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MINUTES

October 21, 2022

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission met in the Broken Bow Public Library Broken Bow, 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 October 6, 2022.

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 A.M. Chairman Berggren 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 Pat Berggren, Broken Bow; Doug Zingula, Sidney; Rick Brandt, Lincoln; Ken Curry, Columbus; John Hoggatt, Kearney; Scott Cassels, Omaha; Dan Kreitman, Wahoo; and Bob Allen, Eustis, Donna Kush, Omaha was absent.

Minutes of the business meeting held August 31, 2022 were reviewed.

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

Financial vouchers for August and September were reviewed.

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

Director's Report

Director McCoy thanked Tommy Hicks for the tour of Victoria Springs the day before and Bob and Carla Allen for hosting everyone for dinner the night before.

The Director and Commissioners read the Resolution of Appreciation honoring Commissioner Bob Allen for his years of service to the Commission and to conservation across the state. Commissioner Allen's term expires on January 15, 2023.

Director McCoy asked Communications Assistant Division Administrator Jeff Rawlinson to come forward to present an Award of Excellence to the Haumont Family for their coordination of the annual Pressey Smallbore Silhouette Invitational for 34 years of the event's more than 45 years in existence.

The Director also shared that Larry Pape Fisheries Outdoor Education received an award from the Aquatic Resources Education Association for recognition for serving as President and his work with AREA.

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The Director announced the next Commission meetings will be in Lincoln in January, the date will be set once the schedule is determined today.

End Director's Report

With time before the first public hearing, Parks Division Administrator Jeff Fields reviewed the Capital Maintenance Fund Report. This fund was established by legislation in 2014 and extended in 2021. By the time this recent legislation sunsets, \$76 million will be spent on parks, fisheries, roads, trails, facilities and access improvements. More than \$9.4 million in Capital Maintenance and matching funds was spent for parks and facilities improvements statewide in 2021-2022.

Chairman Berggren opened the public hearing at 8:32 AM to consider amendments to Chapter 3, Boating Regulations, Section 003 Equipment Standards. Boating Administrator Jeff Clauson reviewed staff recommendations. No public comments were received, and no public testimony was offered. The public hearing was closed at 8:39 AM.

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

With some time before the next public hearing, Director McCoy led the discussion on the Commission meeting schedule for 2023.

Motion by Mr. Curry, seconded by Mr. Zingula to approve the following Commission meeting schedule: Strategic planning meeting December 9 in Kearney, regular business meetings January 19 & 20 in Lincoln, March 16 & 17 in Kearney, April 18 & 19 in Fremont, June 8 & 9 in Alma, August 3 & 4 in Valentine, and October 12 & 13 at Fort Rob in Crawford. Voting aye: Cassels, Curry, Hoggatt, Kreitman, Brandt, Zingula, Allen and Berggren; Kush absent; voting nay: None. Motion carried.

Chairman Berggren opened the public hearing at 8:45 AM to consider amendments to Chapter 3, Boating Regulations, Section 012 Waters with Special Restrictions. Boating Administrator Jeff Clauson reviewed staff recommendations. No public comments were received, and no public testimony was offered. The public hearing was closed at 8:52 AM.

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

With time before the next public hearing, Committee Chairs gave their Committee reports and Chairman Berggren moved on to Public Comments. Dave Haumont of Broken Bow was the first to speak. He owns land in the area that had over 200 mule deer several years ago and called a biologist but was frustrated because he did not find him helpful in finding good options at the time. He went on to say currently the number of deer on his property is about right.

Jason Scott of Elkhorn was the second to speak. He has property with ponds on it and does a lot of mentored hunts with military veterans. He says everything freezes up early and he wants to be changed to the early zone that he is very close to. Wildlife Division Administrator Alicia Hardin addressed his

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comments and let him know the new waterfowl zone changes will not occur until 2025; at which time the criteria for zone changes will be available for waterfowl seasons 2026-2027.

Dan Snyder lives near Calamus and feels that raccoons should be taken off the furbearer list, and open shooting be allowed or that raccoons at least treated like striped skunks that can be harvested all year round. He cannot grow sweet corn without an electric fence around it. He feels depredation by raccoons is part of the cause of the decrease in turkeys and pheasants.

Commissioner John Hoggatt also rose to recognize Pheasants Forever as a great partner in sponsoring mentored youth hunts.

Chairman Berggren opened the public hearing at 9:13AM to consider amendments to Chapter 3, Boating Regulations, Section 15, Special Rules and Regulations for Non-public Lake Associations. Boating Administrator Jeff Clauson reviewed staff recommendations. No public comments were received, and no public testimony was offered. The public hearing was closed at 9:16AM.

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

Chairman Berggren opened the public hearing at 9:18AM to consider amendments to Chapter 2, Fisheries regulations, Section 010 Special Fishing Permits. Fisheries Division Administrator Dean Rosenthal reviewed staff recommendations. No public comments were received, and no public testimony was offered. The public hearing was closed at 9:24AM.

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

Chairman Berggren called for recess; the meeting was reconvened at 9:33 AM.

Chairman Berggren opened the public hearing at 9:33 AM to consider amendments to Chapter 4, Wildlife Regulations, Section 001, General Wildlife Regulations. Wildlife Division Administrator Alicia Hardin reviewed staff recommendations. No public comments were received, and no public testimony was offered. The public hearing was closed at 9:40AM.

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

Chairman Berggren opened the public hearing at 9:59AM to consider amendments to Chapter 4, Wildlife Regulations, Section 003. Antelope, Deer, and Elk. Wildlife Division Administrator Alicia Hardin reviewed staff recommendations. No public comments were received, and no public testimony was offered. The public hearing was closed at 10:02AM.

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

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Chairman Berggren opened the public hearing at 10:03AM to consider amendments to Fisheries C006 Sportfish. Fisheries Division Administrator Dean Rosenthal reviewed staff recommendations. No public comments were received, and no public testimony was offered. The public hearing was closed at 10:12AM.

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

Planning and Programming Division Administrator Michelle Stryker reviewed the R-3 (Recruit. Retain. Reactivate.) Plan. She expressed gratitude to all divisions for their work and contributions to the plan. This plan is effective from 2023 to 2027 and identifies the strategies NGPC will utilize in that time to get new people engaged in outdoor pursuits, to keep those people already engaged involved and to get those that have gotten away from outdoor activities to re-engage in them.

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

Parks Division Administrator Jeff Fields gave a report on Fall in the Parks, sharing the many Halloween and Fall activities going on at many of the state parks and rec areas.

Executive Session

Motion by Mr. Brandt and seconded by Mr. Curry to enter executive session for the purpose of discussing personnel at 11:21AM, asking the Director to participate. Voting aye: Curry, Hoggatt, Kreitman, Brandt, Zingula, Allen, Cassels and Berggren; Kush absent; voting nay: None. Motion carried.

The Chairman called the meeting back into regular session at 12:05 PM.

Mr. Cassels moved, and Mr. Brandt seconded, to leave executive session. Voting aye: Hoggatt, Kreitman, Brandt, Zingula, Allen, Cassels, Curry and Berggren; Kush absent; voting nay: None. Motion carried.

Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Allen and seconded by Mr. Hoggatt to adjourn at 12:07 PM. Voting aye: Kreitman, Brandt, Zingula, Allen, Cassels, Curry, Hoggatt and Berggren; Kush 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 October 21, 2022.



Timothy McCoy, Director

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