

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
NJ FISH AND GAME COUNCIL

Central Region Office
Robbinsville, NJ
October 9, 2012

The regular meeting of the Fish and Game Council was held on the above date.

The meeting was called to order at 1:11 p.m. by Acting Chairman Burke.

The flag salute and Pledge of Allegiance were completed.

The following was read aloud by Acting Chairman Burke: In accordance with P.L. 1975, c. 231 notice of this meeting was filed with and posted at the Office of the Secretary of State and delivered to the designated newspapers of the Division, the Newark Star Ledger and the Atlantic City Press on October 4, 2012.

Roll call was taken. In attendance were:

Acting Chairman David Burke
Councilman Philip Brodhecker
Councilman Agust Gudmundsson
Councilman Jeffrey Link (arrived at 1:14 p.m.)
Councilman John Messeroll
Councilman Robert Puskas
Councilman Dan Van Mater

Absent: Councilwoman Barbara Brummer

Division personnel included L. Herrighty, P. Nelson, L. Barno, M. Chicketano, R. Porutski and D. Ferrigno.

Members of the public included representatives of the Farm Bureau, pending Fish and Game Council appointee Cathy Blumig, and others.

Minutes of the September 26, 2012 Joint Councils meeting were reviewed. **A motion was made by Councilman Messeroll, seconded by Councilman Brodhecker to approve the minutes as presented. A vote was taken with all in favor, none opposed, and it was noted that they be posted on the Division website as approved by the Fish and Game Council but still pending approval by the Endangered and Nongame Species Advisory Committee.**

Acting Chairman Burke reminded members of the PSE&G tour this Friday.

(Councilman Link arrived at 1:14 p.m.)

Acting Chairman Burke commented on the change in the weather for the start of the Fall hunting and fishing seasons, and wildlife he has been seeing.

Director Chanda was not able to attend today's meeting. Assistant Director Herrightly had no additional information to report.

One agenda item was noted for today, the approval of 2012 Pheasant and Quail Stocking Schedule. Additionally, Acting Chairman Burke advised the Council would move Executive Session to consider a license restitution request.

The public comment period was opened.

Barbara Sauchau addressed the Council. She commented on the raising of pheasants and other birds, and why she is opposed to the stocking program. She also commented on the needs for respirators and medical exams by personnel involved. (Ms. Sauchau expired her three minutes to speak)

Janet Pizar, Chatham also addressed the Council. She too is opposed to the raising and release of pheasants, and expressed her concerns why.

Councilman Messeroll noted to those in attendance that the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires the use of respirators in certain situations, just as they require gloves, boots, etc. where the situation merits.

Committee reports began. Councilman Link reported for the Agriculture Committee, noting the deer season is underway. Hunters have reported finding pockets of dead deer, and have expressed their concerns as to the cause. The need for specimens from carcasses found in this area was discussed.

Councilman Link noted the weather conditions have been cold, damp and rainy, but the farmers are busy. Councilman Brodhecker noted quite a lot of crop damage by both deer and bear have hurt the harvest in his area. Depredation permits were also discussed.

Councilman Puskas noted most of the farming in his area was now crops, and not too many cow farms were remaining. Farm harvest totals and farming costs were also reviewed. Councilman Puskas commented on seeing many deer in his area.

Councilman Messeroll reported for the Federation. He noted that the Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament had quite a number of participants. Also attending were the Lieutenant Governor, the Commissioner and the Assistant Commissioner.

The Wounded Warrior program has been very busy. Councilman Messeroll noted an event this coming Saturday at the Central Jersey Rifle and Pistol Club in Jackson, which will also include a parade. Councilman Gudmundsson added that Trout Unlimited runs a Wounded Warrior program at the fishing pond on the Pequest WMA.

Acting Chairman Burke noted information he saw this morning on two other bills, A 2339 and A 2963. Both bills were listed on the tracking information given today.

The Legislative Committee will hold a meeting on December 11, 2012 at 9 a.m., before the start of the regular Fish and Game Council meeting at 10 a.m.

There was no report for the Endangered and Non-Game Species Committee.

There was no report for the Waterfowl Stamp Committee. The Committee is tentatively scheduled to meet again in January, 2013.

There was no report for the Wildlife Rehabilitator's Committee. The next meeting for the Committee is scheduled for October 17, 2012.

Chief Barno reported for the Bureau of Freshwater Fisheries. She advised that the Fall trout stocking program began today, and reviewed that staff have been monitoring water temperatures and stream flows since last week.

Staff is well underway in preparation for the 2013 stocking program. The egg take has been completed, and progress on the program was reviewed for the Council.

Chief Barno noted one change to the Winter trout stocking program. Lake Ocquittunk will not be lowered and will be on the schedule.

Staff at the Hackettstown Hatchery have a surplus of channel catfish, and the program will be reviewed for how to handle these surplus fish in the future.

Chief Barno reported that the annual angler survey is due to start soon, and reviewed the three part process that completes this task.

Staff will attend the Lake Hopatcong Citizen's Advisory Committee meeting tomorrow to discuss scheduled drawdowns of the lake.

Chief Barno noted concerns at the Greenwood Lake, and there was some discussion on the Fall drawdown of the water. The Division of Parks is preparing information for lake owners on maintaining their docks relative to ice damage. There was additional discussion on this matter.

Councilman Gudmundsson inquired about the reclassification of the South Branch, and this was reviewed and discussed by Chief Barno.

Councilman Messeroll noted improvements being done at Lake Mohawk in Red Bank, Monmouth County. It was recommended to that they contact the Bureau of Freshwater Fisheries when the work is complete. Fisheries Biologist Crouse may also be asked to attend a meeting.

Trout Unlimited has asked for more rainbow trout to be stocked on the Toms River. There was some further discussion on this.

Councilman Gudmundsson inquired about the progress of the angler survey on the Flatbrook. Chief Barno explained that some anglers had not yet submitted their log books, and the survey has not been completed. There was some additional discussion regarding the Flatbrook.

Chief Sciascia was not in attendance today, so there was no report from the Bureau of Information and Education.

Regional Superintendent Porutski reported for the Bureau of Land Management. He distributed the 2012 Pheasant and Quail Stocking Schedule to the Council for their review and approval. The information distributed was reviewed. Supervising Biologist Carr was also in attendance to review production problems that have led to a reduced number of available pheasants. He also noted historic data and information about the program. There was some additional discussion on the information given today, including distribution numbers for the stocked WMA properties. **A motion was made by Councilman Puskas, seconded by Councilman Van Mater to approve the pheasant and quail stocking schedule as presented. A vote was taken with all in favor, none opposed.** It was also noted that if additional changes were to be made later in the season due to a reduction in the anticipated number of pheasants available, the Council would like the days to hunt to remain the same.

Regional Superintendent Porutski also advised of the recent road work done on the Assunpink and Turkey Swamp WMAs. He further described the problems the Division is having with the road grader in the Central Region, and advised that the manufacturer is no longer in business and it is not possible to access replacement parts. There was additional discussion on this matter, and other suggestions were noted and reviewed.

Central and Southern Region staff for the Bureau of Land Management have been attending Commercial Driver License (CDL) training.

Staff in the Central Region have been busy with Fall trout stocking, and are also preparing for the upcoming small game season.

Repairs to the Prospertown Lake are underway, utilizing monies from the Corporate Business Tax (CBT) fund. The contractor hopes to be done by the first week in November.

Acting Chief Chicketano reported for the Bureau of Law Enforcement. He reviewed several highlights that were listed in the Bureau's monthly report for the Council.

Also reviewed was an incident that occurred this past weekend. A woman was seen on a webcam pouring a liquid substance onto a hunters bait pile. The officer scouted residences in the area, and noticed similar containers outside of a home that were similar to those on the webcam. He recognized a woman from the webcam pictures, and when confronted by the Conservation Officer she claimed that she was pouring vinegar on the area. In the course of speaking with her, the woman lunged at the officer, dropped the jug of liquid which broke and splattered on the

officer. The liquid in question was urine, and the officer was treated at the emergency room due being splattered by bodily fluids. The woman has been charged with hunter harassment, assault, and trespassing.

Assistant Director Herrighty reported for the Bureau of Wildlife Management. He noted that he had just received a text message from Chief Barno that the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) would be replacing the road at the Ken Lockwood Gorge to its previous state-prior to the storm last year. There was some additional discussion on this matter and additional changes or improvements that might be considered for this area.

Assistant Director Herrighty also addressed an inquiry made by Councilman Brodhecker on utilizing depredation permits on Sundays. He noted that by law, the shooting of deer is not allowed on Sundays, but advised that airports were exempted from this by Federal law. He noted that this can be looked at again for the future, and Councilman Brodhecker asked that they look into utilizing the bear depredation permits on Sundays as well.

Assistant Director Herrighty noted the monthly report from Wildlife Pathologist Stansley, which lists information on Lympho Proliferative Disease (LPD) in turkeys. He further reviewed the history of this disease, and noted that there was a turkey that tested positive for this in New Jersey. A cooperative research project is planned for next Spring's turkey hunting season, and hunters may be asked to surrender a leg from any harvested birds since the disease is found in bone marrow. There was additional discussion on this matter, and it was noted that all Northeast agencies will be cooperating in this study.

A handout was distributed to the Council with information on the Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD) outbreak. Assistant Director Herrighty advised that sportsmen who see deer that they suspect may have EHD should contact the Division.

Assistant Director Herrighty briefed the Council on the automated deer check system, as well as advising that the application period for bear, otter and bear permits is approaching.

Staff are currently doing lymph node testing of deer at the lab today.

Anti-hunting ordinances being proposed by several municipalities are keeping staff busy.

Assistant Director Herrighty also briefed the Council on information regarding the release of genetically altered deer, and problems that may result from this. Other state agencies such as Alabama have allowed this, and commercial hunting interests are pressuring for this type of activity to be allowed.

Assistant Director Herrighty noted the monthly report, which showed that bear complaints are down by 40% overall, but added that activity is picking up now due to the time of year.

There was discussion on the Community Based Deer Permit applications. Members of the Council expressed concerns about applicants who did not apply in a timely manner. Assistant

Director Herrighty advised that he would have Principal Biologist Predl contact past applicants and make them aware of the timeframe in which they should apply.

There was no Old or New Business to discuss.

The public comment period was opened, with those wishing to address the Council advised that they would have three minutes to speak. It was noted that afterwards, the Council will go in to Executive Session, and the meeting would adjourn when this session was completed.

Janet Pizar, who gave an office address of Chatham, distributed her comments to the Council for the record, and reviewed same. Ms. Pizar also advised that she was videotaping her comments today. She made comment on information given to new Council members and the duties that are listed for them. Ms. Pizar's written comments were submitted for the file.

There was additional discussion among the members regarding the information Ms. Pizar mentioned, and with Ms. Pizar regarding her comments today. Acting Chairman Burke advised Ms. Pizar that Title 13 lists the specific duties of the Fish and Game Council.

Next to address the Council was Barbara Sauchau. She commented on an e-mail she had sent regarding EHD research, and the response she received. She also noted other animal species that are dying of viruses, and felt that there was not sufficient research available. She commented on the deer season as noted earlier by Councilman Messeroll, stating that it should be called the deer killing season. She also referenced previous Game Code comments. Ms. Sauchau expired the three minute time allowance, and was advised of same.

There was some minor discussion between the Council and Assistant Director Herrighty on EHD and some of its background history.

At this time, Acting Chairman Burke advised that the regular meeting was over, and asked that the room be cleared for the start of Executive Session. The regular meeting of the Fish and Game Council concluded at 3:14 pm.

At the end of the Executive Session, **a motion was made by Councilman Van Mater, seconded by Councilman Brodhecker to adjourn the Fish and Game Council meeting. A vote was taken with all in favor.** The meeting was adjourned at 3:28 p.m.