



MASSWILDLIFE

DIVISION OF FISHERIES & WILDLIFE

1 Rabbit Hill Road, Westborough, MA 01581

p: (508) 389-6300 | f: (508) 389-7890

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

PRESENT: Steve Sears/Chair, Bob Durand/Vice Chair, Ernie Foster/Secretary, Sasha Dyer, Emma Ellsworth, John Organ, Matthew Sisk, Ron Amidon/Commissioner/DFG, Mark Tisa/Director, Jon Regosin/Deputy Director, Kris McCarthy/CFO, Mike Huguenin/Assistant Director/Wildlife, Eve Schlüter/Assistant Director/NHESP, Trina Moruzzi/Assistant Director/Operations, Nicole McSweeney/Assistant Director/Outreach and Education, Todd Richards, Assistant Director/Fisheries, Todd Olanyk/Central Wildlife District Manager, Pat Huckery/Northeast Wildlife District Manager, Jason Zimmer/Southeast Wildlife District Manager, Andrew Madden/Western Wildlife District Manager, Joe Rogers/Conn. Valley Wildlife District Manager, Jennifer Sulla/General Counsel/DFG. PUBLIC: Chris Giglio, Jeff Miller

DATE: January 19, 2023

LOCATION: MassWildlife Field Headquarters, Westborough

Chair Sears opened the discussion meeting at 1:30 p.m.

Chair's Opening Remarks

Chair Sears stated that the meeting was intended to be a public discussion among the Board members. He reported that it would adjourn after an hour, so the members may not get to everything on the agenda. Chair Sears stated that the discussion would be just among the Board members for first few meetings, and that they would be focusing on governance and strategy, not operational matters. If issues arise, he stated that the Board will work with Director Tisa to address them, but they are not examining operations at all in these meetings.

Board Members' Obligations and Goals

Chair Sears stated that, with a new administration, there is an opportunity to reach out and form relationships. If the members want to be relevant, they have to do outreach. Members have relationships and opportunities to interact that the staff doesn't have. A discussion ensued in which there was general agreement with these ideas among the members. Chair Sears stated his belief that the members are not on the Board just to rubberstamp, and he is trying to make the members feel empowered and good about what they're doing, so that they will do the best they can.

The Board discussed what 'Board Succession Planning' means, further down in the agenda. Chair Sears stated that he wants to remain on the Board but doesn't want to be Chair forever, so members could discuss how the process of choosing succeeding Chairs might work.

Board Members' Obligations and Goals

Members discussed asking Dr. Organ and former MassWildlife Project Leader James Cardoza to develop a history of the role of the Board as trustees of MassWildlife, to make sure everyone understands their roles.

Members discussed the possibility of working with DCR and whether the Board should hold a joint meeting with the DCR Stewardship Council. Chair Sears suggested a joint meeting before the next DCR Stewardship Council meeting on June 8. A discussion ensued about the differences between MassWildlife and DCR, one being that the DCR is a much larger agency. Members agreed that a good first step would be to meet with the Stewardship Council members.

Members discussed having a Board manual and Dr. Organ was asked to develop one. He noted that he can glean ideas from existing manuals of other Boards and Commissions.

Members discussed ways for them to contribute to getting MassWildlife staff in front of the public and the media as the experts in wildlife management. talk about benefits to every citizen.

Chair Sears discussed the statutory \$3,000 limit on Board reimbursements and reported that he is working with a new senator to increase that limit, which is very old, and stated that he will advise the members as that effort moves forward. In the discussion that ensued caution was urged because of the potentially controversial look of increasing benefits to the Board members.

Members discussed outreach in urban areas, where most people know nothing about hunting and many of whom want to learn more about it. Including women in those discussions can bring new, expanded perspectives. Members also explored opportunities for better outreach, including getting legislators to go to County League meetings. They also discussed that ~~forest~~ **habitat** management is one obligation the Board members have to explain, protect, and uphold. With fewer sportspeople and fewer people growing up with hunting and fishing among legislators and the public at large, Board members agreed it is a matter of advocacy.

Members discussed the role the Board can play in emerging issues, to help staff., and discussed the need for and possibilities of another coalition of conservation organizations to come together and speak in a unified way about the issues we all face.

Chair Sears asked the members, for the next few meetings, to come prepared to talk about what each one wants to achieve as a Board member, because he proposed to spend the next couple of meetings talking about each other's goals. During the discussion, Mr. Sears offered his opinion that Zoom discussion meetings were a possibility later, but for the first several he felt it would be better in person, adding that he intends to schedule them the same day as the business meeting, to help minimize disruptions to the members' schedules.

Set Next Meeting Date and Time

The Board members discussed the February meetings briefly and decided to reschedule the business meeting to 9:00 a.m. from 10:00 a.m., to allow more time between the meetings. They decided that the discussion meeting would be held on Tuesday, February 21, 2023, at 1:00 p.m.

The time being close to 2:30, Mr. Sisk made a motion to adjourn; Secretary Foster seconded; the vote in favor was unanimous and the meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ernie Foster

Secretary

List of documents presented to the Board in its January discussion meeting packets

January discussion agenda