

**Michigan Wildlife Council  
Minutes**

February 25, 2022

The Michigan Wildlife Council (MWC) met at Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Customer Service Center (CSC) at 4166 Legacy Drive, Lansing, Michigan 48911

***Present***

Nick Buggia, MWC  
Beth Gruden, MWC  
Franklin Hayes, MWC  
Brent Pike, MWC  
T. Elliot Shafer, MWC  
Henry Stancato, MWC  
Kristin Phillips, Treasurer DNR/MWC  
Pam Vance, DNR

Ally Caldwell, Gd Marketing  
Zachary Krieger, Gd Marketing  
Amy Moore, Gd Marketing  
Nate Pilon, Gd Marketing  
Chelsea Maupin, Gd Marketing  
Sara Williams, Gd Marketing  
Jill Holden, Gd Marketing

***Attended Virtually:*** Jason Garvon, MWC and Mark Duda, Responsive Management

***Absent:*** Ed Roy, MWC

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***Call to Order***

**Chairperson Nick Buggia** called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. and introductions were made all around.

***Approval of Agenda***

**Chairperson Buggia** asked for discussion on the agenda. There was no discussion. **Beth Gruden** made a motion to accept the agenda, and **Buggia** seconded. The agenda was accepted unanimously.

***Approval of October 22, 2021, Minutes***

**Buggia** asked for discussion on the minutes but there was none. **T. Elliot Shafer** motioned to accept the minutes as they were presented. **Franklin Hayes** seconded the motion, and the minutes were accepted unanimously.

***Campaign Strategy and Goals***

**Sara Williams**, media manager for Gd Marketing, provided an overview of the campaign strategy and goals, and then presented a look back on the fall campaign (October-December 2021). Williams shared investment tactics and a summary of insights.

Key metrics included:

- o 11,152,721+ total impressions
- o 2,538,011 total engagements
- o \$96,048 paid media added value
- o \$624,000 earned media added value

Key takeaways included the following:

- o High-profile sponsorships drive reach and high engagement rates by delivering messages through recognizable and trusted voices.
- o Educating influencers through experience is key to driving authentic engagement.
- o Audiences of focus actively chose to engage with content for longer periods of time.

Henry Stancato, Brent Pike and other members of the council brought up opportunities to include more messaging related to hunting and fishing safety, in response to GÜD Marketing showing “Zavia’s first-time hunting” video.

**Survey Results**

**Chelsea Maupin**, research manager for GÜD Marketing, provided an overview of research completed in 2021 and introduced **Mark Duda** from Responsive Management, third-party research partner of GÜD Marketing.

**Duda** provided an overview of the methodologies for both the statewide phone and online surveys before presenting results. The surveys were fielded in December 2021 and January 2022. Results from both surveys show that the MWC is making progress toward educating key audiences about the benefits of hunting and fishing in Michigan.

- o 65% of Michiganders understand that human wildlife management is necessary for thriving wildlife populations, up from 39% in the baseline measure before the campaign started.
- o Approval of hunting and fishing in Michigan and among metro Detroit residents matches or exceeds national approval data.
- o More than 7 in 10 metro Detroit residents correctly identified hunting and fishing licenses as the source of funding for wildlife and wildlife management work.

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**Chairman Buggia** dismissed the council for lunch at 12:25 p.m. He called the meeting back to order at 1:02 p.m.

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Following the presentation of survey results, **Maupin** shared key findings from four focus groups conducted in December 2021 with urban or suburban residents from Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb counties. Key opportunities included new calls to action, showcasing more outdoor spaces, and exploring the use of expert voices.

**Chairman Buggia** asked for public comment at 1:45 p.m. **Larry Holcomb**, from Olivet, appeared to share his concerns about the “green energy impact on wildlife habitat, animal numbers, and hunter access.” His concerns revolved around the potential for wind turbines negatively impacting wildlife populations, habitat for wildlife, and access to land for hunting. **Holcomb** applauded the MWC for the work they are doing.

**Jill Holden**, strategic planning director and partner for GÜD Marketing, provided an overview of the 2022 communications strategy, which included details regarding audience, geography, message, media, and timing.

**Hayes** mentioned the spring walleye run from March – May in response to GÜD Marketing’s proposed campaign timing. Five major tournaments take place on the Detroit River that we might want to consider so fishing opportunities are not missed.

**Williams** highlighted key upcoming opportunities for the campaign in 2022, including event activation during Free Fishing Weekend in June and Wildlife Conservation Month in July, partnerships with the Michigan Chronicle, and an “Education Exhibit Tour,” which will include opportunities for interactive experiences. An investment breakdown of the 2022 tactical plan was provided and approved by the council.

**Buggia** asked for approval for the new campaign plan, with addendum for GÜD Marketing to have a follow up discussion of timing with Hayes. **Brent Pike** motioned to approve the campaign plan, **Gruden** seconded, and all agreed unanimously.

Following the investment breakdown, **Holden** shared recommended advocate communications strategy and goals, including existing communication channels and new opportunities to reach the council's hunter and angler audiences.

**Hank Stancato** asked if they could get some feedback from kids that just finished hunting class. **Buggia** suggested we try to highlight some of the things license dollars fund, showcase more outdoor spaces, and explore adding expert voices, such as the focus groups loved DNR biologist Joe Robison.

**Buggia** commented that we are using the right strategy, but it's just going to take longer than we thought to see movement in the survey.

#### ***Treasurer's Report***

**Treasurer Phillips** submitted a report for the council. **Phillips** asked if anyone had any questions about the treasurer's report. There was no comment. **Chairman Buggia** motioned to accept the treasurer's report as submitted, and **Shafer** seconded the motion. The treasurer's report was accepted unanimously.

#### ***Operational Plan***

**Hayes** motioned to approve the Operational Plan; **Gruden** seconded. It was approved by all.

#### ***Legislative Update***

**Buggia** provided update that the Michigan Wildlife Council and GÜD Marketing will be presenting to the House on March 24<sup>th</sup>.

#### ***New Business***

#### ***Nominations***

**Stancato** moved to re-elect the current office holders, **Pike** seconded, and all present approved. **Buggia** will continue as chair, **Gruden** as vice chair, and **Phillips** as Treasurer.

#### **Dates for 2022 MWC Meetings**

May 13 – Detroit

Aug. 19 – Muskegon

Oct. 21 – Upper Peninsula (or northern Michigan)

#### ***Adjournment***

The meeting was adjourned at 3:01 p.m.

APPROVED Date: 05/14/2022

  
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Nicholas Buggia, Chairperson

**MICHIGAN WILDLIFE COUNCIL  
TREASURER'S REPORT  
October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2021**

<b>Prior Fiscal Year Balance</b>	<b>\$1,241,361</b>
<b>Current Fiscal Year:</b>	
<b>Revenue</b>	1,621,586
<b>Expenditures</b>	
Research/Marketing/Creative/Media Expenses	1,909,815
Administrative Costs	
Travel	33
Meetings & Supplies	<u>0</u>
Total Administrative Costs	33
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>1,909,848</b>
<b>Fiscal Year Balance</b>	<b><u>(\$288,262)</u></b>
<b>Fund Balance</b>	<b><u>\$953,100</u></b>

**Fiscal Year 20/21**

	FY 20 Encumbrance	FY 21 Budget	YTD	Remaining	YTD%
<b>Expenditures</b>					
Research/Marketing/Creative/Media Expenses					
54451 Media Plan Year 6 Campaign Management	632,823	70,000	77,812	25,011	76%
54452 Media Plan Year 6 Media	563,540	936,000	1,184,992	314,548	79%
54453 Media Plan Year 6 Messaging & Implementation	312,895	448,000	500,434	260,460	66%
54454 Media Plan Year 6 Research	<u>126,515</u>	<u>136,000</u>	<u>146,576</u>	<u>115,939</u>	56%
Research/Marketing/Creative/Media Expenses	1,035,772	1,590,000	1,909,815	715,958	73%
Administrative Costs					
54451 Travel	0	5,000	33	4,967	1%
54451 Meetings & Supplies	<u>0</u>	<u>5,000</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>5,000</u>	0%
Total Administrative Costs	0	10,000	33	9,967	0%
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>1,035,772</b>	<b>1,600,000</b>	<b>1,909,848</b>	<b>725,925</b>	<b>72%</b>