

Eastern Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council (EUPCAC)

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 16, 2015

6:30-8:30pm EST

Comfort Inn Conference Room, Newberry, MI

Chair: Dick Pershinske Vice-Chair: Glenn Moll Secretary: Tom Buckingham

Council Members Present

Allan Augustyn

Jim Duke

Gary Gorniak

Tim Hass

Jim Hoy

Bernie Hubbard

Michael Lawless

Glenn Moll

Dick Pershinske

Jim Shutt

Mark Spencer

Council Members Excused/Absent

Keith Aldrich

Tom Buckingham

Ivan Darling

Al Garavaglia

Jason Garvon

Bridget Nodurft

Chad Radka

Richard Serfass

Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Staff Liaisons

Kristi Dahlstrom, Executive Assistant, Marquette

Lt. Skip Hagy, Law Enforcement Division, Newberry

Stacy Haughey, U.P. Regional Coordinator, Marquette

Tom Paquin, Parks & Recreation Division, Newberry

Bob Burnham, Forest Resources Division, Shingleton

Terry Minzey, Wildlife Division, Ishpeming

Steve Scott, Fisheries Division, Newberry

Call To Order

The Eastern Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council (EUPCAC) meeting was called to order at 6:32pm EST by **Chair Pershinske**.

Adoption of Agenda

Chair Pershinske asked if there were any additions or revisions to the agenda. There were none. **Mr. Lawless** motioned to adopt the agenda as presented; **Mr. Spencer** seconded the motion. **Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: Mr. Aldrich, Mr. Buckingham, Mr. Darling, Mr. Garavaglia, Dr. Garvon, Ms. Nodurft, Mr. Radka, Mr. Serfass. Motion carried.**

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Chair Pershinske asked the Council if there were any corrections to the February 5, 2015 EUPCAC minutes; none were brought forth. **Mr. Duke** motioned to approve the minutes as submitted; **Mr. Hass** seconded the motion. **Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: Mr. Aldrich, Mr. Buckingham, Mr. Darling, Mr. Garavaglia, Dr. Garvon, Ms. Nodurft, Mr. Radka, Mr. Serfass. Motion carried.**

Chair Comments

Chair Pershinske stated he wanted to acknowledge, as he did at the most recent NRC meeting, the amount of time DNR staff spent on the Graymont proposal. He noted supervisors need to recognize staff for the monumental time they spent on that project. It may have a huge impact on the eastern

UP. The Council needs to know that those in uniform are doing a commendable job. He also made reference to a copy of a very good article in the meeting packets, which was from the Business Today and details the DNR's accomplishments in the last year. He indicated he will be implementing another Council evaluation, similar to the one done 2-3 years ago, to evaluate effectiveness and to make any improvements necessary in function.

Public Comments

- **Mrs. Haughey** reviewed a written public comment from Ms. Sue Belanger regarding the protection of the AuTrain-Whitefish corridor. **Mrs. Haughey** stated she will obtain additional information from Ms. Belanger and will connect with her after the meeting.
- Mr. Daryl Browning from Graymont, audience member, wanted to thank the Council for the time and effort they put into the process. He appreciates the DNR Director's integrity on the whole process. They are very aware of the time staff put into it. He would like to thank everyone for their support.
 - **Mr. Hoy** asked for the current status of the proposal. Mr. Browning indicated after the DNR Director gave his recommendation, they have been getting all the paperwork completed and ready for permitting of the mine. They are hoping to have the permits ready by early winter. There are lots of people coming to them about hiring, including vendors.
 - **Chair Pershinske** stated that one requirement of the proposal was putting \$100,000 into a community fund, which will be governed by a seven-member board of trustees. Graymont will have one member on the board. This is a significant commitment on their part and will help the surrounding communities in a positive way.

Reports

1. **Stacy Haughey, UP Regional Coordinator:** **Mrs. Haughey** welcomed new member Mr. Allan Augustyn. She stated another new member, Mr. Tom Tessmer, decided not to continue and she will work on filling that position. Introductions of Council members were made. **Mr. Shutt** indicated he will be attending a charter boat association meeting soon and to let him know if there is any information he should bring to that meeting. **Mr. Hass** mentioned new trail work being done and a park-to-park hike development. **Chair Pershinske** offered to speak about the Council on Mr. Augustyn's radio show if there is interest. **Mrs. Haughey** provided the following updates:
 - The fee for the recreation passport is \$11 and entitles entrance into 102 state parks. There are discounts across the state in the passport perks program. In FY 2014, 3.5% of rec passport sales in the state were in the U.P. Since 2011, \$2.9 million in community-related grants were awarded statewide with \$696,000 (24%) awarded to U.P. communities. Also since 2011, over \$10.5 million in park improvements were made with \$367,000 going to U.P. restoration projects. A map depicting areas of low participation was shared. **Chair Pershinske** stated Pure Michigan ads are heard on the west coast. **Mrs. Haughey** stated she heard southern state residents are vacationing up north.
 - **Mrs. Haughey** introduced Mr. Sigurd Utych from Newberry who serves on the NRC Youth Conservation Council. Mr. Utych provided an update on the council's goal which is to increase youths' interest in the outdoors. They have been working on a photo contest, blog, and YouTube videos. There are 24 members on the council, but he feels there is still not enough

from the U.P. Applications for new members are being accepted. He is available for questions after the meeting.

2. DNR Division Reports: Written staff reports were provided via email to Council members on April 9, 2015. The following are current updates or comments provided.
- Terry Minzey, Wildlife Division: **Mr. Minzey** provided the following updates:
 - He explained the recent case with a swine being taken in Marquette County and answered questions from the Council. **Mrs. Haughey** indicated that she has a copy of Public Act 328 of 1976 to regulate animals running at large and reviewed a portion of it.
 - The biologist position vacated by Mr. Kevin Swanson in Shingleton has been filled; the new person will start April 27th.
 - Bear quotas have been approved by the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) at their April meeting. The 5% reduction in the Newberry management unit was approved. **Mr. Augustyn** asked how many permits were reduced. **Mr. Minzey** indicated he didn't have the exact number available with him. He stated the reduction was a result of requests by user and sportsman's groups. **Mrs. Haughey** indicated she can provide the breakdown information after the meeting.
 - Although the Wildlife Division has spent 6-7 years working on the AuTrain refuge area, parcels that came up for sale did not make the priority list. **Mr. Minzey** explained the potential options they are looking into. He and Mrs. Haughey have been in multiple conversations and will work with Representative Kivela and Alger County representatives on the next step.
 - The Northern long-eared bat has been listed as threatened rather than endangered with a 4-d rule. This rule is temporary to give time for comments by impacted utility companies. He explained the process further. **Chair Pershinske** stated he listened to a USF&WS teleconference and there were several questions answered, but were not definitive. **Mr. Minzey** indicated U.P. road commissions stated they would do their work early in the year to avoid conflict. **Mr. Augustyn** stated he had read that one of the areas where White Nose Syndrome first occurred is seeing a reduction in occurrence. **Mr. Minzey** indicated it is still a long road ahead.
 - **Mr. Gorniak** asked a question in regards to the consent decree; **Mr. Scott** provided an explanation as it related to fishing rights.
 - **Mr. Gorniak** also asked about a grant for grouse management that was mentioned in the previous meeting minutes. **Mr. Minzey** noted that the Wildlife Division was listed in the grant as a partner, but they were not notified. He stated there were early discussions about partnering for sharp-tail grouse management, but the grant submitted was for golden winged warblers and it doesn't fit with sharp-tail grouse. He will be meeting with the grantors soon.
 - **Chair Pershinske** asked for a deer management update. **Mr. Minzey** stated this has been the third difficult winter in a row. The Wildlife Division has been in discussions with the NRC on potential options and it will be the NRC's decision to consider any action. There will be more information available at the May NRC meeting.
 - **Chair Pershinske** asked about a moose survey in the eastern U.P. **Mr. Minzey** stated a survey is not done in the eastern U.P. It is not really known how many moose are on

the east end. A sight-ability index model was used in the western U.P. survey and it wouldn't work well in the east end with the type of vegetation that exists. The amount of funding needed to develop a survey for the east end is not available.

- Steve Scott, Fisheries Division: **Mr. Scott** stated he did not have any updates to his report, although he did have an update on the cormorant program. The 2014 season went well. About 10,000 birds were killed last season and several batches of eggs were oiled. The population is reducing as a result. The funding will remain in place for 2015 and the activities will continue the same as last year. However, funding has not been put into the 2016 budget for cormorant control and it is hoped that this will change. He briefly discussed a lawsuit against the USF&WS which could result in losing all cormorant control efforts. The DNR is not directly involved in the lawsuit, but is providing information when requested. **Mr. Shutt** asked about control efforts in the Les Cheneaux islands; **Mr. Scott** responded.
- Tom Paquin, Parks & Recreation Division: **Mr. Paquin** added to Mrs. Haughey's update on the recreation passport program stating it has helped to fund a major project at each state park in the eastern U.P. this season. The projects are described in his report.
- Bob Burnham, Forest Resources Division: **Mr. Burnham** stated he was attending on behalf of Mr. Jeff Stampfly and has no additions to the report.
- Lt. Skip Hagy, Law Enforcement Division: **Lt. Hagy** introduced CO Robert (Bobby) Watson, the newest officer in the area. He noted the academy is on its 15th week and is going strong with 37 recruits.
 - **Mr. Duke** asked about noise meters. **Lt. Hagy** stated the division is making noise meters a priority across the state and they will be well-prepared next year. Tickets were issued this past season in the western U.P. He indicated the number of piped snowmobiles coming in from Wisconsin and Minnesota are rising and, this season, has cost the loss of a large tract of snowmobile trail that is on private property because of the loud machines. **Mr. Duke** indicated the snowmobile program is pushing very hard to get rid of the noise problem.

Old Business

1. Subcommittee Reports: There were no reports.
2. UP Wildlife Habitat Workgroup Update: **Mr. Minzey** indicated the next meeting of this group will be on April 28th in Ishpeming and is open to the public. There hasn't been a meeting since this Council has met resulting in no new business to report. **Chair Pershinske** asked how many members are in this group; **Mr. Minzey** replied 13. **Mr. Minzey** stated he misspoke previously when he stated there were no representatives from the agriculture sector. In fact, Mr. Suchovksy from the WUPCAC and the Marquette Conservation District are members.
3. Wolf Update: **Mr. Minzey** stated there hasn't been much action since the appeal was submitted. He indicated the wolf management plan has been put out for public comment and over 1,000 comments have been received. Staff are now reviewing those.
 - An audience member stated it seems like wolves are being managed in the whole state of Michigan when they should be managed per small area, such as by county. He feels Luce County is very different than Menominee County in density of wolves. **Mr. Minzey** stated the wolf management plan was written as a requirement of the Endangered Species Act. Wolves

can move a long ways, 500 miles at times. A plan was developed for the entire U.P. to get it approved through the USF&W. In the updated plan, all tools will be maintained as an option for management. The goal is to get back to managing wolves and have a hunt. The only way currently a wolf can be killed is if it is challenging someone's personal safety. There are problems currently with wolves in the Manistique area. The audience member asked if the plan will ever offer the option to manage by county. **Mr. Minzey** replied he is not sure.

- **Chair Pershinske** stated a resolution was passed at the Joint UPCAC meeting about the plan and unanimous consent. He stated there is a huge impact on the farming community right now due to calving season. He encouraged the public to talk to their legislators. **Mr. Minzey** indicated options for donkeys and fencing still remain. There are options to work with farmers while going through the legalities.
- **Mr. Augustyn** stated there may be a future concern with enforcement. **Mr. Minzey** stated the officers are doing their best with enforcement.
- Another audience member complained about owning a large amount of property that is void of deer because of the amount of wolves.
- **Mr. Hoy** asked if the Council could receive a report in two months on the status of the legislation at the federal level; **Chair Pershinske** agreed.

New Business

1. **Hunting & Trapping Guide Concerns:** **Chair Pershinske** stated he feels there are still concerns with the guide pertaining to deer regulations. He asked if the Council had any other concerns. **Mr. Spencer** stated there have been some clarifications made in regards to trapping. **Mrs. Haughey** indicated the DNR has sponsors who help to produce it and it goes through a thorough review process internally. She stated Mr. Spieles is part of a group that oversees the guide internally and can relay the concerns to that group. She indicated the DNR is always looking for ways to improve it. **Mr. Scott** stated there are several areas with red stars indicating that it was printed before changes in regulations occurred. **Lt. Hagy** noted the officers also look at the guide before printing to make sure the language is clarified and understandable. **Chair Pershinske** asked Mrs. Haughey to relay this information to Mr. Spieles.
2. **Conservation Officer Academy Update:** **Lt. Hagy** played the Shields of Gold DVD that is available on the Law Enforcement Division's web page (a copy of the web page was provided to the Council). **CO Robert (Bobby) Watson**, the new CO in the Luce County area, introduced himself and explained his desire to become a CO and his background.
 - **Chair Pershinske** asked what his perception is of his job in the eyes of those he works with on a daily basis. **CO Watson** explained the positive and negative attitudes he encounters and stated the Academy prepared him well.
 - **Mr. Augustyn** asked if he spent time with a veteran CO before working on his own. **CO Watson** stated after the Academy, he worked with CO Mike Hammill in the local area for the first six weeks. The second six weeks he worked in a different area and environment with another veteran CO. For the third six weeks, he returned back to the local area in a ghost phase in which his partner (veteran CO) is in plain clothes. After this third step, a probationary period begins and every few weeks, a supervisor rides along. The Academy is 22 weeks and the training afterwards is 24 weeks.

- **Lt. Hagy** showed a YouTube video on ice rescue training and how it was done. He indicated recruits go through several self-survival trainings.
- **Mr. Scott** asked about the difference with tasers versus guns and where officers carry them. **Lt. Hagy** explained the training CO's receive with these items and the precautions taken.
- **Mr. Augustyn** asked if the DNR has a ride-along program. **Lt. Hagy** replied there is a program and approvals have to go through the proper chain. Individuals have to be 21 years of age to participate.
- **Chair Pershinske** asked for an explanation of the line of authority in the Law Division. **Lt. Hagy** indicated the recruit title is replaced after graduation (from the Academy) with CO. There are 4 years of service required before moving on to a Sargent, and another two years of service to move beyond that level. CO's must build their resume as moving up the ladder is competitive.
- It was asked if there is a recruiter available to do presentations at schools and colleges. **Lt. Hagy** spoke about a CO who adopted a classroom in the lower peninsula and the good things that arose out of the experience.

Chair Pershinske and the Council thanked CO Watson for sharing his experiences with them.

Next Meeting

1. **Next Meeting Date:** **Chair Pershinske** noted the next regular meeting of the EUPCAC will be held on Thursday, June 18th in St. Ignace. A confirmed location will be forthcoming. (**NOTE: *Since the April meeting, the June 18th meeting has been relocated to Newberry and the August 27th meeting has been relocated to St. Ignace. -5/12/15*)
2. **Topics for Next Meeting Agenda:** **Chair Pershinske** asked if there were any suggestions for items to add to the next regular EUPCAC meeting agenda in June. **Mr. Hoy** suggested a discussion on the daily bag limit of geese. **Mr. Minzey** stated it is a federal matter. There is a DNR Citizens Waterfowl Advisory Committee whose mission is to provide feedback to the DNR-Wildlife Division on existing and proposed waterfowl regulations and wetland issues. He explained why the early season is more liberal than the late season due to population. **Mr. Hoy** stated there aren't any issues with the early season and it seems more people want the limits increased for the late season. **Mrs. Haughey** indicated she will talk with Ms. Barb Avers to see if she can provide a presentation or information on the matter. Other agenda topics include a wolf legislation update, cormorant update, and a council evaluation.

Public Comments

Chair Pershinske opened the floor for additional public comments. There were no comments brought forth.

Closing Comments from the Council

Mr. Gorniak asked Mr. Minzey if there are any changes pending to the archery deer tag. **Mr. Minzey** stated a decision of any changes will be made in June. Information will be presented to the NRC in May, with action in June. Also, suggestions will be discussed at the U.P. Sportsman's Alliance meeting on Saturday (April 18) and Commissioner Chair John Matonich will be in attendance.

Adjourn

There being no further business, **Chair Pershinske** adjourned the meeting at 8:31pm EST.

Approved 6/18/15