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MINUTES  
April 25, 2024

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission met in the River Bluff Room at Ponca State Park Ponca, 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 April 13, 2024.

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

Minutes of the meeting held March 8, 2024, were reviewed.

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

Financial vouchers for March were reviewed.

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

Director's Report

Director McCoy expressed thanks to the Ponca State Park staff for hosting the Commission meeting and tour yesterday, and the fisheries and wildlife staff that helped with the fish fry. He also expressed gratitude to Tom and Bonnie Ferry for hosting the Chairman's hour the evening before.

The Director asked Dean Rosenthal to assist in the presentation of a 40-year service award to Jeff Schuckman

The Director reviewed the many upcoming NGPC events kicking off the spring and summer seasons.

The June 20 & 21 Commission meetings will be in Ogallala with the first day's meetings at the Lake McConaughy visitors center and the business meeting will be at the Petrified Wood Gallery.

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## End Director's Report

Chairman Zingula read the staff recommendation to call for a public hearing at the June Commission meeting to consider amendments to Chapter 5, Park Regulations Section 001 State Park Regulations.

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

Chairman Zingula read staff recommendations to call for a public hearing at the June Commission meeting to consider amendments to Chapter 2, Fisheries Regulations Section 006 Sport Fishing.

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

Chairman Zingula read staff recommendations to call for a public hearing at the June Commission meeting to consider amendments to Chapter 4, Wildlife Regulations Section 037 Mountain Lions.

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

Chairman Zingula opened the public hearing at 8:15 AM to consider Wildlife Commission Order C03, Antelope, Deer, Elk regarding changes to permit numbers, season dates, bag limits, and areas open. Wildlife Division Big Game Manager Luke Meduna reviewed staff recommendations. There was only one comment received prior to the meeting by a landowner who thinks we are harvesting too many elk in Units 3 and 9. There was no public testimony at the hearing. The hearing was closed at 9:03 AM.

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

After a recess, Chairman Zingula opened the session for public comments. Senator Tom Brewer shared information they had researched regarding the R-Line project, which he opposes. He asked that NGPC consider this new information as part of the environmental review we provide for projects requiring state permitting, as it was not available prior to the last review. The last day for comments is May 9.

Parks Division Administrator Jeff Fields reviewed staff recommendations for Commission approval of the proposed rental fees for the newly constructed horse pens located within the new mare barn campground at Fort Robinson State Park.

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

Parks Division Administrator Jeff Fields presented on the Missouri River Expo turning 20 in 2025. This a huge event showcasing outdoor skills and education for adults and kids alike and is largely dependent upon volunteers. It is greatly supported by the Ponca community in terms of volunteering and fundraising.

Communications Division Administrator Christy Firestone reviewed the agency's plans for spring education and outreach efforts.

Parks Division Administrator Jeff Fields reviewed the staff recommendation for Commission approval of increases in the cash change funds at several park areas to assist with operations and accommodate shower house coinage requirements.

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

The Committee Chairs reported on their respective Committee meetings held the day before.

During good of the order, the Commissioners expressed thanks to the park staff as well as all associated with the fish fry. They also congratulated two new division administrators, Tiffani Gerber for Engineering and Jeff Clauson for Law Enforcement.

#### Executive Session

Motion by Mr. Cassels and seconded by Mr. Berggren to enter executive session for the purpose of discussing personnel at 10:53 AM. Voting aye: Curry, Berggren, Brandt, Hughes, Kush, Cassels, and Zingula; voting nay: None. Hoggatt was absent. Motion carried.

The Chairman called the meeting back into regular session at 11:15 AM.

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

#### Adjournment

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Motion by Mr. Berggren and seconded by Mr. Curry to adjourn the meeting at 11:17 AM. Voting aye: Brandt, Hughes, Kush, Cassels, Curry, Berggren and Zingula; voting nay: None. Hoggatt was absent. 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 April 25, 2024.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'T' followed by a cursive 'M' and a long horizontal flourish.

Timothy McCoy, Director

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