

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

**Central Region Office
Robbinsville, New Jersey
April 10, 2018**

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

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m. by Acting Chairman Frank Virgilio.

The flag salute and pledge of allegiance were completed.

Acting Chairman Virgilio read aloud the following notice: 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 on April 2, 2018 and delivered to the designated newspapers for the Division, the Newark Star Ledger and the Atlantic City Press; published on April 5, 2018.

Roll call was taken in attendance:

Councilman Phillip Brodhecker (late arrival 10:10 a.m.)
Councilman Joseph DeMartino
Councilman James DeStephano
Councilman Agust Gudmundsson
Councilman Rick Lathrop
Councilman Jeffery Link
Councilman Robert Pollock
Councilman Loren Robinson
Councilman Ken Whildin
Acting Chairman Frank Virgilio

Division employees included: L. Herrighty, D. Golden, P. Nelson, L. Barno, C. Stanko, A. Ivany, S. Cianciulli, D. Jenkins, J. Sloan, R. Shramko, J. Bullock and S. Coltrain.

There were numerous members of the public in attendance.

Acting Chairman Virgilio asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes.

A motion was made by Councilman Robinson to approve the March 13, 2018 minutes, seconded by Councilman Gudmundsson. Vote taken, nine (9) were in favor; none opposed, one (1) abstention (Councilman Lathrop), motion carried.

Acting Chairman Virgilio gave his comments. He stated the Bureau of Information and Education (I&E) within Fish and Wildlife is rising to be his favorite Bureau. He has attended many of their events recently and they have been very impressive. I& E is one of the first point of contact with the citizens of New Jersey for both consumer and non-consumer groups. Acting Chairman Virgilio

reported attending a turkey seminar with his adult daughter. They both were very impressed with the presenters, staff member Ryan Risher, and someone from the National Turkey Federation. They taught respect for the harvest. He also reported on a job well done by hunter education for a document produced for gun clubs on how to safely drive deer. He commended I&E and encouraged them to continue to do a good job.

Acting Chairman Virgilio asked Director Herrightly for comments.

Director Larry Herrightly stated last Saturday (April 7th) was trout season opening day and he had the honor of helping staff. There was a veterans group, Healing Waters, in attendance fly fishing. The Commissioner came and received a tour of the I&E section as well as the hatchery. Acting Assistant Commissioner, Martha Sapp, also attended.

The new Marine Fisheries Administrator will start on April 23rd. Approval has been given to hire a veterinarian pathologist. Chief Stanko is putting together a Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Taskforce staff and will go over the Division's plan for CWD which is a hot topic on the national level.

Assistant Director Golden responded to Acting Chairman Virgilio's request from the last meeting regarding notifying the public using a one-call system in cases where the Council meeting is cancelled in emergency situations. He researched and found posting to the website or using the current listserv is the best way. After a discussion it was decided, in cases of cancellation of a Council meeting due to emergency closing, the Division will post on its webpage, social media sites (Facebook and Instagram), and use the existing listserv.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Agriculture Committee Report:

Councilman Link reported the weather has been unpredictable and when it was good, farmers rushed to get work done before it changed. He commended the Division on their forest management work and encouraged them to continue the good work.

Councilman Brodhecker reported seeing a lot of deer in the hay fields grazing on the early growth. There is a lot of activity of foxes, racoons, and skunks eating chickens. There are no bear reports yet, but he knows they're starting to be out there.

Dr. Sebastian Reist from New Jersey Department of Agriculture was present but had nothing new to report.

Farmer/Sportsman Relations:

Nothing to report at this time.

Acting Chairman Virgilio stated he had a report on farmers and Hunters Helping the Hungry and gave it to Councilman Brodhecker.

State Federation Reports:

Councilman DeMartino reported not being able to attend meetings due to attending nine other events and being away for a week

Councilman DeStephano reported not attending any county meetings but he did attend the Game Committee and the Law Enforcement Committee meetings. On trout season opening day, he volunteered as an Opening Day Angler Counter at the Clinton Reservoir.

Councilman Gudmundsson reported attending the Morris County meeting. One concern they had was the Sussex Fair and having the State participate in it. They also specifically asked for coloring books and other printed material which was provided last year. If provided with a PDF document, they are willing to print the material. Councilman Gudmundsson also stated the public would like to talk to the Fish and Wildlife officials. Warren County is not happy with the deer regulations. He reminded them there is a Federation Deer Committee that meets regularly and they should attend. He also informed them there will be a meeting at the Federation convention in April. Councilman Gudmundsson reported attending the trout season opening day and saw the Acting Commissioner and Acting Assistant Commissioner. He reported the mold in the auditorium at Pequest is a concern.

Assistant Director Golden stated Pequest needs a new roof due to it leaking, which is the cause of the mold. Contractors have been selected. The plans and permits are in. The permits are being reviewed by the architect and should be fixed within the next month and a half. Plans are also in place to address the mold.

Councilman Gudmundsson asked if there was an update on the solar panels. Director Herrighty stated Chief Barno will make a report on it and the Commissioner is in favor of them. Councilman Gudmundsson reported there was a good turnout at Hackettstown on opening day in spite of the bad weather.

Councilman Robinson reported attending the Middlesex County meeting where they discussed the six bills that came out of the legislature dealing with guns and how they are going to affect sportsmen. Acting Chairman Virgilio made a nice presentation on the senior hunter advantage program. This program will help to maintain senior numbers by reducing permit fees for seniors. Councilman Robinson also reported attending the State meeting where they talked about hunter recruitment, mentoring program for adults and youth, and a mentored pheasant hunt for women sponsored by the State Federation. Also discussed was the need to educate the public to the benefits of trapping. He reported attending the Ken Lockwood Chapter Trout Unlimited meeting. It was well attended and there was a nice presentation on Trout In the Classroom. Councilman Robinson attended the Middlesex April meeting at the Saltwater Sports show in Iselin. They will have a fishing derby on May 19th at Molder's Preserve in conjunction with Hooked on Fishing-Not on Drugs (HOFNOD). He attended the Law Enforcement Committee Meeting and the Central Region meeting. The Central Region is scheduling their sporting clay shoot for June 3rd at Red Bank. The Central Region is in charge of the 2019 New Jersey State Federation Convention and they are already making plans for it. Councilman Robinson went out on Trout Season opening day, there were not a lot of people.

Councilman Whildin reported attending the Atlantic County meeting in March; there were no complaints. He also attended a sportsmen show in Cumberland County sponsored by the Mauricetown Fire Company. They had over 2,000 people sign up for door prizes. He attended the Cumberland County Ducks Unlimited Banquet. He also reported the South Jersey Bobwhite Quail Project had a youth day. It was very well attended by youth and adults. The children planted trees and wildflowers. There were educational booths

set up to learn about bob-white quail.

Acting Chairman Virgilio reported not attending any meetings, but was able to attend the sportsman's show in Cumberland County. He was approached by several people from Fortescue asking for a port in their area. There will be a statewide fishing tournament put on by Jersey Coast Anglers Association (JCAA) and Fortescue did not have a port for weighing. Acting Chairman Virgilio made some phone calls and was able to finalize getting a port for Fortescue in time for the tournament.

Finance Committee:

No meeting, nothing to report.

Fish Committee:

Nothing to report.

Game Committee:

Councilman DeMartino reported attending a Game Committee meeting in Trenton on one of the days it snowed. The Committee discussed ruffed grouse and foregoing the season due to their insufficient numbers. The Committee also discussed CWD. Councilman DeMartino stated he attended a US Fish and Wildlife Refuge meeting and they discussed charging for access. No one he asked ever heard of this other than in New Jersey. He stated a lot of duck hunters do not like the extra fee as they already pay for the duck stamp.

Legislative Committee:

Assistant Director Nelson reviewed the legislative activity. A-167, authorizes use of tracking dog to search and recover wild deer during prescribed hunting season, has been withdrawn as it was passed in the last session.

A-792, authorizes issuance of multi-species depredation permits for wildlife control on farmland, has passed in the Assembly and is now in the Senate Economic Growth Committee. The Division does not support this bill, as we already do what is in this bill.

S-1925, designates bog turtle as State Reptile and S-2287, designate Pine Barrens Treefrog as NJ State Amphibian, both have passed through committee and are waiting for full Assembly vote.

A-3813 – transfers the Division of Fish and Wildlife and related entities to the Department of Agriculture. This would include the Marine Fisheries Council, Fish and Game Council and Endangered and Non-game Species Advisory Committee. Assistant Director Nelson stated this has come up in the past, it never received any activity then, so we will see what will happen now.

S-2419 – Permits certain deer control activities; prohibits deer feeding; and establishes check-off donation on hunting license applications to support venison donation program. This is a companion bill to A-3442.

SCR-116 – proposes constitutional amendment to preserve right of people to fish, hunt, trap, and harvest fish and wildlife. This is not new and has been around for a number of sessions.

SCR-119 – Commemorates New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife for 125 years of fish and wildlife

conservation.

Endangered & Non-Game Species Advisory Committee:

Councilman Lathrop reported a few weeks back that the program had their workshop where they rolled out the CHANJ (Connecting Habitat Across New Jersey) Program. The Endangered and Non-game Species Program have been working on this for more than five years. It was introduced at the Eco-Complex. The project connects habitat for threatened and endangered non-game, but also game species so it benefits all New Jersey's wildlife.

Councilman Lathrop also reported receiving a call from Ken Klipstein from New Jersey Water Supply Authority. This past year they had hydrilla, which is an invasive aquatic plant, in the D&R Canal which is part of their water supply. He had questions about what the Division was doing in terms of hydrilla on WMA properties.

Assistant Director Golden stated staff have been attending the Invasive Species Taskforce meetings to get a better sense of which species we need to keep an eye on. Most of them are terrestrial and if hydrilla is one we can pay closer attention to it. As of right now it has not been on the Division's radar.

Waterfowl Stamp Advisory Committee:

Councilman DeMartino reported the waterfowl committee meeting was canceled due to snow and was not rescheduled. The next meeting will be in September.

Law Enforcement Committee:

Councilman Whildin reported the initial Law Enforcement Committee meeting took place. There were a lot of ideas and he will make a report later in the meeting on keeping consistency in the license restoration process. Acting Chairman Virgilio stated there will be a switch of members on the committee. Councilman Gudmundsson will be an alternate and Councilman Robinson will be permanent

Public Member:

Councilman Pollock had nothing to report as he was on three storm duties and away for a week and a half. Acting Chairman Virgilio asked him about the Salem Nuclear Power Plant as South Jersey is interested. Councilman Pollock reported there is a bill that will give zero emissions credit in the legislation but with a new administration coming in, they wanted to add a lot of alternative language into the bill. It is scheduled to be voted on April 12th.

Wildlife Rehabilitators Advisory Committee:

The next scheduled meeting will be April 25th.

DIVISION REPORTS

Assistant Director Nelson reported on behalf of Barbara Stoff, Licensing and Permits, since she was in training. Assistant Director Nelson reported turkey sales, the lottery, and over the counter sales all went smoothly. There were no complaints.

Chief Lisa Barno, Bureau of Freshwater Fisheries, stated Acting Commissioner McCabe was at the Pequest Hatchery on the Opening Day of Trout Season. The Commissioner was impressed with how the facility runs and is supportive of the work. She supports the solar panel project and wants to fast track the process as it should not take two years to complete. Chief Barno was given a flowchart on the steps to getting the panels in place. It will take 60-90 days to get bids from regional energy companies that will ultimately bid to do the work. She stated it is a significant step forward if we get the response within that time frame. Meetings are taking place weekly regarding the panels.

Chief Barno reported on opening day counts conducted on 38 waterbodies, 32 lakes and 6 streams: there were a total of 1,144 anglers counted. This is significantly down from last year due to the weather. The resident license sales from this time last year are down by 12% and the trout stamp sales are down by 7.6% from last year. The non-resident license sales were up 2.5% and the trout stamps sales were up 3.3%. This year the fish per angler was the highest it has been over the last 10 years with an average of 0.71 fish per angler. Some of the hot spots were ponds that did not produce well in the past: Warinanco Park Pond, Roosevelt Park Pond, and Birch Grove Park Pond. Staff member Ross Shramko will make a presentation later in the meeting and bring the final report that has all the information from the weekend.

Chief Barno noted that typically the Bureau does not put a lot of focus on the streams because a lot of volunteers would be needed to cover them because they are so spread out and the anglers come in and out and move around quite a bit. Of the 6 streams surveyed Lopatcong Creek and the Musconetcong River are the ones anglers seem to do really well.

Chief Barno reported the walleye brood stock collection started last week. Trap nets were set and pulled. There was a total of 226 walleyes and over 6 million eggs were collected. The Bureau will set nets in Greenwood Lake for muskies next week. Connecticut and Pennsylvania were provided with surplus northern pike fry. Northern pike fry was also shipped down to Deal Lake and pike are being set up for final grow out to 5 to 8 inches and will go into established waters.

The Research & Management Unit's Annual Report for 2017 was completed. It includes the highlights from 199 fisher surveys that were conducted at 118 waterbodies last year. There are 53 rivers and 65 ponds sampled. Staff handled over 41,000 fish that were measured and identified representing 72 species. The report is 254 pages and will be e-mailed to the council. The Cool Water Assessment final report will be completed soon.

The staff participated in a fish salvage at the Morris Canal just below Lake Musconetcong. There was some dam repair work and the water was shunted, fish became stranded in the short section of the canal. Staff netted out over 4,000 fish and will be going back again.

Chief Al Ivany, Information and Education, reported on the opening day of trout season celebration at the Pequest Trout Hatchery. Forty veterans from Healing Waters and Wounded Warriors attended and fished at the education pond. Acting Commissioner McCabe and Acting Assistant Commissioner Sapp both attended and were given a tour of the education center by Bureau staff.

Chief Ivany reported there will be an Outdoor Writers Workshop on April 19th and invited the

Council members. The Commissioner was also invited but has not yet confirmed her attendance.

Preparations are well under way for this year's Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament. The tournament will be held on Sunday, May 20th at Island Beach State Park.

The GovDelivery (Granicus) listserv e-mail system continues to improve and expand dramatically. The Division is up to 21,780 e-mail addresses, up from 13,000 when it was started. The pop-up on the website and the much-improved look of the messages are having a dramatic effect on promoting Fish and Wildlife efforts.

Chief Ivany thanked Assistant Director Golden for the update on the roof at the Pequest facility. He stated everyone is doing all they can to make improvements at Pequest. He believes in protecting the Division's investment and making it as safe as possible for those who visit. He stated over the last couple of years there are new steps to the pond, pond bathrooms have been remodeled, trees around the main building have been cleared to open the view-scape and protect the building from falling needles and branches, the break room off the main lobby has been remodeled, the lobby has been painted, the main storage barn has been cleaned, and sidewalks in front of the main building have been repaired.

Chief Ivany reported the Association for Conservation Information annual conference will be hosted by New Jersey in 2021. At each conference there is an awards ceremony. This year the Division made 17 submissions. To mention a few, the HOFNOD video, short and long version, the 125th Anniversary Logo design, and the black bear brochure and warning sign.

Councilman Link thanked Chief Ivany for the pins that were provided for a 4-H conference. He said they were well received and helped promote the Division.

Assistant Director Golden reported on behalf of the Bureau of Land Management and gave an update on the covered shooting stations. As reported in the past, there will be six ranges, two in each region. A contractor has been selected and next steps have been discussed. The site inspections have already begun. Over the summer they will work on the design. They are proposing to begin construction in the Fall. There is another meeting with the contractor in May. It is proposed for the construction to start in the central region which changed from original proposal of doing central last. After the preliminary site inspection, Assistant Director Golden will have a better plan on the sequencing of construction.

Assistant Director Golden followed up on a question from the last Council meeting of 200-yard ranges in North and Central and some handicap access at all of our ranges. On the 200-yard range front, we evaluated the ranges in north and central and may have some options for expanding the range length. In Flatbrook there really are no options. At the Clinton range we could increase it but only up to 130 yards with no problems. The question to ask Federations: will 130 yards make enough difference to justify the cost? In the Central Region, Colliers Mills would be the best option. The initial site inspection and soil borings have been done at the existing location. They would have to be redone. Stafford Forge is an option, but would require extensive tree clearing. For ADA compliance, regional superintendents have been charged with getting this done at the trap ranges.

Millville Range has been re-aligned and re-opened halfway through the project. Moving forward, uncovered concrete shooting stations will be installed. This may be able to be done without closing the ranges. At the same time, concrete pads will be added to the trap stations and the ADA work will be done within the next month and a half.

Acting Chairman Virgilio asked for a meeting with the Range Committee in the Federation in two or three months. Assistant Director Golden agreed.

Acting Chairman Virgilio stated he was asked at the sporting show if the Division would be interested in a piece of property near Beaver Dam. Assistant Director Golden stated the best way to handle would be to go through the Green Acres application which would get forwarded to all the agencies that manage land.

Acting Chairman Virgilio also brought a concern about Rowans Pond being overgrown with aquatic vegetation making trout fishing almost impossible. Assistant Director Golden stated he would have freshwater fisheries investigate.

Acting Chief Sean Cianciulli, Law Enforcement, stated he attended the Law Enforcement Committee meeting and it was a very productive meeting. He asked if anyone had questions from the highlights as he is trying to get away for reading what has already been sent.

There have been a lot of striped bass taken unlawfully from the Newark Bay/Hudson River Complex. WMA patrols are increasing this time of the year and there were a lot of snow-related off-road violations, people using ATVs, and maintaining bonfires. Acting Chief Cianciulli did not receive any reports of violations on the opening day of trout season.

Councilman Brodhecker asked if someone without hunting or fishing privileges is found guilty of dumping on a WMA and later wants to purchase a hunting license, does that individual have the same hunting penalty (revocation) as someone who was licensed at the time of the violation. Acting Chief Cianciulli explained that individuals who are convicted of violations who do not have a CID number get one created in the licensing system. They receive a letter advising them that their privileges are suspended and this blocks them from purchasing licenses until their suspension is cleared.

Acting Chairman Virgilio asked for a status update on the two vacant communications operator positions in the southern and marine offices. Acting Chief Cianciulli stated the marine position has been filled with an agency service representative and interviews have been conducted for the south position. The Bureau is in the process of changing communication operators positions to agency service reps because it is a more relevant job title.

Chief Carole Stanko, Bureau of Wildlife Management, reported she has a meeting with I&E regarding R3 as it relates to pheasant purchases. She also reported attending the North American Wildlife Conference in Virginia. Several sessions she attended discussed CWD. The most notable was the session given by the CWD Alliance which is the clearing house that all the states use for information on CWD. Last year there was minimal attendance, but this year there were 60-70 people in a room sized for 25 based on last year's attendance. There was a first-ever case

of CWD in a moose in Norway. In 2018, five of the nine cases discovered in captive herds were in a CWD-certified clean herds. USDA has a comment period going on now about herd certification, which the Division will make comments on. Chief Stanko suggested that the Council make a comment and stated she would work with them on the comment.

Chief Stanko reported a veterinarian pathologist will join the staff soon and she will work closely with them to try and keep New Jersey CWD free. The first internal meeting will be held shortly. The Game Committee and the Council will be updated and stakeholders will be brought in as the efforts proceed.

A Deer Symposium was held at the Eco-Complex on March 19th. It was very successful with 76 participants. Participants had a choice of 12 presentations by various professionals within and outside of the Division they could attend. In the afternoon, participants broke out into two sessions, one for counties and municipalities administrators and the other for agricultural people. It is the hope to continue these symposia as an ongoing program every year and possibly expanding to one in the north and one in the south. Based on a couple of meetings with the Department of Agriculture, Chief Stanko will work with I&E on a couple of new brochures. Two will be for farmers, one on bear and one on deer, outlining their options for management. The other will be for municipalities with the same options for deer.

Chief Stanko reported receiving a call from Aaron Guikema from Wildlife Services, USDA, who is working with the Port Authority in the airport (Newark and Teterboro) asking if pole traps can be used there. Pole traps have been banned in New Jersey under Title 23 since 1924, so the response was “no”. She and Director Herrighty was called to attend a meeting with the Governor’s staff and Port Authority staff. The bird they have the most problems with are kestrels, which is an endangered species in New Jersey. The trap they want to use is not lethal. The birds will be relocated after trapping. The trap is a 24 x 24-inch trap which closes up on itself. The birds are banded for tracking and released elsewhere. The Division of Law attorneys are looking at how the Division can accommodate this program while they try to amend the statute.

Councilman Lathrop asked if this was happening during winter migratory season or during the breeding season, Chief Stanko responded it is during the migratory season and both airports are in the migratory corridor. Councilman DeStephano asked if they had written permission to release on the WMA. Director Herrighty responded the question was not asked if they had permission.

Chief Stanko gave an update on the pheasants. Permission has been granted to purchase the additional adult birds for the southern region for 2018. Treasury has responded to the Division’s request for pricing for 2019. Assistant Director Golden and Chief Stanko are in the process of reviewing the comment and will return the paperwork to Treasury as soon as possible.

Chief David Jenkins, Endangered and Non-Game Species Program, reported turning in the final version of the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) last week to the US Fish and Wildlife Service after conducting a 40-day public review and comment period. There were approximately 60 individuals who submitted comments and approximately 250 comments on 150 different issues. A lot of the comments resulted in changes to the plan, including amending the threats, the

language used in the threats actions and deleting some of them. The plan contains a section called “projects” which is an assembly of related actions and amendments were made to the projects. Also amended was some of the text part of the plan that introduce the concept of threats and actions to do a better job at explaining the planning process. Final approval is expected sometime in June. At that time the final plan will be posted on the website. A summary of the issues that were brought and addressed will also be posted.

Chief Jenkins stated this is not the end of the planning process. There is additional work that needs to be done to make it more useful to the users (the Division and conservation partners). This includes revisiting our conservation focal area, the geographic element part of the plan. Doing a threat assessment and action development on behalf of those areas which we have not completed yet. Then putting it altogether and prioritizing the actions and the projects. The plan is in a database. The database is going to continually need refinement. The ultimate goal is to have the database web enabled for internet use. The intermediate goal would be to have the database available for download.

Chief Jenkins also reported the March Endangered and Non-game Species Advisory Committee (ENSAC) meeting was cancelled due to the snowy weather and is rescheduled for April 20th in Trenton. The main agenda item is status review of all the birds through the Delphi process. The report has been posted online since early March. It is the last species status review we will undertake before we get involved in the rulemaking to adopt all the changes to the threatened and endangered species list that have been recommended through the status reviews.

ENSAC had a rollout of the last presentation to the group of people who have been working on the Connecting Habitat Across New Jersey, the “CHANJ Program,” together at the Eco-Complex at the beginning of March as a last review of the products that are going to be deployed for use. Which is basically a map of the cores and corridors that are important for conserving and connectivity across New Jersey State. This was a way to make sure everyone had a chance to have one last look to provide input and suggestions. They have been posted on the web to the partner groups who have worked on this with ENSAC. It is the hope the CHANJ product will be put out and available for public use sometime in the next few months. The current administration is going to have to be brought up to speed to insure they are in support. A turtle crossing has been completed in Assunpink WMA.

Chief Jenkins announced this will be the last Council meeting he will attend as Division staff as he is retiring effective June 1st. Staff member John Heilferty will fill in as Acting Chief.

Councilman Lathrop, on behalf of ENSAC, thanked Chief Jenkins for his leadership.

Acting Chairman Virgilio ask Chief Jenkins in the review of the native birds, what does it do for the re-introduction of the bobwhite quail in certain location. Assistant Director Golden responded the ENSAC meeting will on focus on non-game birds only.

Lunch: 11:54 am– 12:49 pm

Old Business

Chief Stanko gave the 2017 -18 Deer Season Harvest Report. Some highlights from the report there were 48,545 deer harvest which is slightly down from last season. Bow hunters took 57% (27,809) of the harvest this year. There were 28,463 antlerless deer and 20,082 antler deer. There were three Community Based Deer Program Permits this year: Bernard Township, Essex County Parks, and Princeton. There were over 7,000 farmer zone permits issued this year.

New Business

Fish and Game Law Enforcement Committee – discussion on license restoration hearings. Councilman Whildin stated the first meeting for this committee was held and guidelines for hunting restoration was developed. He stated there will be unique issues to each case, this will help give consistency to the cases.

Acting Chairman reiterated each councilman will make their own decision. He gave background on what the legislature intent was for the Council to perform and how the process used to be when it was in the Office of Administrative Law. The Committee agreed now there will only be three times per year when restorations will be held, in May, July, and in the Fall, and the Law Enforcement Committee will meet prior to the hearings to make recommendations to the Council. The Committee is also recommending that the person must be present at the hearing.

Director Herrighty stated we need to be careful having the committee make recommendations to the Council before the hearing takes place. He also stated, attorney advised that the opportunity be granted to be heard in person, but not mandatory.

Staff member Jimmy Sloan, Bureau of Wildlife Management, gave an update on Bobwhite Quail Habitat Restoration. The highlights were, development of four National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative Focal Areas, increased habitat management efforts on state owned lands inside the four focal areas, provided 66 landowners owning over 20,000 acres a habitat management plan, and increased efforts in monitoring our actions.

Biologist Ross Shramko, Bureau of Freshwater Fisheries, gave a presentation on the Radio Telemetry Study on Stocked Trout Movement in the Flat Brook catch and release area. Despite being popular among anglers, years of electrofishing indicated low numbers of trout inhabiting this stretch compared to the numbers stocked. In 2017, transmitters were surgically implanted in the abdomen of 10 1/2 to 11-inch stocked trout and released into three locations within the catch and release area. Twenty (20) tagged trout were stocked on two separate dates. Staff went out every day over a two-week period and then every other day after that until no tagged trout remained within the stream (9/11/2017).

The study found the fish are not swimming great distances and leaving the catch and release area or the Flat Brook system nor are they moving into and remaining within the deep pools. Study results indicate predation is responsible for the low number of available trout. Nineteen (19) transmitters were lost due to avian predation and 16 most likely lost to predation by mammals.

Mr. Shramko stated there will be a second-year study. The Division has partnered with Montclair State University – School of Conservation. There will be a graduate student doing the same study with an extension looking at temperature and field cameras to identify predators.

PUBLIC COMMENT (3 -5MINUTES)

Barbara Sachau, Whitehouse Station, NJ stated she noticed a lot of state government cars in the lot and people should double up and ride together. She also reminded the Council solar panels should be going on any construction being done. It is another energy saver. Ms. Sachau asked Assistant Director Nelson, if when she went to Washington D.C. to lobby, did she work for the 9 million people who live in New Jersey who have a right to own the wildlife that live in New Jersey. She stated Pitman Robertson is federal money and the land is open space money which comes from everybody. She does not think it's fair. Ms. Sachau asked, why do the people who go out to the field to murder wildlife have to have cover on their shooting ranges? She objects to using the New Jersey Audubon and the New Jersey Outdoor Alliance as partners.

Assistant Director responded, she did not go to Washington D.C. to lobby and she is not allowed to lobby.

Acting Chairman Virgilio tried to explain the Ms. Sachau that the New Jersey Outdoor Alliance Environmental Projects that is part of the Quail Project is a private corporation and has nothing to do with the New Jersey Outdoor Alliance.

Director Herrightly announced staff member Shelley Coltrain will retire by the end of July and introduce staff member Joyce Bullock.

A motion was made by Councilman Link and seconded by Councilman DeMartino to adjourn the meeting at 2:48 pm. Vote taken, all in favor, none-opposed; motion carried.