

Wildlife and Boat Committee Meeting Minutes
4000 West Broad Street, Board Room
Richmond, Virginia 23230

October 8, 2008, 9:30am

Present: Mr. Richard E. Railey, Jr., Committee Chairman and Mr. Ward Burton;
Absent: Mr. Charles Yates; **Director:** Robert “Bob” W. Duncan; **Senior Staff:** Ray Davis, Gary Martel, Colonel Dabney “Dee” Watts, Lee Walker, Bob Ellis, Charlie Sledd, Larry Hart and Rick Bush.

Mr. Railey welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 9:30am.

Approval of Minutes: Mr. Railey called for a motion to approve the minutes of the June 5, 2008 meeting. **Mr. Burton made the following motion: I move the minutes of the meeting be approved as submitted. Motion seconded by Mr. Railey. Ayes: Mr. Burton and Mr. Railey.**

Update on the Proposed Parasail Regulation: Mr. Sledd provided an update on the proposed parasail regulation that the Board will be considering for final adoption at the October Board Meeting. The regulation has generated only one public comment, which was in support of the effort. The only change made to the proposed regulation during the public comment period is a style change as suggested by the Virginia Registrar. Staff is recommending to the committee that this regulation be presented during the October Board meeting for final adoption, with the regulation to become effective on January 1, 2009.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Sledd for his presentation.

Update on Boater Safety Education Law Outreach: To provide a consistent outreach message, Mr. Sledd indicated that the boating safety education program has developed information and materials that cover the two essential parts – the compliance schedule and the provisions for compliance – of the boating safety education requirement. This information has been made available in the latest printing of the Virginia Watercraft Owner’s Guide, the *Boat Virginia* student manual, the registration renewal notice and registration document, the October issue of *Virginia Wildlife* magazine, and on the agency web site. An information card (wallet size) will soon be available for mass distribution. A brief discussion was held between the Committee and Staff on the number of times a student could take the test. Staff indicated there are unlimited times the student could take the test.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Sledd for his presentation.

Update on Fisheries Division Capital Projects: Mr. Gary Martel provided an update on the Coursey Springs Hatchery Renovations and the Laurel Bed Lake Dam repairs. The

Coursey Springs Hatchery Renovations are progressing with only minor problems (uncovered asbestos pipe and the contractors have also encountered some bedrock). The Laurel Bed Lake project has just begun and since this report the contractor has experienced a little difficulty with the concrete company and delivery. The total of the two projects is approximately 13M. Both projects are running on schedule.

Update on the Hunting with Hounds Study: Mr. Bob Ellis expressed his sincere appreciation to Mr. Rick Busch who served as the Coordinator of the project. The final report should be ready soon and the recommendations will be presented to the full Board during the October Meeting. Mr. Railey stated he echoed Mr. Ellis remarks. Mr. Railey is aware of the time and effort given not only by Mr. Busch to the study but also by everyone at Virginia Tech and the Stakeholders Committee. Mr. Railey stated that depending on what you read some people are completely in favor of hound hunting and some people are not in favor hound hunting. Mr. Railey says he believes the study has been a success.

Mr. Busch thanked everyone for their kind remarks. It was certainly a team effort by everyone. There is still a lot of work to be done once the recommendations have been presented to the Board. Over 6000 pieces of public input have been submitted regarding this study. The final decision by the Stakeholders Advisory Committee (SAC) by a majority vote was to present all 11 recommendations to the Board. This will be an informational briefing for the Board. The technical report is on the Agency Website along with other information regarding the study.

Mr. Burton expressed his concern regarding the 11 recommendations and how will the Agency proceed to make sure the public is still included in bringing resolution to the study. Mr. Duncan stated there are 3 areas of the study that needs to be addressed: Administrative, Regulatory and Legislative. Some of the regulatory issues can be addressed during the hunting and trapping process. This process allows continued input for public comments. The recommendation by staff to the Board would be to work with the Natural Resource Agencies and legislative members to work on the Code Changes.

A discussion was held by the Committee and the staff on the public meetings.

Mr. Burton wanted to know the level of involvement of the Law Enforcement Division. Mr. Busch stated that Law Enforcement has been involved since the study began.

Discussion continued by the Committee and staff on the future process and public involvement.

The Committee requested formal recognition of the Stakeholders Advisory Committee Members. Mr. Duncan stated they will be recognized at a later date.

Mr. Duncan stated there are also educational issues regarding hunting with hounds in communities and companies.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Duncan, Mr. Ellis and Mr. Busch for their report and remarks.

Summary of Hunting and Trapping Regulatory Issues: Mr. Ellis stated that a series of public meetings have been held on the Hunting and Trapping Regulatory Issues process. Copies of the comments were distributed to Committee Members. Recommendations will be made to the full Board during the February 2009 meeting. Two delegates attended the public meeting. The meetings were interactive with staff so the public could voice their issues in addition to those issues identified by staff. Over 500 comments and issues have been received. They will be placed on the Website for review and comment. No specific issues at this time. A briefing will be provided to the Board during the October Meeting.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Ellis for his report.

Update on the National Wildlife Federation and the Virginia Conservation Network: On behalf of David Whitehurst, Mr. Chris Burkett gave the following presentation:

There is mounting evidence that climate change will have a dramatic and profound impact on many of Virginia's wildlife species and habitats. With a grant provided by the Wildlife Conservation Society (funds for the grant program were provided by the Doris Duke Charitable foundation) the National Wildlife Federation, the Virginia Conservation Network, and the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (Partners) have established a partnership to develop adaptation strategies that will help conserve wildlife and habitats as climatic conditions change.

The Partners will host two one-day workshops for a diverse array of stakeholders. The first workshop will be held in Wakefield, Virginia on October 30, 2008. Participants will hear presentations on the Governor's Commission on Climate Change, Virginia's Wildlife Action Plan, the impacts climate change is having on Virginia and the Chesapeake Bay, and national efforts to develop climate change legislation. Participants will also be asked to articulate climate-related problems, issues, and concerns held by the organizations they represent. Over 35 different agencies, businesses, municipalities, and organizations have registered to participate in this event.

Following the first workshop, the Partners will review the stakeholder input and develop draft strategies that could address the identified issues.

The second workshop will occur during the spring of 2009 at a site yet to be determined. During this event, participants will be reminded of issues previously identified and informed of any significant developments that may have occurred since the first workshop. They will then be asked to review and offer insights on draft strategies developed by the Partners and then be asked to review and offer insights on draft strategies developed by the Partners and be given the opportunity, modify and develop additional actions and strategies. Using the input provided by workshop participants, the Partners will finalize a climate change adaptation document to supplement and enhance Virginia's wildlife Action Plan and other conservation efforts.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Burkett for his report.

There were no comments from the Public.

Additional Comments: Mr. Duncan introduced Major Mike Clark. Major Clark will be the Administrative Major for the Law Enforcement Division. Mr. Duncan also introduced Mr. Larry Hart who is the new Capital Programs and Facilities Director. Mr. Duncan announced that the next recruit class will begin December 10, 2008. Mr. Duncan stated he participated in the opening of the Bass Pro Shop. Mr. Duncan called upon Mr. Lee Walker to give an update on the Apprentice Hunting License sales and the promotion of the Agency and Apprentice License Hunting during the Homecoming Game at Virginia Tech. Mr. Duncan reminded the Committee of the Virginia Deer Hunters Association Banquet on October 23, 2008.

Mr. Ellis stated the Quail Plan Presentation will be carried forward to the February Board Meeting.

Next Meeting Date: The committee approved the Committee meeting dates for 2009: February 5, 2009; May 11, 2009 and June 15, 2009.

There being no further business, Mr. Burton made the motion to adjourn. Motion seconded by Mr. Railey.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth B. Drewery
Board Secretary