



2200 N. 33rd St. • P.O. Box 30370 • Lincoln, NE 68503-0370 • Phone: 402-471-0641

## MINUTES

February 25, 2016

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission met in the Ringnecks building at Pheasant Bonanza located at 3097 County Road O Tekamah, Nebraska 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 February 11, 2016.

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 P.M. Chairman Spurgin advised this meeting was being held in conformance with the State Open Meeting Act and the act was available for review on the table in the back of the room. He asked for a moment of silence for recently departed Commissioner Lynn Berggren. The Commissioners introduced themselves. Members present were Bob Allen, Eustis; Rex Fisher, Omaha; Kent Forney DVM, Lincoln; Norris Marshall, Kearney; Dan Kreitman, Wahoo; Mark Spurgin, Paxton; Dick Bell, Omaha; and Mick Jensen, Blair. The Commissioners and Director Douglas also shared a few of their memories of Commissioner Lynn Berggren.

Minutes of the meeting held January 14, 2016 were reviewed.

Motion by Mr. Marshall, seconded by Mr. Bell to approve the minutes. Voting aye: Allen, Bell, Jensen, Forney, Fisher, Marshall, Kreitman, Spurgin. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

Financial vouchers for January were reviewed.

Motion by Mr. Bell, seconded by Mr. Fisher to approve the financial vouchers. Voting aye: Bell, Forney, Fisher, Marshall, Kreitman, Jensen, Allen, and Spurgin. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

### Begin Director's Report:

Director Douglas thanked Trent Lichleiter and staff of Pheasant Bonanza for hosting the Commission.

Director Douglas announced the National Pheasant Plan Coordinator for the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies had been selected and was none other than

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Nebraska Game and Parks Commission Wildlife Division Administrator Scott Taylor. Taylor will be moving to the Pheasant Forever Offices in Brookings, SD to assume his new position.

Director Douglas introduced Dave Nomsen, Pheasant Forever's Vice President of Governmental Affairs and Director of the Brookings Office who gave a presentation on what Pheasants Forever is doing in South Dakota.

### End Director's Report

Chairman Spurgin opened the Public Hearing at 1:30 P.M. to consider amendments on Chapter 4, Wildlife Regulations, Section 001, General Regulations Governing Wildlife Species. Scott Taylor reviewed staff recommendations providing for the transportation of harvested elk by allowing for the transportation of the de-boned meat and the head of the harvested Elk to a check station, rather than the entire animal. No person or organization testified; the public hearing was closed at 1:42 P.M.

Motion by Mr. Bell, seconded by Mr. Jensen to approve staff recommendations. Voting aye: Fisher, Marshall, Kreitman, Allen, Jensen, Bell, Forney, and Spurgin. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

Chairman Spurgin read the staff recommendation to hold a public hearing at the April meeting to consider amendments on Chapter 4, Wildlife Regulations, Commission Order 003, Antelope, deer, Elk.

Motion by Mr. Marshall, seconded by Dr. Forney to approve staff recommendations. Voting aye: Kreitman, Jensen, Forney, Allen, Bell, Fisher, Marshall, Spurgin; voting nay: none. Motion carried.

Chairman Spurgin read the staff recommendation to hold a public hearing at the April meeting to consider amendments on Chapter 4, Wildlife Regulations, Commission Order 006, Coots, Ducks, Geese, Crow.

Motion by Mr. Fisher, seconded by Mr. Jensen to approve staff recommendations. Voting aye: Jensen, Allen, Bell, Forney, Fisher, Marshall, Kreitman, Spurgin; voting nay, none. Motion carried.

Chairman Spurgin opened the Public Hearing at 1:45 P.M. to consider amendments on Chapter 4, Wildlife Regulations, Section 003, Antelope, Deer, and Elk. Scott Taylor reviewed amendments including renumbering sections, and changes to the types of auction permits available to residents and non-residents. No person or organization testified; the public hearing was closed at 1:49 P.M.

Motion by Mr. Jensen, seconded by Mr. Fisher to approve staff recommendations. Voting aye: Jensen, Allen, Bell, Forney, Fisher, Marshall,

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Kreitman, Spurgin; voting nay, none. Motion carried.

Kit Hams gave an overview of the big game information used to create preliminary regulation recommendations on antelope, deer, and elk. Various regional meetings were held for public input. Overall hunting permit sales and hunting success rates were very good, some at near or record breaking levels. The public hearing on big game will take place in Chadron at the April meeting.

Mark Vrtiska was present to provide an overview on waterfowl after information gathering through a variety of survey methods. There was a good survey response with all units well represented. The public hearing on waterfowl seasons and bag limits will also be held at the April meeting in Chadron.

The Chairman announced a 10 minute recess.

There was a public request to consider allowing utility terrain vehicles in state parks by Paula Mulliken, who had an unavoidable conflict prior to the meeting, so Director Douglas relayed her message. He suggested to the Commissioners that due to different types of off road vehicles and similar requests, it might be a good idea for staff to gather information regarding the different types of vehicles, statutory requirements pertaining to them and consideration of appropriate uses in state parks. The Commissioners agreed; this matter will be revisited at a future meeting.

Mike Anderson and Kathy Newberg were present from the Nebraska Horse Trails Committee to share information on a variety of projects they have done to enhance trail riding throughout Nebraska, including work in state parks and wildlife management areas. They invited the Commissioners to attend their upcoming Horse Trails Riding Expo and expressed their willingness to assist Nebraska Game and Parks with continued improvements.

Jim Swenson reviewed a staff recommendation to approve an increase in the Cash Change Fund from \$1,000.00 to \$1,200.00 at Lewis and Clark State Recreation Area to support the coinage requirements at Burbach Campground shower buildings.

Motion by Dr. Forney, seconded by Mr. Allen to approve staff recommendations. Voting aye: Jensen, Allen, Bell, Forney, Fisher, Marshall, Kreitman, Spurgin; voting nay, none. Motion carried.

Scott Taylor reviewed a staff recommendation to approve a permanent easement request from the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) on the Middle Decatur Bend Wildlife Management Area in Burt County.

Motion by Mr. Bell, seconded by Mr. Marshall to approve staff recommendations. Voting aye: Fisher, Marshall, Kreitman, Allen, Jensen, Bell, Forney, and Spurgin; voting nay: none. Motion carried.

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Scott Taylor reviewed a staff recommendation to approve a comprehensive pheasant plan for Nebraska- "Nebraska's Mega Plan Improving Pheasant Hunting." Staff also proposes the plan be dedicated to Lynn Berggren who played a big role in its development.

Motion by Mr. Bell, second by Mr. Jensen to approve a resolution to support in concept this planning effort with additional details to be worked out. Voting aye: Allen, Bell, Jensen, Forney, Fisher, Marshall, Kreitman, Spurgin. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

Aaron Schroder was present to address his request for the Commissioners to consider extending waterfowl seasons, specifically dark goose in the North Central District. He would prefer a later start and end date, as the season is only 107 days. The Commissioner advised they would take this under consideration.

Motion to adjourn

Motion by Mr. Kreitman, seconded by Mr. Allen to adjourn the meeting at 3:42 P.M. Voting aye: Fisher, Marshall, Kreitman, Jensen, Forney, Allen, Bell, Spurgin; 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 February 25, 2016.

  
James N. Douglas, Director