

Michigan Wildlife Council

MINUTES September 6, 2018

A regular meeting of the Michigan Wildlife Council was held Thursday, September 6, 2018, at the Traverse City Customer Service Center, 2122 South M-37, Traverse City, Michigan.

Present for the Michigan Wildlife Council

Matt Pedigo
Beth Gruden
Jeff Poet
Carol Rose
Henry Stancato (arrived at 11:18am)
Kristin Phillips

Excused Absence

Jim Hammill
Ed Roy

Call to Order

Chairman **Pedigo** called the meeting of the Michigan Wildlife Council (MWC) to order at 11:11a.m. The open vacancy on the council is anticipated to be filled by the next meeting scheduled on November 5, 2018.

Approval of Agenda

Chairman **Pedigo** reviewed the agenda and called for discussion. There was no discussion. **Rose** made a motion that the agenda be approved as presented. **Gruden** supported the motion, and the agenda was approved, by unanimous vote (5-0).

Approval of April 26, 2018, Minutes

Pedigo called for discussion on the minutes of the April 26, 2018, MWC meeting. There was no discussion. **Poet** made a motion that the minutes be approved as submitted. **Rose** seconded the motion. **Pedigo** asked for questions or comments. There being none, the minutes were approved by unanimous vote (5-0).

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer **Phillips** gave an overview of the presented written draft financial report for October 1, 2017, to June 30, 2018, noting a prior fiscal year balance of \$1,670,889, current fiscal year revenue of \$1,109,407 and expenditures of \$865,272 for a current fund balance of \$1,915,025. The council discussed if revenue was on track and the contingency fund. **Phillips** stated there is a slight decline in revenue every year but it's still on track and estimated between \$1.5 and \$1.6 million. The contingency fund is growing and \$11,000 has been spent on the Sportsmen's plan. **Gruden** moved that the draft financial report be approved as presented; **Rose** seconded the motion. **Pedigo** asked for questions or comments. There being none, the draft report was approved by unanimous vote (5-0).

Güd Marketing - Year 3, Flight 2 Completion Report/Fall Media Overview

Ally Caldwell, account coordinator of Güd Marketing, opened with a review of Güd Marketing's agenda.

Emmie Musser, media director of Güd Marketing, stated the campaign intentionally shifted to promote the funding message. They continue to optimize digital ads based on performance. Mobile devices continue to be the biggest source of traffic, but they did see a slight shift to desktop. **Musser** presented the paid media year-three, flight-two completion report (January 1 – June 7, 2018). **Musser** reviewed paid media goals, overall investment and communications strategy with key results from the council's broad and targeted tactics including: outdoor, transit, radio, television, digital video streaming, digital music streaming, paid and organic social media, media interviews, influencers and niche publications, and the website. Key results include:

- 56 percent value-added placements
- Introduced funding messages broadly for the first time (April 2018)
- Campaign engagement rate reached a record high (4 percent)
- Published content was more diverse (articles and quizzes)

The council discussed the engagement rate doubling from 2 percent to 4 percent. Güd Marketing explained they were targeting the right audience and had introduced new ways to engage such as quizzes and videos. Council members thought that 4 percent was still low, however Güd explained that the industry average on a digital ad is .04 percent. The MWC has generated close to 3 million engagements. Targeted paid social ads (Facebook) equaled approximately 1.1 million engagements.

Güd Marketing - Creative Updates

Joel Newport, creative director for Güd Marketing, presented completed creative assets for the summer 2018 campaign, including the digital matching game, vertical video for Facebook and Snapchat, and the first video content story. In addition, he provided an overview of next steps for a new campaign website.

Newport also introduced a creative concept to utilize Snapchat's lens feature that would add a digital elk anywhere a flat surface is detected. Stancato questioned how this helps the council's message and purpose. Güd Marketing explained it was a way to bridge the 18 to 24-year-old audience and get them to interact with the council (they would have to read something about the council to use the lens). Council members felt it gave a false impression, was disrespectful to wildlife and did not support using this feature, particularly with game animals. Güd Marketing stated they will research other options to present at the next meeting on November 5, 2018.

Newport discussed the website and updates that need to be made and separated them into two categories: must haves and opportunities:

Must haves: mobile first, faster load times, security, Americans with Disabilities Act compliance, strong content

Opportunities: custom webpages by audience, increased depth of engagement tactics, opportunities to "Get Involved"

Andrea Ness, outreach and engagement director of Güd Marketing, introduced a public relations plan to leverage hunting season this fall. Media kits will be available with key messages, lists of experts and all content already produced will be available to reproduce.

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The meeting was adjourned at 1:04 p.m. for lunch and reconvened at 1:23 p.m. All council members present prior to lunch, were present after lunch.

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Güd Marketing – Statewide Survey

Jill Holden, strategic planning director of Güd Marketing, presented an overview of the statewide survey methodology and timeline. Deployment will be in the next three weeks, data analysis will happen between October 8 and November 2 and presentation of initial findings will be at the next meeting on November 5, 2018. **Holden** then explored opportunities for expansion of the sampling size and/or enforcing demographic quotas at a regional level. The council discussed this and decided to maintain the same sample size and enforce demographic quotas at a regional level.

Güd Marketing – Sportsmen’s Plan

Caldwell provided an update on the progress of the development of the sportsmen communications strategy deliverables. She played a revised campaign video. The council discussed how it would be viewed. Güd Marketing recommended it be used to supplement presentations given by council members.

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The meeting was adjourned for break at 2:15 p.m. and reconvened at 2:24 p.m. All council members present prior to break, were present after break.

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Public Comment

Chairmen **Pedigo** called for public comment at 2:24 p.m.

Mr. John Bumstead asked when the next request for proposal (RFP) is due for the third-party marketing vendor. **Phillips** advised the current marketing contract is through June 2020. The RFP process will begin June 2019 and will be released through Buy4Michigan, which is now SIGMA VSS. As with the first RFP, the bid will be advertised to other states.

Mr. Bumstead stated that the original intent of the bill to create the Michigan Wildlife Council was to focus on non-hunters, non-fishers and the voting population. He stated he thinks the council is missing that connection. Also, those who have the “Disney Syndrome”, referring to the discussion about the elk Snapchat lens, you will never get them to approve of hunting and fishing.

Mr. Michael Leonard, of Safari Club International, stated his opinion that Güd Marketing is weighting engagements too high. The success of the campaign should be measured by opinions, not by how many clicks you get, it’s how many minds you are changing. **Stancato** responded that Güd Marketing is not doing that. The engagement numbers are what they are, they are not the ultimate results which are determined by the baseline survey.

Stancato, referring to the elk Snapchat lens, stated that Güd Marketing is supposed to come out with creative ideas, and we are supposed to provide direction.

Michigan Wildlife Council Trademark Recap

The council called **Nate Gambill**, assistant attorney general, at 2:56 p.m. on a conference phone during the open meeting. Gambill reviewed the timeline of events related to the trademark litigation:

- When the Council was first created they used a temporary website.
- At the Council's request and with its approval, the Council's temporary website was managed by a council member and his associate who had volunteered to do work for the Council.
- Once the Council had hired its marketing firm and the firm had completed its design of the Council's permanent website, the Council wanted its temporary website to be absorbed into the permanent site.
- The Council asked the member who managed the temporary site shortly before his term expired in March 2016, and numerous times after he left, to turn over control of the Council's temporary website to the Council. He refused and continued operating the website without permission, impersonating the Council.
- After he left the Council, the former council member also filed an application on August 26, 2016 with the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs to register the name "Michigan Wildlife Council" (MWC) as a service mark of his own.
- The Council, through the State of Michigan, filed a lawsuit in July 2017 to regain control of its temporary website and the use of their name.
- He filed his own lawsuit against the State of Michigan (SOM) in September 2017 arguing the Council was violating his trademark of the MWC, and the lawsuit was promptly dismissed for lack of merit.
- On October 5, 2017, a temporary injunction was granted in the State's lawsuit requiring the former council member to take down the website and deactivate it during litigation. The former council member unsuccessfully appealed the temporary injunction.
- Ultimately, on April 24, 2018, the court ordered the former council member to turn over the domain names, to stop impersonating the government, and cancel his service mark for the MWC name.
- He did not appeal the judgement, turned over the domain names and cancelled the service mark of the MWC name.

From **Gambill's** perspective this has been resolved.

Council Reports / New Business

A short discussion was held regarding the next marketing contract. It was agreed that the November meeting agenda should include discussion of the RFP bidding process for the next contract period.

Adjournment

Rose made a motion to adjourn, seconded by **Poet**, and the motion was approved by unanimous vote (6-0). The meeting was adjourned at 3:25 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for November 5, 2018, at the Carl T. Johnson Hunting and Fishing Center in Cadillac.

APPROVED: Date _____

Matt Pedigo, Chairperson
Michigan Wildlife Council