on the matter was received, he and the Wildlife staff would develop the regulations draft as quickly as possible and submit it to the necessary authorities for approval. Once approval was received, staff would forward the draft regulations to the Board members and advertise them widely to the public for comments. Mr. Huguenin stated that he would present the federal frameworks and the final staff recommendations, after consideration of all comments received, at the public hearing.

At the close of Mr. Huguenin's presentation, Mr. Durand moved that the Board authorize staff to develop the specific regulations and take them to a public hearing as soon as possible. Dr. Van Roo seconded the motion. Mr. Sears noted that the late goose season was great news and expressed again his belief that the agency needs to consider aligning with the federal model and removing the state's requirement for minors to purchase migratory bird hunting stamps.

Hearing no more discussion, Vice Chair Roche called for a vote.

Vice Chair Roche: yes

Secretary Booth: yes

Dr. Van Roo: yes

Mr. Foster: yes

Mr. Sears: yes

Mr. Durand: yes

The motion passed unanimously.

Director Tisa thanked the Board and stated that staff would proceed to develop the regulations and submit them to the Department, EEA, and ANF for approval of a public hearing as soon as possible, given the federal filing deadlines.

Vice Chair Roche tabled the Chair's report on the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Advisory Committee until the Chair could join the meeting.

Set March Meeting Date

Members discussed the date for the March Fisheries and Wildlife Board meeting and, after a brief discussion, members selected Tuesday, March 22, 2022, at 9:00 a.m.

Member's Comments

Ms. Booth, Dr. Van Roo, and Mr. Sears had no comments.

Mr. Durand remarked on the progress thus far of several bills regarding the use of crossbows.

Mr. Foster reminded everyone that it was the county league banquet season and he encouraged those present to reach out to their delegate and attend their league's banquet.

Vice Chair Roche reported on his further anecdotal researches into the new license sales system. He reported a conversation with the head of Kalkomey's Customer Service team in which he acknowledged that the system is more difficult with older constituents because of newness and some confusing aspects. Vice Chair Roche was assured that Kalkomey is doing everything it can as problems are identified to deal with them as quickly as possible.

Public Comment: Don Graves

Mr. Donald Graves of Shelburne Falls provided a report from the Massachusetts Sportsmen's Council's (MSC) Bear/Deer Damage Committee on damage being sustained by farmers from bear and deer. Mr. Graves and the MSC asked MassWildlife to create a Bear/Deer Management Assistant Permit, similar to one currently available in New York State, to help concentrate hunting effort at known damage sites.

Chair Larson was able to join the meeting during Mr. Graves' comments.

Chair Larson thanked Mr. Graves, his associates at the MSC, and the farmers who had contributed reports of the damage they have sustained over the past several years. He also thanked Mr. Graves for the supporting photos and spreadsheet of detailed damage reports that he had submitted to the Board members prior to the meeting. The Chairman reported that he had consulted with Director Tisa and had decided to appoint a subcommittee of the Board to work with MassWildlife staff to look into the matter and report back to the Board members. The Chairman appointed Secretary Booth, the agricultural member of the Board, as Chair, with Mr. Sears and Mr. Durand.

Chair's Comments

Turning to his own comments, Chair Larson reported that he was impressed by the qualifications of the hatchery technician in the personnel report and thought Mr. Wernert will be a great addition to the staff.

Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Advisory Committee Report

Chair Larson asked the Board members to note in the month's Heritage state income tax donation report that donations are increasing with every month. He reported that staff is still working on creating a map that shows the zip-code locations of those donors, but stated that it's a more difficult process than he had anticipated. He will keep the Board members apprised of the progress. He also pointed to very interesting recent increases in the size of individual donations.

There being no further business, Secretary Booth moved to adjourn; Mr. Foster seconded the motion.

Chair Larson: yes

Vice Chair Roche: yes

Secretary Booth: yes

Dr. Van Roo: yes

Mr. Foster: yes

Mr. Sears: yes

Mr. Durand: yes

The meeting was adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie Booth

Secretary

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

Agenda

Draft January minutes

Personnel Report

Commendation letter RE Jim Lagacy

Spreadsheet of Natural Heritage Fund Taxpayer Donations (1992 to 2020)