

NEW HAMPSHIRE FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT

SEPTEMBER 16, 2009 COMMISSION MEETING

Meeting Location: NH Fish & Game Department, 11 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH 03301

Commissioners Present: E. Orff, R. Phillipson, R. Rowan, T. Tichy, J. Ryan, T. Hubert, M. Kalter, W. Morse, and S. Guaraldi.

Commissioner's Absent: P. Costa

Coastal Commissioner: vacant

Executive Director Normandeau - present

Chairman Rowan called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m., and asked the audience to join in the pledge of allegiance. He informed the audience that the public is entitled to attend all Commission meetings and when recognized by the chairman, may speak on any item on the agenda.

ACTION ITEMS:

Commissioner Kalter inquired as to whether he would still serve on the Policy Committee while he was a holdover as Strafford County Commissioner and Commissioner Rowan replied, "You will serve on your respective committee's until you are replaced".

1. Commissioner Kalter moved to approve the August 19, 2009 Commission Minutes as written and Commissioner Orff seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.
2. Commissioner Phillipson moved to accept the donation of \$1,330.27, from the Lakeview Neurorehabilitation Center, to be deposited into the Search & Rescue Account and Commissioner Guaraldi seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.
3. Commissioner Kalter moved to approve the expenditure of \$15,000 of Wildlife Legacy Initiative Funds in support of the Landowner Relations Program and Commissioner Phillipson seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Chuck Miner, Landowner Relations Coordinator, reported that the program now had 14 signs to offer to landowners rather than the 7 signs in the past. He stated that there seemed to be more vehicle issues than before.

4. Commissioner Orff moved to accept the donation of \$4,500 of expenses from the Wildlife Heritage Foundation of New Hampshire in support of the Hunting and Fishing Expo and Tour and Commissioner Guaraldi seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

LATE ITEMS:

1. Commissioner Ryan moved to accept the donation of \$10,000 from the family of Peter Shintani, to be deposited in to the Search & Rescue Account and Commissioner Morse seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

INFORMATION ITEMS:

1. Kathy LaBonte, Chief, Support Services, read the monthly Financial Statements dated August 31, 2009. (See attached statement)

2. Chairman Rowan asked for Commission input regarding the recent Commission/Senior Staff Retreat held at the Owl Brook Hunter Education Center in Holderness, NH.

Commissioner Tichy stated that he thought it was a worthwhile session. He further stated that he felt that there was need to have more discussion and time to absorb what the Commission and staff learned and what the group came up with. He stated that the Commission has legislative authority to govern by policy without changing legislation. He suggested that the Commission look at the existing policies and decide whether they need updating or wordsmithing.

Commissioner Hubert stated that he concurred with Commissioner Tichy's assessment of the Retreat. He reported that he does agree that the policies could use a major overhaul with umbrella policies and layers under that. He reported that he was skeptical that no other States were currently using the program presented by Dwight Guinn of the Management Assistance Team and felt it required further studying.

Commissioner Guaraldi reported that she agreed with Commissioner Tichy and Hubert. She stated, "It is always good for Senior Staff and the Commission to get together." She reported that she felt there needed to be better communication, such as detailed reports when requesting monies for projects, as she found the reports to be very beneficial.

In closing, she reported that she got the feeling it was implied as to what the Commission was going to do to change. She stated, "It needs to be a two way street".

Commissioner Kalter reported that the group was shown a model for a more effective way to get the work done and allow both the Department and Commission to work more efficiently. He stated that it does hinge on the ability to write good policy, which is difficult. In closing, he stated that his personal feeling was that he would like to see the Commission go down that path.

Commissioner Morse stated that there were some good points raised at the Retreat. He stated that it was always good to speak with one voice, which makes for a more effective group. He suggested that the Commission speak through the Chairman, who in-turn will contact the Director.

Commissioner Orff stated that the policies needed to be formulated into a collective package that makes sense, to include some wordsmithing.

Commissioner Ryan stated, “I enjoyed every minute of the Retreat.” He stated that he was still in the learning curve process. He thought there were some good points raised and was happy to see problem solving methods being used in other States.

Commissioner Phillipson reported that there were some good points brought out. He questions why other States have not got involved in this method of governance. He suggested that the Policy Committee review and come up with a plan of action for the entire Commission. He stated that it could take up to a year or better to switch over if it looked feasible to move forward.

Commissioner Rowan reported that he concurred with most of the comments made and stated, “If it fits, use it, and if not, make it more user friendly”. He stated that he believed everyone was in common agreement that it would take time and effort. Further, he reported that he would like to schedule a work session for the Commission, as it would take meeting more than once a month to accomplish this. He asked that the Commission e-mail him with a preference on a time and date to meet. In closing, he reported that there were 3 other States trying this method of governance; The Colorado Division of Wildlife, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, and Arizona Game and Fish.

Commissioner Morse asked to hear from staff as to what their thoughts were on the Retreat.

Commissioner Rowan responded that he would like to get structure first, although stated that staff could provide comment. He stated that the next meeting would be a work session for the Commission to start going in the right direction.

Steve Perry, Chief, Inland Fisheries Division, reported that there was another book available to read entitled, “Reinventing Your Board”, by John Carver and Meriam Carver, and suggested using it as a tool. Commissioner Hubert stated that he would like to read the book when it’s available.

STANDING COMMITTEES:

POLICY COMMITTEE: Commissioner Hubert, Chair; Commissioners; Kalter, Phillipson, Orff, Costa, and Ryan. Commissioner Hubert reported that the committee did not meet this month. He stated that the committee has been compiling existing policies and thanked Commissioner Kalter for his efforts.

Commissioner Phillipson moved to approve the proposed updated policies as presented and Commissioner Morse seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE: Commissioner Morse, Chair; Commissioners Tichy, Rowan and Guaraldi. Commissioner Morse reported that the committee did not meet this month. The Commission discussed a correction to a statute in The Department of Safety’s law relative to the operation of certain vehicles on highway rights of way. The committee recommended allowing Major Acerno to continue to work with the Department of Safety on the issue. Tim agreed to keep the Commission informed.

RIVERS COMMITTEE: Commissioner Ryan; Chair; Commissioner Ryan reported that the committee did not meet this month, therefore, had nothing to report.

LAKES COMMITTEE: Commissioner Orff; Commissioner Orff reported that his appointment to this committee would go before the Governor & Council for vote at the September 23, 2009 Meeting. In closing, he reported that the next schedule Lakes Committee Meeting would take place on September 25, 2009.

HANDBOOK COMMITTEE: Commissioner Guaraldi, Chair; Commissioner Guaraldi reported that the committee did not meet in September, therefore, had nothing more to report. She stated that Commissioner Kalter has put in a great deal of work into the updated handbook and felt by the October Commission Meeting the Commission would have a copy.

OLD BUSINESS: At this time, Chairman Rowan asked to vote on the September License Suspension Hearing Minutes as written.

Commissioner Kalter moved to approve the September 16, 2009 License Suspension Hearing Minutes as written and Commissioner Morse seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Further, Chairman Rowan asked for comments from the Commission regarding dam repair on Jones Pond Brook at the Ellis Hatch Wildlife Management Area.

Commissioner Phillipson stated that after reviewing the documents and studies done by John Magee, Fisheries Biologist, he felt repairing the dam would not be the practical thing to do.

Commissioner Tichy stated, "I hate to lose impoundments areas". He reported that he had visited some great impoundment areas in Canada. He further stated that many people enjoy the Jones Pond Brook at the Ellis Hatch Wildlife Management Area and would rather not see it go away forever, including himself.

Commissioner Rowan talked with Jim Gallagher, Chief Engineer, Dam Bureau, Environmental Services, to find out the status of the Jones Pond Dam on the repair list. Jim reported that it was now #13 on the list from up from #17. He further reported that it would cost approximately \$435,000 to replace the dam and about \$500,000 to restore it. In closing, Jim stated that if the department chose to proceed, he would assist in looking for proper funding.

Director Normandeau stated, "Although I realize this is an emotional issue for some, there are many department owned buildings around the state in need of repair." For instance, he stated that the Milford and Warren Hatcheries both have pump and generator issues, in addition to routine upkeep at other Regional Offices.

Former Commissioner Carney reported that the dam at Jones Pond was put in for a cost of approximately \$40,000 and felt it could be replaced for much less. He further reported that everyone was looking to see it come back and stated, "I can't see spending \$500,000 to put a dam in".

Chairman Rowan reported that the actual road getting to Jones Pond would first need repair before any work on the dam could be done.

Commissioner Morse moved to put the Jones Pond Brook Dam Repair on hold while proper funding sources could be found and Commissioner Tichy seconded.

Much discussion ensued.

Steve Perry reported that the Commission has a policy to not sacrifice brook trout habitat and felt the department would be sacrificing the resources by rebuilding the dam.

Commissioner Kalter stated, "It isn't practical at this point".

At this time, Commissioner Tichy withdrew his second to the motion and Commissioner Morse withdrew the motion itself.

Chairman Rowan announced that the conference room at the Region 1 Office was available on November 18, 2009 for the Commission Meeting and Biennial Hearing.

Commissioner Guaraldi moved to hold the November 18, 2009 Commission Meeting at the Region 1 Office in Lancaster, in conjunction with the Biennial Hearing taking place at 6:30 p.m., at the same facility and Commissioner Tichy seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

COMMISSIONERS REPORTS:

COMMISSIONER GUARALDI: Commissioner Guaraldi reported that she attended the Councilor Burton Tour, the Commission & Staff Retreat, met with local outing clubs in the area, and worked at the Hopkinton Fair on Sunday. She stated, "What an unbelievable job staff did on the exhibits." She thought that it was a great opportunity to meet a lot of people. She reported that it was the 15th Anniversary of the Becoming an Outdoor Woman Program to held on September 11 – 13, 2009. She further reported that Councilor Burton visited Rockywold and had dinner with the Becoming an Outdoor Woman participants.

In closing, she reported that she had been distributing the new hunting digest and has received positive comments.

COMMISSIONER MORSE: Commissioner Morse reported that he received positive and negative comments regarding the new hunting digest. He reported that the majority of the folks that did not like the booklet were mostly disappointed with the size and preferred the smaller booklet.

He further reported that with help from Commissioner Phillipson, the Deering Fish and Game Club would be holding an event similar to the “Women on Target” event on September 26, 2009.

COMMISSIONER RYAN: Commissioner Ryan reported that he was still visiting local clubs in the area. He reported that he attended the Councilor Burton Tour and learned quite a bit. He stated that he felt the Commission & Staff Retreat was great and felt it was good to interact with Senior Staff & Commissioners.

COMMISSIONER TICHY: Commissioner Tichy reported that he did not work at the Lancaster Fair, however, spent some time with the Law Enforcement Staff.

He further reported that he received a huge amount of negative feedback regarding the new hunting digest, however, once he explained the cost saving measure most folks were supportive.

COMMISSIONER HUBERT: Commissioner Hubert reported that he attended the Pheasant Volunteers Meeting in Claremont with Sullivan and Cheshire County clubs, along with Ted Walski and Chuck Miner of the Department, attended the Councilor Burton Tour along with Councilor Shea and many others and thought it was very effective in that it educates folks about the many different Fish and Game Programs, attended the Commission & Staff Retreat and stated, “It was time well spent”.

Further, he reported that he received mix reviews regarding the new hunting digest, however, once he explained the cost savings most folks were supportive. In closing, he reported that he received positive comments regarding the department’s display at the fair.

COMMISSIONER KALTER: Commissioner Kalter reported that it was a fairly quiet month, receiving no comments regarding the new hunting digest. He reported that the local club meetings would start up next month.

In closing, he reported that he was not aware of any names being submitted for the Strafford and Coastal Commissioner seats.

COMMISSIONER ORFF: Commissioner Orff reported that he attended the Commission & Staff Retreat, the North East Outdoor Writers Association Meeting, and visited sporting shops. He further reported that he did not receive any real negative comments regarding the new hunting digest.

COMMISSIONER PHILLIPSON: Commissioner Phillipson reported that he did not receive any comments regarding the new hunting digest, positive or negative. He reported that he attended the Pheasant Volunteers Meeting with Cheshire and Sullivan County club members.

In closing, he reported that the Cheshire County Fish & Game Club made a donation of \$200.00 to the Landowner Relations Program.

COMMISSIONER ROWAN : Commissioner Rowan reported that he attended the Rulemaking Hearing and the Becoming an Outdoor Woman BBQ, which he found very interesting. He further reported that he received the routine calls and visits from constituents, mostly anti-bear hunters.

In closing, he announced that he received a letter from a Mr. Dodd of Moultonborough, New Hampshire that read as follows:

“Ladies and Gentleman,

I am inquiring about the individuals that were high bidders for the 2009 Moose Permit Auction. I am aware that 30 plus thousand dollars was raised by this process. To say I was not happy with the concept of selling moose permits would be quite an understatement. I have attended many of your public hearings around the state. Those of you that know me personally know that I have normally supported the Commission and the department. I am inquiring as to who received permits, whether resident or non-resident, and how much they bid to win.

Since retiring from the New Hampshire State Police after 27 years of service, I have not taken time to read the specifics on public information, however, it seems to me the information I am requesting is just that. A public entity auctioning off a public resource to fund a public program should dictate the public has the right to know all about this process.

I am formally requesting my communication be read at the next Commission Meeting. I will be in contact with Bob Rowan, Chairman, Carroll County Commissioner, to discuss my e-mail and my dismay with this type of fundraising.

If you would please e-mail me with the requested information, I would sincerely appreciate it.

Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this matter.

Very truly yours,

*Dwight D. Dodd (no relation to Billy)
Moultonborough, NH”*

DIRECTOR’S REPORT: Director Normandeau reported that Councilor Shea rode with him during the recent Councilor Burton Tour. During the tour, one of the stops was at the proposed boat access site on Sunapee. He stated that it was made clear that the issues at Sunapee were strictly political and not environmental. He stated that it was always good to inform people as to what the department does.

Further, he reported that he spent some time on Saturday at the Hopkinton Fair and received a call the next day from Governor Lynch commending the department on the exhibits at both the Lancaster Fair and the Hopkinton Fair. He reported that the final count from the optical scanner indicated that approximately 14,000 people visited the Fish and Game building.

In addition, he reported that the department contributed \$250,000 to assist the Society For the Protection of New Hampshire Forest in acquiring 2,200 acres of riverfront property in Clarksville, which is an excellent deer wintering yard. He reported that he attended the Society For Protection of New Hampshire Forests Annual Meeting with Charlie Bridges, Habitat & Diversity Coordinator, where the department received a “Conservation Partner Award”, as an important contributor.

In closing, he announced that in honor of National Hunting & Fishing Day, the department would be holding an event entitled, “ New Hampshire Hunting & Fishing Expo & Tour”, at New Hampshire Fish and Game Headquarters, 11 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH, and at the Owl Brook Hunter Education Facility on Perch Pond Road, Holderness, NH.

Director Normandeau thanked Councilor Burton for forwarding copies of the Wildlife/Moose Driver Education Video for the Fish and Game Commission to view.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

No public comments were heard at this time.

At this time, 3:25 p.m., Commissioner Guaraldi moved to adjourn and Commissioner Morse seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Respectfully submitted,

Patti Costa, Secretary

Approved: _____
Robert Rowan, Chairman

Date: _____