

**NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
November 12, 2020  
Conference Call/Virtual Meeting**

**Present for the Natural Resources Commission (commission)**

Carol Moncrieff Rose, chair, Hillman, MI  
David Nyberg, Marquette county, MI  
J.R. Richardson, Carp Lake township, MI  
Keith Creagh, Williamston township, MI  
Louise Klarr, Jackson, Liberty township, MI  
Chris Tracy, Kalamazoo, MI  
Mike Lashbrook, East Lansing, MI

**Present for Department of Natural Resources (department) Staff**

Dan Bock, legal counsel, Office of the Attorney General, Lansing, MI  
Daniel Eichinger, DNR director, Isabella county, MI  
Trevor VanDyke, DNR director of legal and legislative affairs office  
Brooke Parmalee, DNR, legal and legislative affairs office  
Cheryl Nelson, executive assistant to the NRC

**Chair Rose** called the meeting of the commission to order at 9:00 a.m. Before asking for a roll call of the commissioners, she invited **Trevor VanDyke** from the department's executive division to share information on Public Act (PA) 228 of 2020, of which part of directly correlates to roll calls during virtual meetings. Specifically, PA 228 permits telephonic or video conferencing meetings, in whole or in part, under the following circumstances: before January 1, 2021, and retroactive to March 18, 2020, under any circumstances; on and after January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021, only to accommodate absent board members due to military duty, a "medical condition" or "statewide or local state of emergency;" and after December 31, 2021, only to accommodate board members due to military duty. In addition, procedures must allow an absent board member to participate in and vote on business before the board and provide for: two-way communication; publicly announcing at the beginning of a meeting and then documenting in the minutes that a board member is attending the meeting remotely; and the announcement must identify specifically the member's physical location by stating the county, city, township or village and state.

**Chair Rose** then called for a roll call; all commissioners, the director and assistant attorney general were present virtually for the November 12, 2020, Natural Resources Commission meeting.

At this point, **Rose** asked if a commissioner would motion to adopt PA 228 of 2020 as a part of the commission's policies. **Commissioner Tracy** made a motion to adopt PA 228 of 2020 into the commission's policies; **commissioner Klarr** supported the motion. **Rose** called for discussion, there being none, a vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

**Chair Rose** then called for a motion to approve the November 12, 2020, Natural Resources

Commission's meeting agenda. **Commissioner Lashbrook** made a motion to adopt the day's agenda; commissioner **Tracy** supported the motion. **Rose** called for discussion, there being none, a vote was taken and the agenda was approved unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was the approval of the October 8, 2020, commission meeting minutes. **Chair Rose** called for a motion to approve the minutes; commissioner **Klarr** made the motion to adopt the October 8 minutes, commissioner **Creagh** seconded the motion, **Rose** called for additional discussion, there being none, a vote was taken and the October 8, 2020 meeting minutes passed unanimously.

**Chair Rose** next made a motion to amend the previously approved July 16, 2020 meeting minutes; commissioner **Tracy** supported the motion. **Rose** explained the need for the amendment; after a comparison of the meeting minutes and the recording from the July 16, 2020 meeting, suggested changes to the minutes were tracked and posted online. Clarification was necessary in the portion of the minutes regarding Wildlife conservation order amendment no. 6 of 2020. The updated language reflects the actual outcome regarding commissioner **Tracy's** 3-point antler point restriction (APR) amendments and commissioner **Creagh's** muzzleloader amendment. In addition, language has been added referencing two resolutions regarding deer carcass movement and the department's mandatory APR guidelines. **Rose** called for discussion; **Klarr** noted that it is great that the public follows the commission so closely and she was glad something previously missed was caught by the public. With no more discussion, a vote was taken and the July 16, 2020 meeting minutes were approved as amended.

### **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

**Director Eichinger** welcomed the audience and gave a short summary on the new chief of the Wildlife division, **Jared Duquette**, who will be joining the department on November 29.

**Duquette** comes to the department from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources but is a Michigander from St. Charles and a graduate of Central Michigan University. His background in research includes deer disease and chronic wasting disease (CWD) management, among others. **Duquette's** Ph.D. study was based on predator prey research in the Upper Peninsula (UP).

Next, **Eichinger** spoke about the federal process that has been completed for the delisting of wolves. Effective January 4, 2021, wolves will be removed from the threatened and endangered species list in the lower 48 states. **Eichinger** added that it will be important for the department to contemplate its management actions, as he assumes there will be legal challenges ongoing. The department will be making updates to the management plan with consultation from Tribal governments.

### **Director's Report**

#### **Safari Club International (SCI)– Michigan Involvement Committee Gun & Bow Prizes**

Safari Club International – Michigan Involvement Committee's **Bob Taylor**, announced deer hunter survey participant prize winners. The names were drawn randomly from early survey respondents. This year's winners included **Gary Sabol** of Caspian, who was awarded a rifle and **Roger Katz** of Boyne City, who was awarded a crossbow.

#### **Safari Club International's Award for Biologist of the Year**

Next, **Mr. Taylor** announced the “Biologist of the Year.” This award recipient is nominated and selected by his or her peers. **Taylor** presented award to long-time habitat biologist, **Guntes (Nik) Kalejs**. **Nik** works in western Michigan, operating out of the Muskegon state game area.

### **Deer Regulations Phase II**

**Chad Stewart**, deer management specialist and **Ashley Autenrieth**, deer biologist from the Wildlife division, presented changes for the 2021 seasons, which are being made with the intent on making the laws more understandable for the state’s hunters. A few of those proposed changes include a voluntary harvest registration system, which will incorporate hunter feedback; a universal antlerless license that may be used across multiple deer management units (DMU); late season crossbow use in the UP; elimination of hunter’s choice in the UP, among others. They also talked about issues and recommended solutions.

**Director Eichinger** thanked **Stewart** and **Autenrieth** and the commissioners for the dialog and engagement on the deer regulations topic. The commission and director also discussed when the amendment should be voted on.

The director’s report ended at 11:14 a.m. After a short break chair **Rose** called the meeting back to order and did another roll call with all commissioners still in attendance.

### **PUBLIC APPEARANCES BEFORE THE NRC**

(**Brooke Parmalee** read the official timekeeping procedures and guidelines for the meeting’s public appearances which began at 11:19 a.m.)

**Nancy Warren** representing National Wolf Watch Coalition, shared her thoughts on the delisting of wolves, she does not want to see a wolf hunting season.

**Ed Flanagan** came before the commission to share his vision on ambush hunting. He would also like the knife and spear once again be a legal means of hunting.

**Marcie Tree** shared her thoughts on the delisting of wolves. She feels the delisting is premature and not scientifically based.

**Ian Fitzgerald**, MUCC brought up several topics, including reiterating MUCC’s policy procedures, that MUCC is happy with hunter access opportunities and not having complex hunting regulations, as long as it does not hurt the deer population. They are neutral on the use of crossbows statewide. Regarding recreational and supplemental feeding; both are disease vectors and they can see the need for supplemental feeding during a severe winter. **Fitzgerald** added that MUCC would like to see permitting continue in the UP for supplemental feeding as it provides a better ability to get good data. He also asked if the deer regulations would be reopened in 2021 with respect to harvest regulations.

**Dr. Cathy Theisen** shared her thoughts on hunting and trapping in Michigan. She is opposed to the hunting and trapping of wolves and believes they have an intrinsic value to the residents of Michigan.

**Erik Schnelle**, president of the Michigan Chapter of the National Deer Association, formerly QDMA, spoke about efforts to educate hunters about removing lymph nodes from deer in CWD areas and getting them in for testing. **Schnelle** said that they are getting enthusiastic feedback

regarding APRs in the CWD core area, it is managing the disease more proactively. On the 2021 deer recommendations and his group, they are happy with the deer registration system, they have been concerned about the lack of in-season data. They think that universal antlerless licenses is a great idea. Regarding supplemental feeding in the UP, would like to see habitat efforts increased.

**Bee Friedlander**, Attorneys for Animals. She spoke about her concerns regarding mortality in bald eagles and the use of lead ammunition. With regard to CWD, they will be participating in a department stakeholder group. Also, **Friedlander** indicated that she was happy to see that the department and commission will not be rushing into a wolf hunting season

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**George Lindquist**, representing Whitetails of Marquette county wanted to remind the audience that it is sportsmen's dollars that brought back the wolf in Michigan.

**Gary Gorniak** told the commission that wolves should be managed scientifically, noting that the deer numbers are going down as the wolf population increases.

**Mike Thorman** spoke about wolves in the state and the need for them to be managed scientifically and would agree with having a recreational hunt.

**Molly Tamulevich** from the Humane Society of the United States; they are opposed to the hunting and trapping of wolves; there is no need for a hunting season. She also noted that she was appreciative the various public comments and discussion on wolves today.

**Trish Marie**, she did not feel that there is scientific support for a wolf hunt. She asked that the commission listen to science and the will of the people.

**Stephanie Velea**, 13 years old, from Washington spoke passionately to the commission about wolves and wolverines and their possible extinction. She condemned the killing of all wildlife species.

**Jenny Cook** thanked the department for working together with the equestrians so that they are also able to enjoy Michigan's trails. **Cook** spoke about a recent ride she led that was along the magnificent Lake Michigan shoreline; there will be more in the future.

**Robert Allen** spoke about ungulates and keeping the trout streams cool. The ecosystem gets broken; the more man tries to balance the ecosystem, the more unbalanced it gets.

**Chair Rose adjourned the public appearances portion of the meeting at 12:25 p.m. and called to order the regular meeting of the NRC at 12:26 p.m. She asked for another roll call of commissioners and noted that all who were present at the Committee of the Whole were present for the regular meeting.**

**NEW BUSINESS**  
**DIRECTOR**

**Chair Rose** read the new business for the director, which may be acted on during the day's meeting:

**LTA 20190261 Sale of Easement, Cadillac District – Osceola County, Pere Marquette State Trail**

**LTA 20190250 Sale of Surplus DNR-Managed Land, Cadillac District – Mason County**

**LTA 20200152 Parks and Recreation-Gift of Easement - Keweenaw Trail Western Upper Peninsula District – Keweenaw County**

**LTA 20200164 Gift of Land-Gaylord Management Unit – Cheboygan County**

**LTA 20200044 Forest Resources Land Exchange, Shingleton Management Unit – Schoolcraft County, the Pistulka Exchange**

**LTA 20190190 Parks and Recreation Land Acquisition, Holly Recreation Area – Oakland County, the Goren Tract**

**Director Eichinger** indicated that he would be signing these land transactions.

**NEW BUSINESS**  
**NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION**

**Chair Rose** read the new business for the commission, which may be acted upon at the December 10, 2020 commission meeting:

**Deer Regulations, Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No 8 of 2020, FOR INFORMATION ONLY** **Commissioner Creagh** stated that he would like to see additions to the order that will be brought forward for action; he expressed concern over the potential increase in prevalence of CWD in the CWD experiment zone due to the implementation of APRs and the lack of increased antlerless harvest to offset that risk. **Creagh** also would like more information on supplemental and recreational deer feeding. It makes sense for recreational feeding to be held to two gallons, but not in supplemental areas with severe winters; he would like that to be clarified to only two gallons per day.

**OLD BUSINESS**  
**DIRECTOR**

**Chair Rose** read the director's order up for approval:

**Fisheries Order 243.21, State-Licensed Commercial Fishing**

The director indicated that he would be signing this order at this meeting.

**Chair Rose** added a special note at this point asking all to keep the families of **Dr. Bill Porter**

and former commissioner **Harry Whiteley** (longest serving commissioner at 25 years of service) in their thoughts; both who recently passed away and were icons in Michigan's natural resources community.

**OLD BUSINESS**  
**NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION**

*There was no old business for the commission to act upon at this meeting.*

**COMMISSIONER REPORTS**

**Commissioner Richardson** said that the next UP Habitat Workgroup meeting would be taking place on December 10. He also noted that the CWD taskforce meeting went well and that there have been no more CWD positives in the UP core area.

**Commissioner Tracy** thanked chair **Rose** for her mention of **Dr. Porter** and **Mr. Whiteley** and wished all a safe hunting season and a happy Thanksgiving.

**Commissioner Creagh** shared a couple of thoughts regarding **Dr. Porter** and **Mr. Whiteley** and their contributions to Michigan's natural resources. Creagh said he has spent much time in the woods, shooting a couple of birds and finding many deer ticks. He is looking forward to firearm season and wished everyone a safe and successful hunt.

**Commissioner Klarr** spoke about the need for a new commissioner to replace her on the Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee. She noted that the parks have an intense maintenance backlog and to expect updates from chief **Olson**. In the past month she went grouse hunting at a GEM and sharptail hunting by Sault Ste. Marie. **Klarr** is pleased with the abilities of her one-year-old setter pup, and her husband bagged his deer not even an hour into archery season.

**Commissioner Lashbrook** said that there is a new puppy in his household and is looking to getting back into the woods once she is trained.

**Commissioner Nyberg** thanked the department for a very thorough and informative deer presentation.

**Chair Rose** sat in on the recent Bovine tuberculosis committee meeting and is looking forward to hunting. **Rose** wished all a safe hunting season and said that she is looking forward to all the comments on the deer regulations in the upcoming weeks.

**Director Eichinger** also thanked Rose for mentioning **Porter** and **Whiteley**, noting that the conference center at the Ralph A. MacMillan center was named in honor of former commissioner **Whiteley**, who was in attendance at the dedication ceremony. **Eichinger** added that it was an honor to work with, be mentored by and know **Dr. Porter**. He was a great friend to the department. He encouraged all to shoot straight and have a great hunting season.

**Next Meeting**

**Chair Rose** shared that the next meeting of the commission will be held on Thursday, December 10, 2020 and will once again be in a virtual format.

**Adjournment**

**Commissioner Tracy** made a motion to adjourn. **Commissioner Klarr** supported the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 12:49 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carol Moncrieff Rose".

Carol Moncrieff Rose, NRC Chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Daniel Eichinger".

Daniel Eichinger, DNR Director

DATE: December 11, 2020