

MINUTES

Michigan Wildlife Council November 7, 2014

A regular meeting of the Michigan Wildlife Council was held Friday, November 7, 2014, at Jay's Sporting Goods, 8800 S. Clare Ave., Clare, MI.

Present for the Michigan Wildlife Council (MWC)

Merisa Campbell, Johannesburg
Keith Creagh, Lansing
James H. Hammill, Crystal Falls
Matthew R. Pedigo, Howell
Jeffery Poet, Clare
Carol Rose, Hillman
Henry Stancato, Detroit
Randy Stec, Caro
Alan N. Taylor, Rockford

Call to Order

Chairperson **Rose** called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. and welcomed attendees.

Approval of Agenda

Rose gave a brief overview of the meeting agenda. **Hammill** made a motion that the agenda be approved as presented, **Creagh** seconded the motion, and the agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

Approval of October 8, 2014 Minutes

Campbell made a motion that minutes of the October 8, 2014, meeting be approved as presented. **Poet** seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved by unanimous consent.

Financial Report

Campbell gave a brief overview of the treasurer's report for the period August 31, 2014, to September 30, 2014, which shows a balance of \$1,200,884 in the Wildlife Management Public Education Fund. **Campbell** noted that not all revenue has been added yet. **Campbell** also noted that the DNR Marketing & Outreach Division has incurred administrative costs of \$11,373 for the period March 1, 2014, to September 30, 2014, and beginning October 1, 2014, incurred expenditures will be paid from the fund. **Creagh** made a motion that the financial report be approved, **Hammill** seconded the motion, and the report was approved by unanimous consent.

Proposed Budget Overview

Rose presented an overview of the estimated \$1.6 million budget proposal for the MWC operational plan, including 94 percent, or \$1,504,000, allocated for research/marketing/creative/media expenses; five percent, or \$80,000, allocated to the state of Michigan for administrative costs of the MWC; and one percent, or \$16,000, allocated to a contingency fund. After a lengthy discussion, **Taylor** made a motion that the budget be approved as presented. **Pedigo** seconded the motion, and the proposed budget was approved by unanimous consent.

Public Appearance Guidelines

Draft guidelines for public appearances were presented by **Rose**. After some discussion, **Creagh** made a motion to adopt the proposed guidelines. **Taylor** seconded the motion and the guidelines were adopted, as presented, by unanimous consent. Said guidelines are attached and posted to the Michigan Wildlife Council website.

Discussion followed regarding interactions with speakers during the public appearance portion of meetings. Council members agreed that questions will be accepted from speakers, and the complexity of the questions will dictate when they are answered and by whom. General questions will be answered, if possible, during the meeting by council members or others qualified to respond. However, the council chair will ask someone with expertise to respond after the meeting to questions on more complicated issues.

Basecamp/Alternatives Discussion

Discussion was held regarding the best way for council members to communicate between meetings. Suggestions were made on several project management/collaboration systems, including Basecamp, which is currently being used, Huddle, SharePoint, Box and others. Focus was on cost and ease of use. **Taylor** noted that his IT contact had investigated at least 10 different systems, and **Taylor** thought one of the best was Huddle, which is used by most government agencies. However, cost for the Huddle system is \$6,000 a year for 15 users. **Creagh** commented that the cost may well be worth it to have a system that is more time and energy efficient and user-friendly. The council decided to continue with Basecamp for the time being, while further research is conducted. **Pedigo** and **Chad Elder**, **Taylor's** IT contact, will explore alternatives and report back to the council.

MWC Website Development and Future Content

An overview of the new Michigan Wildlife Council website was given. **Hammill** noted he has lots of information to add, including the science of wildlife management, the role hunters play, etc., if the council agrees. **Campbell** thinks the website shouldn't be made too technical for those who don't hunt or fish. She feels the focus of the website should be on reaching non-hunters in order to inform them of the impact sportsmen and sportswomen play in wildlife conservation and the state's economy.

Rose mentioned that she feels content should be added to the website that shows what non-hunters (i.e. hikers, bird watchers, bikers, etc.) can enjoy as well as hunters and that such things are made possible by scientific wildlife management and hunter dollars.

Following a discussion regarding a proposed policy for what content gets added to the website, **Taylor** made a motion that all content suggestions be forwarded to **Chad Elder** who, in turn, will disseminate the information to council members by way of Basecamp for a two-week review period for any comments or objections. If, at the end of two weeks no objections have been raised, the MWC chair will give the okay to post the subject material to the website. If there is an objection, the matter shall be deferred for discussion during the next meeting of the council, at which time the objection can be either withdrawn or continued. **Pedigo** seconded the motion, and the motion passed with unanimous consent.

It was noted that council members who have an objection to posting proposed material on the website must make clear it is an objection not just a comment.

Also discussed was how to reach the public during the interim of when the marketing campaign begins. **Hammill** mentioned billboards; however, **Taylor** feels it is more important the council keep stakeholders and related wildlife organizations advised during the next year before the general public. He suggested soliciting written articles for outdoor publications. **Russ Mason**, chief of the DNR Wildlife Division, and conservationist **Shane Mahoney** were mentioned as possible individuals to invite to submit articles.

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A short recess was called at 10:45 a.m., and the meeting reconvened at 11:00 a.m.

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Request for Proposals (RFP) Update and Discussion

Rose gave an overview of the RFP draft being worked on by the RFP subcommittee for the educational media campaign. She noted that because of the Open Meetings Act, there are certain ethical considerations regarding council members being approached by prospective bidders or outside interested parties before the RFP is finalized and posted. **Rose** highlighted each part of the document developed by the RFP subcommittee, provided by **Sharon Maynard** of the Michigan Department of Technology, Management and Budget (DTMB), and furnished by **Jana Harding-Bishop** of the DNR procurement section. The summary included Exhibit A – Statement of Work Contract Activities; Exhibit B – General Proposal/Bidder Response Requirements; and Exhibit C – Pricing. An additional document with proposed scoring criteria and evaluation instructions was also shared with the council. **Harding-Bishop** also noted that **Mary Ostrowski** is the DTMB buyer for the project.

A lengthy discussion ensued, which included, among other things, whether bids should be accepted from bidders who may have or are representing anti-hunting or anti-wildlife management organizations or who may be doing business with clients who could possibly conflict with the mission of the media campaign. The question was asked whether those bidders with a potential conflict of interest should be automatically disqualified or should be judged on how well they will do the job. **Hammill** wondered how sportsmen's groups and stakeholders would feel about the potential conflict. **Creagh** stated that many companies work both sides of an issue and thinks any decision should be based on the strength of performance. **Pedigo** agreed, saying the council is looking for a specialized company that is professional and more than likely does work for clients with opposing viewpoints. **Stec**,

who started the conversation by asking the question, said he is comfortable with the subcommittee's decision not to include language in the RFP regarding whether a company has clients who may conflict with the MWC mission.

Rose then reviewed the Timeline document, indicating the subcommittee's intent to get the final draft back to the full council within the next two weeks so members can review the document and be ready to approve it at the December 3 meeting.

Stancato suggested that a non-mandatory, pre-bid meeting be scheduled where bidders would have an opportunity to attend and ask questions. It was further suggested that written questions also be accepted and that following the meeting, answers to the questions be distributed to all bidders.

Creagh made a motion that after the next RFP subcommittee meeting, the updated draft of the document be shared with DTMB as well as the full wildlife council and that a pre-bid meeting be worked into the timeline. **Taylor** seconded the motion, and it passed with unanimous consent.

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The meeting was recessed for lunch at 12:15 p.m. and reconvened at 1:08 p.m. All council members in attendance before the lunch break were present.

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Joint Evaluation Committee

Discussion was held regarding the Joint Evaluation Committee (JEC). **Harding-Bishop** explained that the recommendation is that the committee consists of either five or seven members, which would include one non-voting member. She mentioned that possible voting members would be the DTMB buyer, **Mary Ostrowski**, the project manager **Kristin Phillips**, herself, and four members from the Michigan Wildlife Council, one of which would be non-voting.

Taylor said he prefers the DNR's involvement be limited and questioned why the project manager is from the department. It was explained that the project manager is not managing the project, just merely the single point of contact between the department and the council, not to interfere with the council.

Taylor also questioned why the 50/50 split of department representatives and council representatives on the evaluation committee, since it is the charge of the council to expend money from the public education subaccount to develop and implement the media-based education program.

Creagh answered that the council is a public body using stakeholder funds and citizens' money, created within the Department of Natural Resources and bound by Department of Management and Budget rules. **Creagh** went on to say that he will support the council to make sure the evaluation committee is council-led. **Creagh** also stated that the role of the DNR is not to manage the project but support the decisions of the council.

2015 Meeting Schedule

Council members approved the following meeting schedule for 2015:

Wednesday, March 11
Wednesday, June 10
Wednesday, September 9
Wednesday, December 9

Public Comment

The public comment portion of the meeting began at 2:12 p.m., and the following individuals offered remarks to the council:

Jim DeClerck, stated that, as a stakeholder, he would like to see two things: the financial/economic impact and results of the council's efforts, including the dynamics on age, gender, area, etc. He also asked about a perspective of what non-hunters think of hunters...do they even care? **DeClerck** mentioned the 2016 elections and underscored that what the council does today will have an impact in 2016.

Mike Leonard with Safari Club International said it was his understanding the council was formed to choose a marketing firm to educate the general public about the important role hunters play in Michigan. He said it sounds to him like bureaucrats are doing the choosing, so what is the purpose of the council if it can't do what it was created to do?

Katie Keen, wildlife outreach technician with the DNR, mentioned that Chairperson **Rose** was interviewed on the Mike Avery's Outdoor Magazine radio show. **Keen** said it was a great interview and Mike is looking forward to having other council members on the show.

Council Reports/Announcements/Comments

Rose thanked council member **Poet** for hosting the meeting at Jay's Sporting Goods.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by **Hammill**, seconded by **Stec** and passed by unanimous consent. The meeting was adjourned at 2:26 p.m.

APPROVED: Date _____

Carol Rose, Chairperson
Michigan Wildlife Council