

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
NJ FISH AND GAME COUNCIL**

Central Region Office
Robbinsville, NJ
November 29, 2010

A special telephonic meeting of the New Jersey Fish and Game Council was held on the above date. In attendance were:

Acting Chairwoman Jeanette Vreeland
Councilwoman Barbara Brummer
Councilman Dave Burke
Councilman Ed Kertz
Councilman John Messeroll
Councilman Robert Puskas
Councilman Dan Van Mater

Absent: Councilman Phillip Brodhecker

Also in attendance was Assistant Director Herrighty. There were no members of the public.

The meeting was called to order at 12:04 pm.

Roll call was taken.

Acting Chairwoman Vreeland reviewed the reason for the meeting today, which was to consider a request received to “stay” the 2010 black bear hunt. The request was made by the Animal Protection League of New Jersey and the Bear Education and Resource Group.

The following statement was read: In accordance with P.L. 1975, c. 231 notice of this meeting was filed with and recorded at the Office of the Secretary of State and delivered to the designated newspapers for the Division, the Newark Star Ledger and the Atlantic City Press on November 23, 2010.

Assistant Director Herrighty discussed the e-mails he had sent to the members of the Council regarding the request for a stay of the hunt. He advised that this was a necessary step to be taken prior to a lawsuit being filed. The parties concerned gave the Division a deadline of last Monday at noon, which was enough time for the Commissioner to respond that he would not call off the hunt. It was noted to the Council that the only way for the Commissioner to call off the hunt would be by withdrawing his approval of the policy. The Council, being the agency that adopted the rule, has the authority to withdraw the rule if so desired, and this is the request that has been made.

Assistant Director Herrighty noted that Doris Lin has filed a lawsuit in court. Her deadline for filing her brief is at 2 pm on November 30, and on DAG Jablonski acting on behalf of the Council and DEP has a deadline of Thursday, December 2, 2010 at 3 pm.

DAG Jablonski felt it important that the Council hold this special meeting to state their preference on this issue.

(Councilwoman Brummer confirmed on the line at 12:10 pm)

Acting Chairwoman Vreeland asked for a motion to deny the request to stay the hunt. **A motion was made by Councilman Van Mater, seconded by Councilman Burke to not stay the hunt.**

Each member of the Council stated their opinion regarding this matter.

Councilman Van Mater felt the hunt was needed because of too many bears, and the amount of damage that has been seen by farmers in North Jersey.

Councilman Messeroll noted that over the past number of years, he has read complaints and read studies on this matter. He feels the hunt should continue because of the abundance of bears in the Northern part of the state. He felt that the cultural carrying capacity had been reached, noting the number of bears shot because of house break-ins, and also noted the amount of car/bear collisions.

Councilman Puskas noted the data and comments he has seen, and felt no reason to stay the hunt. He added residents don't feel safe, and that there was an overabundance of bears. He felt the only choice for a healthy herd is to have a hunt.

Councilman Burke noted an overpopulation of bear (his call was broken up).

Councilwoman Brummer noted all the work and background research that has been done. She added that she lives in Sussex County, and has seen an overabundance of bears and the problems they cause not only with garbage but with other livestock, and is for continuing the hunt.

Acting Chairwoman Vreeland believed the hunt was a necessity for everybody in the State of New Jersey, and the population was overabundant and the hunt is necessary to lower the number of bears to better protect the public.

(Councilman Kertz noted he was also on the line)

Councilman Kertz noted that the bear biologists have been saying it was necessary to have a hunt during this time on Council. He added that they do the research, and they know. He felt that they should stay with what the biologists say and have the hunt.

Acting Chairwoman Vreeland asked if there were any additional comments from anyone. There were no additional comments.

A roll call vote was taken, with all in favor, and the motion carried.

A motion to adjourn was made by Councilman Messeroll, seconded by Councilman Kertz. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 12:15 pm.