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MINUTES
January 13, 2021

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission met in the third floor conference room at the Nebraska Game and Parks HQ Lincoln, 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 December 29, 2020.

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 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. He also reviewed the precautions being taken to maintain social distancing due to COVID-19. Members present: Chairman Dan Kreitman, Pat Berggren, Broken Bow; Doug Zingula, Sidney; Scott Cassels, Omaha; Rick Brandt, Lincoln; Donna Kush, Omaha; and John Hoggatt, Kearney; Jim Ernst, Columbus participated via Zoom and Bob Allen, Eustis was absent.

Minutes of the business meeting held October 15 and the special meeting on December 18, 2020 were reviewed.

Motion by Mr. Cassels and seconded by Mr. Berggren to approve the October 15 and December 18, 2020 meeting minutes. Voting aye: Kush, Zingula, Berggren, Cassels, Ernst, Hoggatt, Brandt, and Kreitman; voting nay: None. Motion carried.

Financial vouchers for October, November and December were reviewed.

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

Director's Report

Director Douglas and Christy Firestone presented a 49-year service award to Alette Hain and a 45-year service award to Tina Rohrs, both from the Communications Division.

The Director gave a regional and national report on the various organizations he belongs to and chairs on behalf of the agency and shared some recent developments on leadership and RAWA.

End Director's Report

Chris Spargen was present on behalf of Trails Have Our Respect (THOR) to share information about what this volunteer organization is and what they do. They volunteer time to assist in the development and maintenance of trails. They are currently working with staff at Platte River

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State Park to add 5.5 additional miles to the new mountain bike trail system and make it a “destination” for mountain bikers.

Chairman Kreitman read staff recommendations to call for a public hearing at the March Commission Meeting to consider amendments to Chapter 1 Administration Regulations Section 006, Rules relating to fees for licenses and permits and deployed military permits.

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

Chairman Kreitman read staff recommendations to call for a public hearing at the March Commission Meeting to consider amendments to Waterfowl Commission Orders 006 Coots, Ducks, Geese and Crow.

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

Chairman Kreitman opened the public hearing at 9:00 AM to consider staff recommendations to amend Chapter 4, Wildlife Regulations, Section 001. General Regulations Governing Wildlife Species, to allow for the enactment of the Special Landowner Deer Season and the purchase of a bonus point or a preference points as a result of the passage of LB126 and LB287 during the 2020 Legislative Session. Additionally, changes clarifying general application requirements, personal limits, shot sizes allowed for turkeys, checking requirements for antelope taken during the muzzleloader season, management of furbearers associated with damage control permits, tagging time limits for bobcats and grey fox, and changes to who needs to register for the Harvest Information Program are being recommended. There was no public testimony, but the agency did receive two letters of support regarding the shot sizes allowed for turkeys from the Congressional Sportsmen Foundation and from the National Wild Turkey Federation. The public hearing was closed at 9:15 AM.

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

Chairman Kreitman opened the public hearing at 9:15 AM to consider staff recommendations to amend Chapter 4, Wildlife Regulations, Section 003, Antelope, Deer, Elk, allowing the enactment of the Special Landowner Deer Season and the purchase of a bonus or a preference point as a result of the passage of LB126 and LB287 during the 2020 Legislative Session. Additionally, changes clarifying draw units, how forfeited permits may be handled, staggering when over-the-counter permits go on sale, and allowing for one more resident or non-resident shared-revenue elk permit are also recommended. There was no public comment and the public hearing was closed at 9:27 AM.

Motion by Mr. Hoggatt and seconded by Mr. Berggren to approve staff recommendations. Voting aye: Hoggatt, Kush, Zingula, Berggren, Cassels,

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Ernst, and Kreitman. Voting nay: Brandt. Motion carried.

Planning and Programming Assistant Division Administrator Hannah Jones was present to review staff recommendations for Commission approval of the 2021-2025 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) to maintain eligibility for Land and Water Conservation Fund Stateside Assistance Program through the National Park Service, Department of Interior.

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

Planning and Programming Division Administrator Michelle Stryker reviewed staff recommendations to approve local community grant awards for the FY2020 apportionment of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Stateside Assistance Program.

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

The meeting was recessed for a five-minute break and resumed at 10:10 AM.

Communications Assistant Division Administrator Jeff Rawlinson was present to give an R-3 Update on hunting and shooting sports and Fisheries Education Specialist Larry Pape did the same for fishing.

Communications Division Administrator Christy Firestone was present to share the 2021 Marketing Plan with Commissioners with a focus on retaining and expanding on the growth of certain activities in the past year.

Fish and Wildlife Specialist Shaun Dunn was present to share information on the spotted skunk for the environmental report. More research is being done to determine if this species is reaching a threatened category because they are frequently seen.

Wildlife Education Division Administrator Lindsay Rogers and a representative from the Lincoln Children's Zoo were present to share a striped skunk for Critter Moment.

Commissioner Committee reports were tabled at this meeting.

Motion by Ms. Kush and seconded by Mr. Cassels to keep the same slate of officers for the coming year. Voting aye: Kush, Zingula, Berggren, Cassels, Ernst, Hoggatt, Brandt and Kreitman. Voting nay: None. Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Brandt and seconded by Mr. Hoggatt to go into executive session for the purpose of discussing litigation and personnel issues at 12:03 PM. Voting aye: Cassels, Ernst, Hoggatt, Brandt, Kush, Zingula, Berggren, and Kreitman. Voting nay: None. Motion carried.

The meeting was brought back into regular session at 1:06 PM

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Motion by Mr. Hoggatt and seconded by Mr. Brandt to leave executive session. Voting aye: Berggren, Cassels, Ernst, Hoggatt, Brandt, Kush, Zingula and Kreitman. Voting nay: None. Motion carried.

Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Berggren and seconded by Mr. Ernst to adjourn the meeting at 11:50 AM. Voting aye: Cassels, Ernst, Hoggatt, Brandt, Kush, Zingula; Berggren, and Kreitman. 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 January 13, 2021.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James N. Douglas". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "J".

James N. Douglas, Director