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MINUTES

August 18, 2016

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission met at the One Box Convention Center in Broken Bow, 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 August 2, 2016.

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 A.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. The Commissioners introduced themselves and made a statement about activity in their districts. Members present were Rex Fisher, Omaha; Kent Forney DVM, Lincoln; Norris Marshall, Kearney; Dan Kreitman, Wahoo; Mark Spurgin, Paxton; Dick Bell, Omaha; Mick Jensen, Blair; and Pat Berggren, Broken Bow. Bob Allen, Eustis, was absent.

Minutes of the special meeting held June 15, 2016 were reviewed.

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

Minutes of the business meeting held June 17, 2016 were reviewed.

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

Financial vouchers for June and July were reviewed.

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

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Director's Report

Director Douglas thanked Pat and Jeanne Berggren for their hospitality the evening before and in hosting the meetings in Broken Bow.

The Director shared a letter received from a non-resident hunter who was appreciative of the hunting opportunities in the Chadron area and had glowing comments about Commissioner Kreitman who he met on a recent trip.

Director Douglas also reported on the Wild Sheep Federation Summit meeting that was held this summer at Fort Rob. The summit was so successful the Nebraska Bighorn Sheep program can expect contributions of almost \$50,000.00.

Director Douglas also reviewed a list of communication awards received by Nebraska Game and Parks, there were seven in all, some were individual awards and others were for multi-division projects.

End Director's Report

Chairman Spurgin read the staff recommendation to call for a public hearing at the October Commission meeting to consider amendments to Chapter 4, Wildlife Regulations, Section 001, General Regulations Governing Wildlife Species

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

Chairman Spurgin read the staff recommendation to call for a public hearing at the October Commission meeting to consider amendments to Wildlife Regulations, Chapter 4, Section 005 Regulations related to shooting hours of upland game (not including turkey, coots, and migratory waterfowl), Furbearers, Cottontail, Rabbit, and Squirrels

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

Chairman Spurgin read the staff recommendation to call for a public hearing at the October Commission meeting to consider amendments to Chapter 4, Wildlife Regulations, Section 014, Mountain Sheep

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

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Motion carried.

Chairman Spurgin read the staff recommendation to call for a public hearing at the October Commission meeting to consider amendments to Chapter 4, Wildlife Regulations, Section 015, Game Breeding and Controlled Shooting Areas

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

Chairman Spurgin read the staff recommendations to call for a public hearing at the October Commission meeting to consider amendments to Chapter 4, Wildlife Regulations, Section 019, Area-Specific Regulations

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

Parks Division Administrator Jim Swenson reviewed the staff recommendation for hunting in state parks and state historical parks to be the same as it was last year without any changes.

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

Jeff Rawlinson was present to present service awards to Hunters Education Instructors Dave Haumont and Louie Stithem; Louie also received special recognition for receiving an International Hunters Education Award.

Chairman Spurgin opened the public hearing to consider amendments to Administration Regulations, Chapter 1, Section 006 Rules relating to fees for licenses and permits and deployed military permits at 8:37 A.M. Budget and Fiscal Division Administrator Pat Cole presented the staff recommendations to increase the cost of specific licenses, fees, and permits to be in compliance with LB 745 and because they had not been increased in as many as 8 years or more.

Scott Smathers, Executive Director, 61405 Richland Lincoln, NE, testified on behalf of Nebraska Sportsmen's Foundation supports the permit and fee increases which will allow NGPC to continue their many beneficial programs. They appreciate the ongoing partnership with NGPC.

Angelina Wright, Biologist, PO Box 33 Halsey, NE 69142 testified on behalf of Ducks Unlimited in Nebraska, supports the increase of the Nebraska Waterfowl stamps, to

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support needed improvements in waterfowl habitat and conservation.

Colby Kerber 605 N 5th Ave. Broken Bow, NE 68822 testified on behalf of Pheasants/Quail Forever supports the increases in permit and fees because they understand the ongoing conservation and habitat improvements will benefit pheasant and quail populations, as well as hunting opportunities in Nebraska.

Duane Hovorka Box 81437 Lincoln, NE 68501 testified on behalf of the Nebraska Wildlife Federation Supports continued conservation and habitat efforts of NGPC and although no one likes to see cost increases, it has been a long time since permits and fees have been adjusted and they understand it is necessary to continue their wildlife habitat programs and projects.

Chairman Spurgin shared a letter of support from Kent Boughton, Nebraska State Chapter President of the National Wild Turkey Federation. The letter addressed the many challenges that exist when managing resources, habitat conservation and hunter recruitment, retention and reactivation, which are common goals. With no other public comment, the public hearing was closed at 9:02 A.M.

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

Chairman Spurgin opened the public hearing to consider amendments to Wildlife Regulations, Chapter 4, Section 018 General Regulations Governing Administration and Use of Property at 9:03 A.M. Interim Wildlife Division Administrator Karie Decker reviewed the staff recommendations to clarify some definitions and language in that section. There was no public comment; the public hearing was closed at 9:08 A.M.

Motion by Dr. Forney and seconded by Mr. Bell to approve staff recommendations. Voting aye: Fisher, Jensen, Marshall, Kreitman, Forney, Bell, Berggren and Spurgin, Allen-absent, voting nay: None. Motion carried.

Chairman Spurgin opened the public hearing to consider amendments to Park Regulations, Chapter 5, Section 001.12 Permit, Motor Vehicle Entry at 9:10 A.M. Jim Swenson, Parks Division Administrator reviewed the staff recommendations for increases in all park entry permits to stay in compliance with LB 745. Duane Hovorka Box 81437 Lincoln, NE 68501 testified on behalf of the Nebraska Wildlife Federation hearing in support of the increases to provide continued and better opportunities for those who hike, bike, camp, fish, hunt, and all outdoor enthusiasts. There was no other public comment; the public hearing was closed at 9:26 P.M.

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Motion by Mr. Marshall and seconded by Dr. Forney to reject staff recommendations and have staff bring new recommendations to the next meeting. Voting aye: Jensen, Marshall, Kreitman, Forney, Bell, Berggren, Fisher and Spurgin, Allen-absent, voting nay: None. Motion carried.

After a ten minute recess, Director Douglas asked Chairman Spurgin draw the winning entry for the Bighorn Sheep lottery. The winner was Brett Roberg from Holdrege who was notified via cellphone call.

Service awards-Dennis Bridge from Fisheries was presented with a 40-year service award and Mark Feeney from Wildlife was presented with a 30-year service award.

Trisha Schlake from the Information Technology Division was present to do a live demonstration of the interactive Missouri River Access Guide. It will be a very useful tool for anyone who is interested in exploring the river between South Dakota and Kansas. This project was awarded first place in the maps, story-telling category at a recent international ESRI convention. Once her presentation was completed, Director Douglas presented Schlake with an Employee Enterprise Award for her efforts in creating this impressive GIS mapping guide, which was based upon contributions from multiple divisions and outside partners.

Director Douglas asked Commissioner Berggren to accept the Prominent Partners Award on behalf of the Nebraska One Box Pheasant Hunt, a Broken Bow organization which makes valuable contributions to habitat and wildlife conservation as well as providing shooting sports opportunities for adults and youth alike.

Commissioner Berggren then introduced Dave Stunkel, coach of the Nebraska One Box Rock Crushers shooting team, which has had an extremely successful year in shooting sports bringing home a national championship and winning many other tournaments. Coach Stunkel was presented with the Shooting Stars Award of Excellence on behalf of the team.

Pat Cole reviewed the staff recommendations for Commission approval of the Operating and Capital Improvement Budgets biennium request for Fiscal Years 2017-2018 and 2018-2019.

Mr. Fisher moved to approve the biennial budget, but amend the capital construction plan to help jumpstart the Lake McConaughy plan, requesting \$1,000,000.00 cash fund authority be added each year to program 969-State Recreation Areas for capital improvements in the Lake McConaughy Plan, seconded by Mr. Jensen. Voting aye: Marshall, Kreitman, Forney, Bell, Berggren, Fisher, Fisher and Spurgin, Allen-absent, voting nay: None; motion carried.

Michelle Stryker reviewed preliminary staff recommendations for the Lake McConaughy Strategic Plan. This is a twenty-year plan which will be carried out in five phases and is the product of the Lake McConaughy Advisory Committee which consists of a number of Game and Parks staff and local organization representatives who have been meeting for almost a year, as well as public input from two public meetings which were attended by approximately 250 people. The focus of the plan is to provide needed physical improvements, requested amenities, improved public safety, and protecting threatened and endangered species.

Executive Session

Motion by Mr. Bell and seconded by Mr. Marshall to go into executive session for the purpose of discussing potential litigation at 11:34 A.M. Voting aye: Forney, Bell, Berggren, Fisher, Jensen, Marshall, Kreitman and Spurgin; Allen-absent, voting nay: None. Motion carried.

The meeting was re-convened and a motion made by Mr. Bell and seconded by Mr. Marshall to leave executive session at 11:51 A.M. Voting aye: Bell, Berggren, Fisher, Jensen, Marshall, Kreitman, Forney, and Spurgin; Allen-absent; voting nay: None. Motion carried.

Motion to adjourn.

Motion by Dr. Forney, seconded by Mr. Berggren to adjourn the meeting at 11:52 A.M. Voting aye: Berggren, Fisher, Jensen, Marshall, Kreitman, Forney, Bell and Spurgin; Allen-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 18, 2016.


James N. Douglas, Director