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MINUTES
August 27, 2021

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission met at the Legacy of the Plains Museum Gering, NE for the transaction of business, advance public notice having been given through release to news media and official public notice published in the Lincoln Journal Star on August 12, 2021.

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 A.M. Chairman Kreitman advised this meeting was being held in conformance with the State Open Meeting Act and the act was available for review on the table at the back of the room. Members present: Chairman Dan Kreitman, Pat Berggren, Broken Bow; Doug Zingula, Sidney; Rick Brandt, Lincoln; Bob Allen, Eustis, Donna Kush, Omaha, Ken Curry, Columbus; John Hoggatt, Kearney; and Scott Cassels, Omaha.

Minutes of the business meeting held June 11, 2021 were reviewed.

Motion by Mr. Hoggatt and seconded by Ms. Kush to approve the meeting minutes. Voting aye: Kush, Zingula, Berggren, Cassels, Hoggatt, Allen, Brandt, Kush, Curry and Kreitman; voting nay: None. Motion carried.

Minutes of the special meeting held August 9, 2021 were reviewed.

Motion by Mr. Brandt and seconded by Mr. Berggren to approve the August 9 minutes. Voting aye: Zingula, Berggren, Cassels, Curry, Hoggatt, Allen, Brandt, Kush and Kreitman; voting nay: None. Motion carried.

Financial vouchers for June and July were reviewed.

Motion by Mr. Allen, seconded by Mr. Hoggatt to approve staff recommendations. Berggren, Cassels, Curry, Hoggatt, Allen, Brandt, Kush, Zingula and Kreitman; voting nay: None. Motion carried.

Director's Report

Director Douglas thanked the park staff at Wildcat Hills for hosting the Commission meetings and dinner the night before. He also recognized NGPC partners, the Nebraska Big Game Society, for their recent donations to the agency.

The Director had Todd Nordeen introduce Tad King was in attendance to present a \$5,000.00 check to the Commission to be used for big horn sheep equipment and other bighorn sheep program needs in memory of his wife who passed away recently and loved seeing the bighorn sheep.

Director Douglas introduced two Employee Enterprise Award winners Sam Wilson and Monica

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Macoubrie who were honored for showing initiative, creativity and ingenuity in the performance of their duties.

Additional announcements included the Nebraska State Fair beginning that day and the next Commission meetings will be in North Platte on October 21 and 22.

End Director's Report

Chairman Kreitman read staff recommendations to call for a public hearing at the October Commission meeting to consider amendments to Fisheries Commission Order C06, Sport Fishing.

Motion by Mr. Zingula and seconded by Mr. Brandt to approve staff recommendations. Voting aye: Cassels, Curry, Hoggatt, Allen, Brandt, Kush, Zingula, Berggren and Kreitman; voting nay: None. Motion carried.

Chairman Kreitman read staff recommendations to call for a public hearing at the October Commission meeting to consider amendments to Chapter 5, State Park Regulations, Section 001, General regulations governing the use and administration of property.

Motion by Mr. Curry and seconded by Mr. Cassels to approve staff recommendations. Voting aye: Curry, Hoggatt, Allen, Brandt, Kush, Zingula, Berggren, Cassels and Kreitman; voting nay: None. Motion carried.

Chairman Kreitman read staff recommendations to call for a public hearing at the October Commission meeting to consider amendments to Chapter 4, Wildlife Regulations, Section 003. Antelope, Deer, Elk.

Motion by Mr. Cassels and seconded by Mr. Zingula to approve staff recommendations. Voting aye: Hoggatt, Allen, Brandt, Zingula, Kush, Berggren, Cassels, Curry and Kreitman; voting nay: None. Motion carried.

Because it was too soon to begin the public hearing, Chairman Kreitman moved to item 9, which was the bighorn sheep lottery tag drawing. Tad King was asked to pull the winning tag and it was announced that Tait Knutson of Niobrara won the drawing and was notified by call at the meeting.

Chairman Kreitman opened the public hearing at 8:30 AM to consider amendments to Chapter 2, Fisheries Regulations, Section 012 Aquatic Invasive Species Regulations. Fisheries Division Administrator Dean Rosenthal reviewed the staff recommendations. There were no comments received before the meeting and no testimony at the meeting, so the hearing was closed at 8:55 AM.

Motion by Ms. Kush and seconded by Mr. Hoggatt to approve staff recommendations. Voting aye: Allen, Brandt, Zingula, Kush, Berggren, Cassels, Curry, Hoggatt and Kreitman; voting nay: None. Motion carried.

Chairman Kreitman opened the public hearing at 8:59 AM to consider amendments to Commission Order, C14 Mountain Sheep. Wildlife Division Administrator Alicia Hardin presented staff recommendations. There were no comments received before the meeting and no testimony at the meeting, so the public hearing was closed at 9:07 AM. Commissioners had a discussion regarding looking at the program more closely and the possibility of more flexibility in granting permits related

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to the aging of some of the older rams.

Motion by Mr. Brandt and seconded by Mr. Zingula to approve staff recommendations. Voting aye: Brandt, Kush, Berggren, Cassels, Curry, Hoggatt, Allen, Zingula and Kreitman; voting nay: None. Motion carried.

Chairman Kreitman moved up Critter Moment so Monica Macoubrie could introduce the Commissioners to a hog nose snake and demonstrate how pit tags are implanted for ongoing monitoring of the species.

Communications Division Administrator Christy Firestone shared media and social media highlights including details on various outreach efforts.

Wildlife Division Administrator Alicia Hardin gave an update on big game depredation, highlighting the tools and efforts we can use with landowners to work towards socially acceptable population numbers. She also shared that the agency has hired dedicated depredation biologists whose focus is on this issue.

Commissioner Curry excused himself from the meeting at 11 AM.

Fisheries Division Administrator Dean Rosenthal shared some interesting research related to lost anglers in 2021 who did not renew their permits.

Planning and Programming Assistant Division Administrator Michelle Koch was present to give the environmental report on current instream flow appropriation applications and other water issues.

Commissioner Committee Reports were tabled.

Director Search Committee Chairman Scott Cassels gave an update on the Committee's efforts in the search for the new agency Director. Chairman Cassels reviewed the scoring criteria that was used. The decision was especially weighted on management and experience of large organizations over an extended period of time as well as planning, budget, and resources execution. The three high-scoring candidates in no particular order are Roger Kuhn, Jim Swenson, and Tim McCoy-all current staff members. They will be interviewed September 8 and 9 and will be asked to fill out a leadership questionnaire. On September 22, the Committee will meet in Lincoln to review the candidates and decide who the finalist(s) are to be recommended to the Commission for consideration of appointment at the September 29th special meeting.

Motion by Mr. Brandt and seconded by Ms. Kush to go into executive session for the purpose of discussing litigation and personnel matters at 11:30 AM. Voting aye: Allen, Brandt, Kush, Zingula, Berggren, Cassels and Kreitman; Curry absent, voting nay: None. Motion carried.

Regular session was resumed at 12:07 PM.

Motion by Mr. Allen and seconded by Mr. Hoggatt to leave the executive session for the purpose of discussing litigation and personnel matters. Voting aye: Brandt, Kush, Zingula, Berggren, Cassels, Allen and Kreitman; Curry was

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absent; voting nay: None. Motion carried.

Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Berggren and seconded by Mr. Cassels to adjourn the meeting at 12:09 PM. Voting aye: Berggren, Cassels, Hoggatt, Allen, Brandt, Kush, Zingula and Kreitman; Curry was absent. Voting nay: None. Motion carried.

I hereby certify the foregoing is a true and correct copy of action taken by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission at its meeting held August 27, 2021.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James N. Douglas".

James N. Douglas, Director