

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
NJ Fish and Game Council
Conservation Center
Robbinsville, NJ
November 13, 2018**

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

The meeting was called to order at 10:12 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, c231, notice of this meeting was filed with and posted at the office of the Secretary of State on November 1, 2018 and delivered to the designated newspapers for the Division, The Atlantic City Press, and Newark Star Ledger published on November 5, 2018.

Roll call was taken in attendance:

Councilman Phil Brodhecker
Councilman Joe DeMartino
Councilman Jim DeStephano
Councilman Agust Gudmundsson
Councilman Dr. Rick Lathrop (absent)
Councilman Jeff Link
Councilman Bob Pollock
Councilman Loren Robinson
Councilman Ken Whildin
Acting Chairman Frank Virgilio

Division employees included: L. Herrighty, P. Nelson, D. Golden, B. Stoff, L. DiPiano, S. Cianciulli, M. Monteschio, C. Stanko, L. Quirk, J. Bullock, and D. Bajek.

Also present was Assistant Commissioner for Natural and Historic Resources, Ray Bukowski.

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 October 17, 2018 minutes, seconded by Councilman Gudmundsson. Vote taken, all were in favor; none opposed, motion carried.

Acting Chairman Virgilio gave comments on opening day of the small game season. He was out and about and met a few people and had a good time. There were more families out than he anticipated. He added that the Division of Fish and Wildlife has exceeded his expectations and how he is proud to be a part of this organization.

Today there will be two public comment periods, one before lunch and one after due to license restorations.

Director Larry Herrighty stated that he spoke at the Farm Bureau Convention; it was their 100th year anniversary. Senator Sweeny spoke before him. Farmers asked what Senator Sweeney thought about the deer and he responded that he thinks there are too many and we should hunt them. He was also asked about his thoughts on bears and he again answered we need to control the population and hunt them. During his presentation, Director Herrighty brought up the depredation permit issue and that we are working with our farmer council members about trying to streamline the process. A farmer from East Hampton stood up and said he had no problem with the permit and does business with our officers by fax or email. He was very pleased with the whole process.

Director Herrighty also stated that the hot topic this week is bears: last week oral arguments were heard on a lawsuit filed by U.S Outdoor Alliance and the US Sportsman Foundation to open up state lands to bear hunting. The judges should have a decision later this week or by Thanksgiving. On Friday, he, Dave Golden, and Carole Stanko were in Newark for a lawsuit filed 2 years ago on the 2015 Comprehensive Policy. The plaintiffs took over a year to file all their legal documents, so the court case is moving through normal order. The case was not expedited. Director Herrighty is confident that the comprehensive policy will be upheld. DAG Dru did an excellent job defending the policy.

Committee Reports

Agriculture Committee:

Councilman Brodhecker reported that he has had a busy couple of months harvesting the crops and getting through the mud. As he was harvesting the crops he was able to see that deer and bear do a lot of damage. He stated that the damage varies from one field to another depending on location and hunter activity. He attended the Farm Bureau Committee meetings. There were a lot of good ideas. A lot of farms seeing tremendous deer damage and not knowing how to manage the wildlife on it. He added that Director Herrighty came out and spoke at the meeting and was very thorough and gave a lot of facts and information. He received no negative feedback. He mentioned an idea for thought, talking about hunter retention and how to make it cheaper and easier, and having one permit for hunters to cover more area without buying 2 permits.

Dr. Sebastian Reist From New Jersey Department of Agriculture reported about the prosecutor's office taking over humane matters. They are bringing up a lot of DEP issues and he suggested that they reach out to DEP to educate the prosecutors. He spoke about African Swine Fever. It is a viral disease that is going around Europe right now and is a very infectious disease. It could spread from an animal to a person. Should it make it here it would be a catastrophic disaster for swine in the country or state. The long-horned tick is still pushing further throughout the country and state.

Assistant Commissioner Ray Burkowski had no announcements to make today but he had missed last month's meeting and had made a commitment to come whenever he could, so he came to take in some of the conversations today.

Farmer/Sportsman Committee: Nothing to report at this time.

Acting Chairman Virgilio asked to have a meeting scheduled.

State Federation Committee:

Councilman DeMartino mentioned he went to the Ocean County meeting.

Councilman DeStephano talked about the Bergen, Morris, and Warren county meetings. Bergen County had a question, what's going on with Hyper Humus, is it part of phragmite control, overall rehabilitation, or is this something separate?

Assistant Director Golden replied that it is separate, it was initiated ahead of the larger restoration project, but the design of the restoration project has not yet been decided on. There is a public meeting scheduled for December 4th at 6:30 p.m.

Councilman Gudmundsson spoke about the Warren County meeting and they discussed the Sussex County Fair extensively. There were no pressing topics, but they did discuss walleye and the fact that they don't spawn so close to shore.

Councilman Robinson addressed the fall/winter trout stocking in Union County. He would like to see Echo Lake stocked. The archery hunt in Union County Park was successful with 58 deer, 17 antlered in 5 weeks of hunting. The county has been very generous to them, they provided bait to the hunters and are going to appropriate money for deer harvested to be donated to Hunters

Helping the Hungry. He attended the Middlesex County meeting where they discussed the booth at Garden State Outdoor Show. East Brunswick is to enforce a 1986 ordinance about no crossbows and no mechanical releases on any bow in East Brunswick. Chairman Virgilio replied that he, Cindy Kuenstner, and Carole Stanko looked into that and pulled up the ordinances and forwarded it to Middlesex County and let them know that in fact it is rumors and is not being enforced that way, but we will keep an eye on it. Councilman Robinson also went to the Hunterdon County meeting where they discussed a very successful youth pheasant hunt at the Clinton Wildlife Management Area. They had 53 kids out to hunt and they offered a tremendous amount of birds for the kids.

Councilman Whildin attended the Atlantic County Federation where bears were the main topic of discussion, as well as their upcoming venison dinner. He did not receive any complaints from anyone at the meeting. He also attended the South Jersey Quail Project meeting. They are partnering with the new owners of the sand plant to do habitat work on that private property.

Acting Chairman Virgilio attended a couple of meetings, one was the Burlington County Federation. The executive director of the Farm Bureau came and spoke on deer and deer problems in the state of NJ. He talked about the depredation permits and asked if something can be done. We will look into it. There is an aerial deer survey by drone in NJ on display today in Princeton. Also, he attended New Jersey's Fair Harbor swap meet convention, they are actually opening up their meetings to the public. Maybe next year we can get that in our Federation newsletters and try to spread the word. Additionally, he had two meetings on R3, one with senior staff and that was basically a mile-high view of what the Division was looking at and where we should focus Federation and sportsmen interests. The second was with I&E and a couple of foundations, NJ Sportsman's Foundation and NJ Outdoor Alliance environmental projects. One of the things we looked at there was how to utilize people and incorporate R3. We are looking more at crossover participation not only in hunting, but in kayaking and all the different things where we can make this a sportsman type issue and we want to bring this out into the communities and look for more to follow on that. Finally, an important meeting he had with a bunch of people who work with legislatures and this was about our non-lethal policy. The sportsman group have redesigned the law 23:2A-14 intentional feeding of black bears, and they are looking to move this new redesign to cover all the loop holes that are in the existing law. Once we get this bill out and in draft form he will reach out to concerned groups that have concerns for black bear and the non-lethal control of black bears.

Finance Committee:

Councilman Link had nothing to report at this time on finance but would like to address agriculture. On Saturday morning he was taking his kid to a soccer tournament and it was chilly with 30mph winds, he saw around a dozen vehicles at the local lake fishing and using our NJ resources which is good. On a not so good note, he received a few comments from sportsmen that we as a council weren't doing enough to ensure the bear hunt throughout the state. He

addressed their concerns and let them know that our interests are following the management policy that was adopted and passed and survived legal review.

Fish Committee: Nothing to report at this time.

Game Committee: Nothing to report at this time.

Director Herrighty would like the Game Committee to meet with staff to go over deer health regulations and disease issues. Several states are moving towards regulating the importation of whole carcasses of deer. We are trying to get people to voluntarily do that, it's a big issue in most of the states around us which are adopting regulations prohibiting whole carcass importation as well as other measures related to CWD

Legislative Committee:

Assistant Director Nelson provided a list of legislative activity for the last month.

A-1923 was substituted by S-1093 and passed to ban the use of elephants and other wild/exotic animals acts.

S-2511 to change the title of DEP conservation officer to conservation police officer has passed through the Senate and waiting on Assembly side.

S-2553 and S-2554 would create CBT credits for businesses, public utilities that develop pollinator habitat. Went through the Environment Committee and is waiting on the Budget Committee.

A-4459 and S-3022 require state and county mosquito commissions to adopt tick control.

A-4524 would increase minimum civil fine for harassing/taking wildlife and increases criminal penalty for subsequent offenses.

S-3091 and A-4585 would establish "invasive species task force." Requires multiple plans in one year.

AR-188 and SR-106 urge the Dept. of the Interior and Congress to permanently authorize "Land and Water Conservation Fund." That fund purchases land for recreation as well as conservation.

S-2905 a new introduction prohibits certain possession, sale, trade, or distribution or offering for sale of shark fin. This bill has not passed.

S-3007 requires annual update of comprehensive policy for managing black bear.

S-3008 Institutes moratorium on black bear hunting until adoption of new comprehensive policy on black bear management.

A-4524 Increases minimum civil fine for harassing person taking wildlife and increases criminal penalty for subsequent offenses.

A-4526 and S-3104 Reduces residency requirement for resident hunting licenses from six months to 60 days.

AJR-163 and SJR-100 Designates Fourth Saturday of September each year as “New Jersey Hunting and Fishing Day.”

S-3091 and A-4585 Establishes “Invasive Species Task Force.”

SR-109 and Ar-195 Supports seafood gleaning pilot program in Monmouth and Ocean Counties.

A-4136 and S-2675 Establishes Possession in Excess of Daily Limit License for black sea bass and summer flounder; dedicated fees therefrom to marine fisheries programs.

AR-199 and SR-112 urge USFWS and NMFS not to adopt proposed rule changes related to federal ESA.

RAWA update: There are now 110 bill cosponsors in the House, and a hearing tomorrow in the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

Endangered and Non-Game Committee:

Assistant Director Golden reported that ENSAC is meeting tomorrow and two things on their agenda are to follow up on the report about the Delphi species and the presentation on Wildlife Management Area User Survey results.

Waterfowl Stamp Committee: Nothing to report at this time.

Wildlife Rehabilitators Committee:

Councilman Brodhecker reported that they did have a short meeting and talked about Division training and veterinary sign up for non-release of animals, but no action was taken. They did set up the dates for next year’s meetings.

Public Member Committee:

Councilman Pollock mentioned he got a little bit of the same feedback where members of the public approached him with concerns about the ban on black bear hunting on state property and what is the Council doing about it. He replied that we go by science, politics can run different ways and they seemed to be fine after that. He noticed in the last 2-3 weeks that when the weather is really windy and bad, and all the people go to the inlet or canal due to the party boats not sailing or the water too rough. He has had several people claim as well as noticing it himself, that there are a lot of illegal black fish taken. He explained to them to call law enforcement if they see it. He just wanted to pass the message on.

New Business:

Assistant Director Golden gave a presentation on the Wildlife Management Area User Survey results. This is the final report which was received from Stockton University early this year. There are 350,000 acres throughout the state, 122 different wildlife management areas and when you combine this with other state-owned lands the wildlife management area system accounts for 44% of state owned public lands. Operations on these WMAs are all funded through federal aid and hunter and angler funds derived from license sales revenue. Some questions addressed in this survey were who is using our wildlife management areas and how? Do these users know that they are showing up on these properties and that they are managed by Fish and Wildlife? Are people willing to pay for using these areas? Stockton University was contracted for this year-long survey. There were 153 survey days throughout the year, so three times a week the Stockton staff was out interviewing people who were visiting wildlife management areas. The WMAs were selected randomly by region, season, day of the week, and time of day. During each survey day they surveyed a randomly selected WMA within each region. The survey shifts were four hours long and if they came across a vehicle that was not occupied by a person, they left a postcard for them to fill out and send in. Some of the results are that they conducted a total of 1,986 surveys that represented 4,198 people. There was strong agreement for the fact that we should be doing habitat management on the WMA and people are generally satisfied. The full report was posted to the Division's website.

Division Reports:

Information and Education:

Chief Al Ivany stated that Wednesday and Thursday of this week NJ is hosting the Northeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies R3 Committee meeting at the Seaview on Rt. 9. State representatives from Maine to Virginia are attending and will talk about R3 initiatives. Ryan Risher and Nate Figley are hosting the event for the Division. The Bureau will be doing a public information campaign on Chronic Wasting Disease that includes social media posts and web updates. Chief Ivany announced the Division Representative program will now be run by Nate Figley and we will be reinventing the program, filling the current open slots and aligning that program with a lot of R3 initiatives.

Law Enforcement:

Acting Chief Sean Cianciulli spoke about himself as well as other officers sporting a beard and how it is No Shave November, to help support a fellow officer who had lost his father to brain cancer. The first segment of the bear hunt was very successful as far as the bureau. We had fourteen officers at check stations on opening day. There were twelve officers on Saturday in Segment A running security, and we had officers from our northern region come to assist in the field doing inspections. We had talked about public safety on the WMAs, and that being our priority. We've never had any hunting accidents during the bear season and no incidents or accidents were reported this year. We did have one public safety call where we had people blowing air horns in attempt to interfere with a hunter in the woods. They were met on the road, they didn't realize the individual wasn't even bear hunting. They were given a verbal warning and we explained the hunter harassment violation to them. We had one baiting complaint. It turned out to be unfounded, no one was hunting within 300 ft. from the bait. We are preparing for Segment B, right now just assuming we have all the same parameters of the hunt. We will be prepared either way if any of these law suits result in changes to the season, we will adapt our operation plan.

Acting Chairman Virgilio questioned if the conservation officers at the check station were from other regions, that no patrol area was drawn upon in bear country? And were there any calls from the public about hunters on state property or state parks hunting black bear?

Chief Cianciulli replied that was correct: people assigned to the check stations came from central region which didn't really have any involvement in open season and our marine officers who come up and help out during the season. The hunter harassment call that we answered was from the individuals that we gave the warning to. They thought someone was hunting on the property unlawfully but turned out to be individuals bow hunting, so no we didn't have any.

Acting Chairman Virgilio asked if he is correct in saying there was good compliance from hunters following the rules and staying off state properties? Chief Cianciulli answered yes, the signs stayed up and people followed the change and stayed off state property.

Wildlife Management:

Chief Carole Stanko reported that bear was pretty much covered by previous chiefs' presentations. Her one concern with bears right now is that Kim Tinnes, a technician who works with wildlife control/bear project, is retiring December 1. This is her third technician to retire in the last year and a fourth has been called up for active duty for a year. We already took 40% fewer bears in the October season, which means that many more bears will be waking up hungry in the spring to cause human-bear conflicts and she has no staff to respond. We have one technician and two biologists. We were on the verge of making an offer for a new technician, then a hiring freeze came down from the Governor's office. Chief Stanko has some very valid concerns about what we are going to do.

Acting Chairman Virgilio asked with the hiring freeze, could you hire temps? Chief Stanko replied that that temps can't respond to something like this, it's a very highly trained position.

Assistant Director Nelson added that a retired employee cannot come back as a temp or volunteer for six months.

We are moving along with our CWD planning, we had our second task force meeting and will be sending out an email to set up the next meeting for the Game Committee. The deer harvest this year is dead-on with this time last year, we are at approximately 19,604 which is 42 animals fewer than this time last year.

Licensing and Permits:

Barbara Stoff, Licensing and Permits, reported the evaluation committee for the new contract met, we had a couple presentations and the evaluation report is done and we all signed it, now it is sitting with Treasury. We are hoping by the end of December we will have an award issued and a new contract with a new vendor for a new system. Beaver and otter lottery ran properly, and permit pickup started last week; everyone has to December 3rd to claim their awards. She ran the numbers for license sales this year and compared to last year, everything is down except for a few things. Fishing is down 4.9%, hunting is down 3.3%, black bear is down 37.39%, fall turkey is down 8.14%, deer permits increased by 1.74%, and WMA use permits increased by 12.8%. We are participating with the second part of the Archery Trade Association and Responsive Management study on e-mail messaging, a batch of e-mails went out in late September and a second batch will be going out in December in preparation for the January season. She does have the report from the first segment of their research that's about three hundred pages long, and she will have a summary on that for next month.

Freshwater Fisheries:

Chief Lisa Barno reported that Largemouth Bass Virus was documented at our Hackettstown facility at the very end of September into October. We had largemouth in six different ponds and staff noticed some reddened fins. Jan Lovy was on site and thought it to be a bacterial infection which is fairly common, so the fish were distributed. With additional and more intensive testing a subsample of the fish taken tested positive for Largemouth Bass Virus. At that point we had two ponds left and we ceased stocking. Jan retested the fish and they were confirmed positive. There were about 3,000 fish left and they were all destroyed. The ponds have been drained and we are trying to dry them out and if we can get them dry that will kill off the virus. Because some of the fish that were stocked will be carriers of this virus, the actual impact is really difficult to say. Largemouth Bass Virus is a stress-related disease; we may see some mortality related with spawning stress in two years. If the summers are exceptionally hot, we may see issues in a couple of the smaller ponds that were stocked. Considering most of the waters that were stocked have already seen Largemouth Bass Virus we are not anticipating a significant impact to the fishery, but it is something we should monitor. We will be doing additional testing next year and the year after to document what the current status of the virus is in New Jersey waters.

Assistant Director Golden asked what size class were the fish? Chief Barno replied that they were 4-5 inches in length, they were the young-of-the-year.

Chief Barno continued, Largemouth Bass Virus can be carried by other fish, but it only causes mortality in largemouth bass and typically, the mortality is only for the young of the year fish.

Poor recruitment for a couple of years and then the population builds up immunity to the virus. It is like many fish diseases, it is not a direct cause of mortality, but when coupled with other stressors or other bacteria you can get a more accumulative mortality due to that effect.

Acting Chairman Virgilio asked how it is transmitted through the population? Chief Barno replied that it could be transmitted through the water and remain in the water for up to seven days without a fish host and can also be transmitted by direct contact from one fish to the next.

A question was asked if it could affect people? Chief Barno stated that it has no effect on people or other animals preying on the fish.

Councilman Gudmundsson is assuming the hatchery will start raising largemouth again after the virus is taken care of; do we have any idea of how stocking fish that are isolated and free of the disease into waters that have it? Is that going to put those fish at risk and should we not stock? Chief Barno replied not that we shouldn't stock, the waters are so large that the probability of those fish contaminating or extending the virus to other fish is relatively low.

Acting Chairman Virgilio asked if the council is going to have to take any action on that and we might want to call a Fish Committee meeting prior to the next council meeting. Chief Barno replied that we will schedule something for late winter to bring everyone up to speed as to what they will be doing as far as the testing and reviewing the current fish health protocols.

Public Comment:

Janet Pizar, Millburn, NJ, stated going back to the legislative bills and announcements that was mentioned, there was a bill to lower the residency requirement for a NJ hunter license from 6 months to 60 days, and is wondering if there is anything in this bill that addresses an investigation for the interstate wildlife violators. Is it all first-time hunting license buyers? What safe guards are there now if you're not investigating new hunters to see if they are in violation in any other state? Also, she wanted to thank Assistant Director Golden for inviting her to participate in the WMA survey. She had some question on the habitat management in the survey

Ed Markowski, NJ Outdoor Alliance, talked about the statue for feeding bears. Fourteen years ago, a bunch of individuals got together and rushed some legislation through to try to prevent feeding of bears illegally, it proved to be less than successful and were told it would not stand up in court and that it is non-enforceable, but the legislation went through anyway. Despite the fact that we were extremely upset with the governor's decision to close state property to bear hunting, we have been working with the Governor's Office and the Division of Fish and Wildlife along with various other groups to come up with a new policy on bear feeding. We started back in July and worked on it throughout the summer and even though a lot of time has been taken up on lawsuits, we came up with a final version which he will pass out to council today. This will allow the conservation officers to enforce the regulation and should go a long way to protecting bears from people and protecting people from bears. We will be going out in the next week looking for sponsors in both the Senate and Assembly to try to get this through. We know that when you

feed bears you habituate those bears and they become a problem both to the public and the bear. This is our good faith attempt to show the governor that we are willing to work with him to help provide non-lethal methods of protecting our bear population.

Barbara Sachau, Whitehouse Station, NJ, spoke about the WMA survey and how it is all about taxation. They may have been paying for the last 30 years open space money on the local level, the county level, the state level and the federal level and you want more money from them because your hunting population is going down. The 2016 report from the national survey on fishing and hunting shows a really big decrease in hunters. If you want this extra money from the people in this state besides the open space money, how are you going to change the people who sit on this council that are all we have and are hunters and farmers, where you don't let the people who want preservation and to protection of animals in this state to have any voice at all. The only voice we get is three minutes once a month. This survey is slanted and bias. The composition of this council hasn't been changed since 1930.

Ed Karecki, President of Riverside Gun Club, stated that he would like to compliment the Division of Fish and Wildlife for all their farming activities from the northern end of the state to the southern end of the state. His family spends the entire summer weekends up in northern NJ and the farm fields up there look spectacular, the wildlife from birds that he has never seen to woodchucks and everything you could think of. Flat Brook area was spectacular this year with the different diverse crops.

Robert Moss, Bloomfield, NJ, had a few comments on the WMA presentation and some of the discussion. The corporate business tax was up on one of the slides as a funding source without mentioning that a portion of the corporate business tax is specifically dedicated to Green Acres purposes. Bond acts were mentioned before that with Green Acres corporate business taxes also an extension of the Green Acres Program with a different source of funding. There was a lot of discussion of new revenue sources with a lot of emphasis on voluntary sources, but obviously the possibility of involuntary sources remains. There will be, when the general public finds out with relatively new acquired Green Acres land there could be a fee for admission or general purposes, there will be a lot of reaction. Traditionally the non-consumptive users such as dog walkers, bike riders, and hikers, they pay for the acquisition what has been an additional payment was for special use areas. Also, the hunters and fishers pay for the management of the wildlife through their license fees. People are not accustomed in this state to pay for general access for non-consumptive uses.

Lunch: 12:20- 1:00

Acting Chairman Virgilio wanted to answer a question that was asked during public comment, on why Assistant Director Nelson gave her report at the front end of the meeting instead of with the division reports. That report is an administrative report given by the chair of the legislative committee and that's why it was given at that point in time, under the proper heading "committee reports". Work produced outside of committee we are not required to distribute to the audience, after the meeting is over you can always use the proper channels to obtain those reports. As it is right now it is going to stay because it is a committee report.

Conservation Officer Award:

Chief Sean Cianciulli started with giving a little background on the award. On February 21, 2018, Conservation Police Officer Tracy Sites was on his farm, working on his property when he heard a motor vehicle accident. He made a call to 911 and responded out to the road to see what had happened and to render aid. A pickup truck and a mail carrier collided, one individual from the pickup truck was out of the truck and walking however the female driver of the mail vehicle was unconscious and unresponsive. Tracy was able to free her from her seatbelt and render aid to her. She wasn't breathing at the time and he was able to revive her and stabilize her head and neck until the emergency medical personnel responded. As a result of his actions, he likely saved her life, she could have suffocated had he not been there and responded. She sustained serious injuries, a fractured skull, broken ribs and leg, and lacerations but recovered. Without Tracy's intervention she probably wouldn't have recovered. The North American Wildlife Enforcement Officers Association work with officers all over the country and they attend meetings and are nominated for awards. Tracy was nominated for this award.

Mike Massey, retired Lieutenant for the Fish and Game NJ presented the award. He was the Officers Association Rep. He has been with the North American Officers Association for close to 20 years and it is a professional and international organization. We have people from all over Canada and the U.S. who come to the conferences. Each district tries to do some training with their state representatives and we have awards we give out. Officer Sites is being presented the Life Saving Award from the North American Officers Association for his conduct in 2018. It has a plaque and has a description of what went on. Congratulations Tracy.

Acting Chairman Virgilio mentioned a 3-day extension to the semi-wild permit that requires a vote. Bob Loyd, Long Valley, Hidden Valley Gun Club has asked for an extension. Currently set to end on March 15 mid-week and he would like to see that extended to that Saturday.

A motion was made by Councilman Robinson to a 3-day extension, seconded by Councilman Brodhecker. Vote taken, all in favor; non- opposed, motion carried.

Acting Chairman Virgilio asked about the new Fish and Game Council meeting schedule and if anyone had conflicts with any of the dates.

A motion was made by Councilman DeMartino to accept the new Fish and Game Schedule, seconded by DeStephano. Vote taken, all in favor; non-opposed, motion carried.

License restoration Hearings:

Richard Raymond- present

Captain Linda Quirk read the statement for revocation appeal for Mr. Raymond who was present. Mr. Raymond was convicted of a violation on July 2, 2014 N.J.S.A. 23:7-9.a(4) for swimming or bathing in a wildlife management area and a second convicted violation of PA. 2314.A for trespassing and failure to wear orange while hunting in PA. The council asked Mr. Raymond questions. Mr. Raymond testified as to why the Council should restore his license.

Acting Chairman Virgilio asked for a motion to open the floor for discussion.
Councilman Gudmundsson made a motion to open the floor to discussion, seconded by Robinson. All were in favor, motion carried.

After the Council discussed Mr. Raymonds violations, Acting Chairman Virgilio asked for a motion to close the floor for discussion. **Councilman Brodhecker made a motion to reinstate Mr. Raymonds license, seconded by Councilman Robinson. Vote taken, all were in favor, motion carried**

Natan Zolotnitsky- present

Captain Quirk read the statement for revocation appeal for Mr. Zolotnitsky who was present. Mr. Zolotnitsky was convicted of a violation on July 12, 2017 N.J.S.A. 23:5-1 for fishing before 8:00a.m. on opening day as well as having more than 3 rods in the water and a second conviction of N.J.S.A. 23:2B-6 for keeping under size flounder. He is suspended from his hunting and fishing license until April 13, 2020. The Council asked Mr. Zolotnitsky questions. Mr. Zolotnitsky testified as to why the Council should restore his license.

Acting Chairman Virgilio asked for a motion to open up the floor for discussion.

A motion was made by Councilman Gudmundsson to open up the floor for discussion, seconded by Councilman Robinson. All were in favor, motion carried.

After the Council discussed Mr. Zolotnitskys violations, Acting Chairman Virgilio asked for a motion to close the floor for discussion. **Councilman Gudmundsson made a motion to close the floor for discussion, seconded by DeMartino. All in favor, motion carried.**

Councilman Gudmundsson made a motion not to reinstate Mr. Zolotnitskys license, seconded by Councilman Link. All were in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

James Firestine- not present

Captain Quirk read the statement for revocation appeal for Mr. Firestine who was not present. Mr. Firestine was convicted on February 1, 2018 N.J.S.A. for wrongfully procured resident license in NJ. And a second conviction of 23:08.a.8 baiting deer and bear in PA. He is suspended through February 1, 2020.

Councilman Gudmundsson made a motion to open the floor up to discussion, seconded by DeStephano. All in favor, motion carried.

After the Council discussed Mr. Firestine's violations, Acting Chairman Virgilio asked for a motion to close the floor for discussion. **Councilman Gudmundsson made a motion to close the floor for discussion, seconded by DeStephano. All in favor, motion carried.**

Councilman Gudmundsson made a motion not to reinstate Mr. Firestine's license, seconded by Councilman Brodhecker. All in favor, non-opposed. motion carried.

Robert Buch- not present

Captain Quirk read the statement for revocation appeal for Mr. Buch who was not present. Mr. Buch was convicted on January 10, 2014 N.J.S.A. 23:4-24.1a for possession of a uncased firearm in a motor vehicle and a second conviction on August 2, 2017 N.J.S.A.23:7-9.a.(4)/ 7:25-2.2(b) for operating a vehicle over a Wildlife Management Area. He is suspended through August 2, 2019.

Councilman Gudmundsson made a motion to open the floor up to discussion, seconded by Councilman Robinson. All in favor, motion carried.

After the Council discussed Mr. Buch's violations, Acting Chairman Virgilio asked for a motion to close the floor for discussion. **Chairman Gudmundsson made a motion to close the floor for discussion, seconded by Councilman Robinson. All were in favor, non-opposed, motion carried.**

Councilman Robinson made a motion not to reinstate Mr. Buch's license, seconded by Councilman Whildin. All in favor, non-opposed, motion carried.

Jude Welsh- not present

Captain Quirk read the statement for revocation appeal for Mr. Welsh who was not present. Mr. Welsh was convicted on April 23, 2015 N.J.S.A. 23:2B-6 N.J.A.C. 7:25-18.12(h)2 and a second conviction on May 1, 2017 N.J.S.A. 23:5-35.2/N.J.A.C. 7:25-14.7(b) for landing bluefish caught by hook and line during a closed season and for landing black sea bass while having gear on board other than specified on the permit. He is suspended through May 1, 2019.

Councilman Gudmundsson made a motion to open the floor up to discussion, seconded by Councilman Robinson. All in favor, non-opposed, motion carried.

Chairman Link made a motion not to reinstate Mr. Welsh's license, seconded by Councilman Gudmundsson. All in favor, non-opposed, motion carried.

Kyle Jones- not present

Captain Quirk read the statement for revocation appeal for Mr. Jones who was not present. Mr. Jones was convicted on February 18, 2017 N.J.S.A. 23:4-13.1 for hunting without orange, and a second conviction on December 4, 2017 N.J.S.A. 23:3-56.2/ 7:25-5.30(f) hunting without the right permit. He is suspended through December 4, 2019

Councilman Gudmundsson made a motion to open the floor up to discussion, seconded by Councilman Brodhecker. All in favor, non-opposed, motion carried.

After the Council discussed Mr. Jones violations, Acting Chairman Virgilio asked for a motion to close the floor for discussion. **Councilman Gudmundsson made a motion to close the floor for discussion seconded by Councilman Brodhecker. All in favor, non-opposed, motion carried.**

Councilman Gudmundsson made a motion to reinstate Mr. Jones license, seconded by Councilman Robinson, two (2) opposed (Link, Virgilio), motion carried.

Jeffrey Good- not present

Captain Quirk read the statement for revocation appeal for Mr. Good who was not present. Mr. Good was convicted on December 19, 2013 N.J.S.A. 23:4-13/ 7:25-5.23 for being in procession of illegal missal for small game, and a second conviction on June 21, 2018 N.J.S.A. 23:7A-2 for hindering the unlawful taking of wildlife. He is suspended through June 21, 2020.

Councilman Gudmundsson made a motion to open up the floor to discussion, seconded by Councilman DeStephano. All in favor, non-opposed, motion carried.

After the council discussed Mr. Goods violations, Acting Chairman Virgilio asked for a motion to be made to close the floor for discussion. **Councilman Gudmundsson made a motion to close the floor for discussion, seconded by Councilman Brodhecker. All in favor, non-opposed, motion carried.**

Councilman Robinson made a motion not to reinstate Mr. Goods license, seconded by Councilman Gudmundsson. All in favor, non-opposed, motion carried.

Public Comment:

Barbara Sachau. Whitehouse Station, NJ, commented on the October 2017 bow hunter magazine, where it says that NJ hunting is down 40% over the past forty years, that shows not as many people are hunting anymore. Also, she would like to comment on Assistant Director Goldens presentation. Almost every survey done by this agency has a political purpose and it is usually to get more money. She finds the tax on non-consumptive users to be vicious, especially because they are already spending for open space tax on local, county, state and federal levels. Taxation in NJ is atrocious. People are leaving this state because they pay for everything. The word “a lot” is used often here when people here talk to a few people and I’d like to call attention to that. A comment was also made that people are familiar with the management processes here in our state and that’s not true at all. You have to come to these meetings to find out all the back-room stuff that goes on. Farming is going down in this state as well.

Acting Chairman Virgilio asked for a motion to move into executive session. **Councilman DeMartino motioned to move into executive session, seconded by Councilman Gudmundsson. All in favor, non-opposed, motion carried.**

A motion was made by Councilman DeMartino and seconded by Councilman Link to adjourn the meeting at 2:30. Vote taken, non-opposed, motion carried.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday December 11 at 10:00a.m. at the Assunpink Conservation Center.