



MASSWILDLIFE

DIVISION OF FISHERIES & WILDLIFE

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COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
DIVISION OF FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE
FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

PRESENT: Dr. Joseph Larson/Chair, Michael Roche/Vice Chair, Bonnie Booth/Secretary, Ernest W. Foster IV, Stephen Sears, Dr. Brandi Van Roo, Fred Winthrop, Ron Amidon/Commissioner/DFG, Mary-Lee King/Deputy Commissioner/DFG, Mark Tisa/Director, Kris McCarthy/Associate Director/Finance and Administration, Michael Huguenin/Assistant Director/Wildlife, Trina Moruzzi/ Assistant Director/Operations, Todd Richards/Assistant Director/Fisheries, Marion Larson/Assistant Director/Information and Education, Jason Zimmer/Supervisor/Southeast Wildlife District, Jon Regosin/Chief/Conservation Science, Elizabeth Wroblicka/Chief/Wildlife Lands, Anne Gagnon/DFG Land Agent/Northeast Wildlife District, Captain Tony Khabir/OLE; PUBLIC: Stan Andriski, Colin McIntire

DATE: July 17, 2018

LOCATION: Parker River National Wildlife Refuge Visitor's Center, 6 Plum Island Turnpike,
Newburyport, Massachusetts

Chair Larson opened the July meeting of the Fisheries and Wildlife Board at 1:00 p.m.

Acceptance of Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Winthrop to accept the minutes from the June meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Booth. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair's Comments

Chair Larson reported that the Director's search committee had a unanimous recommendation for the Board. There were five candidates; four were interviewed, and all were impressive candidates. He stated that, after careful consideration, the search committee unanimously recommended Mark Tisa as the next Director of the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. Vice Chair Roche moved that the Board appoint Mark Tisa; Dr. Van Roo seconded the motion; the vote in favor was unanimous; and the Board members and staff present at the meeting congratulated Dr. Tisa on his appointment.

Director Tisa stated that he was deeply honored and humbled, and was looking forward to working with the professionalism, expertise, and wisdom of the Board in attaining his goals. Director Tisa asked that he might say a few words about his vision and mission for the agency. He stated that he intends to work closely with staff to promote the idea that MassWildlife is interested in all wildlife, and that he will expend effort and energy to promote the agency in that light. Director Tisa then stated his own priorities as Director:

- Working with the Board to ensure the financial stability of MassWildlife, noting that the agency has gone since 1996 without a license increase. He stated that he will work closely with the Board on this issue;
- Also working with his fellow Directors around the country, to help pass the Recovering America's Wildlife Act, and Director Tisa stated that he will put a lot of energy into keeping Massachusetts in the forefront on the national level;

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- Working on other important national issues, and that he will engage on key AFWA committees to that end;
- Focused on land, with the new Chief of Wildlife Lands and a relatively new staff; he stated that he is fully engaged in MassWildlife's land program;
- Ensuring that we actively manage lands for the habitat values they were protected for, Director Tisa stated that he would oversee a full execution of MassWildlife's forestry plan, including the continued restoration of grasslands, shrub lands, and young forest;
- R3: Director Tisa plans to ensure the success of MassWildlife's R3 programs by working closely with staff to provide opportunities for people of all ages who would like to learn how to hunt and fish;
- Hatchery infrastructure is a priority. He stated that McLaughlin Hatchery is the newest and yet is 60 years old, so it needs updating. He reported that Commissioner Amidon has \$250,000 available to comprehensively study the hatchery system with a consultant that specializes in these operations and can make updates and improvements;
- Continue MassWildlife's strong partnerships with other conservation partners in the state, including the sportsmen's clubs, NGOs, and nonprofits;
- Continue working with the Coop Unit at UMass/Amherst and to protect and strengthen the Coop Unit system in the country.

Chair Larson thanked Director Tisa and finished his own comments by reporting that he had communicated with former Commissioner Walter Bickford again, and Mr. Bickford had repeated that the DCR Stewardship Council and the Fisheries and Wildlife Board are supposed to meet once a year. The Chair state that the Stewardship Council's shared priorities are forestry, endangered species, and land protection, and that he thought it would be most productive if it was a meeting focused on a single common topic. He will report to the Board when a date is proposed.

Commissioner's Comments

Commissioner Amidon reported that he had gone to a meeting the previous month at the Orange Rod & Gun Club. The Commissioner also reported progress on Senate Bill 2248, stating that there were proposed revisions to the bill with the penalties and fines up-to-date.

Commissioner Amidon stated that the day of the Department's Statehouse Day was unforeseen and unfortunate timing, coming immediately after two very long deliberation days, so the turnout of legislators and aides was light, but he stated that he would like to do it again next year.

The Commissioner also reported electrofishing with the Valley District at Swift River, and a meeting with the Town of Athol and the OFBA, negotiating a project where the town would pay for an improved boat ramp and the OFBA will do the plans and engineering. He also reported a meeting with the OCAC [Otis Civilian Advisory Council], where he did a presentation on how FAWNS [Facts about Wildlife and Nature Society] and MassWildlife run the Big MOE [Massachusetts Outdoor Exposition]. The OCAC agreed to be the principle organizer of the Big COD [Cape Cod Outdoors], which the Commissioner stated was ideal because the OCAC already has a relationship with the military and experience running other events at the Joint Base.

The Commissioner also reported attending a meeting regarding his priority to get crossbows out of the statutes and under the regulation of MassWildlife and the Board.

Director's Comments

Director Tisa reported that the agency had received an email from a woman who was present and wanted the agency to know that MassWildlife Northeast Wildlife District Technician Jesse Caney had helped with a very bad road accident he had come upon by chance. The writer outlined the aftermath of the accident and detailed Mr. Caney's exemplary conduct in compassionately helping the victims and coordinating with tact and professionalism the efforts of the good Samaritans who had also stopped to help. The Board members were given a copy of the laudatory email in their meeting packets.

Director Tisa also reported that it was a record year for peregrine falcons in the state, with 46 chicks and 4 adults banded this field season.

He requested that the new Chief of Wildlife Lands, Elizabeth Wroblicka, be allowed to give a short report on the accomplishments of the Realty program in the previous year; Chair Larson welcomed Ms.

Wroblicka, who reported the following projects and acreages in FY 18:

Western	13 projects 1,193 acres
Connecticut Valley	15 projects 837 acres
Central	3 projects 159 acres
Northeast	8 projects 257 acres
Southeast	7 projects 165 acres
Total FY 18	47 projects 2,779 acres
Total MassWildlife	200 conservation restrictions 217,000 acres

Noting that the other side of the Realty program is stewardship, Director Tisa asked if Fee Stewardship Coordinator Christine Chisholm and CR Stewardship Coordinator Liz Newlands could come to a fall meeting of the Board to report on their activities. Chair Larson concurred, and Vice Chair Roche asked that part of the report be about the history of conservation restrictions and their changing use and popularity over time. Ms. Wroblicka also reported plans to work with the I&E Section on WMA highlights, to showcase different ones in different parts of the state and perhaps in different agency publications.

New Business

Personnel Report (Kris McCarthy)

Associate Director of Administration Kris McCarthy submitted the following personnel report for the Board's consideration and vote:

Promotion

<u>Employee</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Location</u>
Sarah Maier	Information Manager Conservation Biologist IV	Westborough

Secretary Booth moved acceptance of the report, Mr. Winthrop seconded the motion; the vote in favor was unanimous.

State Agency Vulnerability Assessment and Priority Actions (Rebecca Quiñones)

Rivers and Streams Project Leader Becca Quiñones reported that she is the point person for climate-change-related work at MassWildlife, and has been working on climate-change issues in research and management for approximately 17 years, primarily looking at the response of aquatic ecosystems to changing conditions. Dr. Quiñones stated that she was before the Board to report on MassWildlife's input to the state's Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan. This work began when Governor Baker signed Executive Order 569, establishing an integrated climate change strategy for the Commonwealth. In the EO, state agencies were directed to complete the State Agency Vulnerability Tool, which would be used to develop priority climate adaptive actions. Dr. Quiñones became involved as the lead for MassWildlife and the coordinator for the Department of Fish and Game when DFG Chief of Staff Bob Greco reached out looking for someone to take the lead and former Director Buckley assigned the work to her.

Dr. Quiñones reported that there are five components or steps to the Vulnerability Tool: the agency's mission; the identification of critical assets and functions; the sensitivity of the assets and functions to future climate conditions; the agency's adaptive capacity; and the agency's overall vulnerability. She pointed out that the tool was really built for infrastructure, like dams, roads, etc., so there were unique challenges to applying it to statewide natural resources.

Dr. Quiñones briefly described the process, stating that there had been two EEA workshops, on how to develop core groups by division (MassWildlife, DMF, DER, etc.) and to provide resource materials to the coordinators. Then there were MassWildlife core group meetings with seven MassWildlife staff chosen from across the agency in consultation with the Director, and she noted that she reached out to the core group and others, including the Director and the Deputy Director, throughout the process. During the core group meetings, the group identified the 10 most critical assets and the 10 most critical functions of MassWildlife and ranked them as to highest vulnerability to climate change, following the methods outlined by the tool. Next came the review and analysis of the data thus generated; the filling out of the tool, which was basically a spreadsheet; and then the product was sent out for review.

After an extended discussion and analysis of the findings, Dr. Quiñones summed up the benefits to the agency, which were the internal collaborations it fostered, the experience with interdisciplinary project development, and the potential funding that could flow to the agency to implement some of the identified actions.

After a number of questions, Chair Larson and the Board members thanked Dr. Quiñones for her work on the project and her very informative presentation.

Law Enforcement Comments

Captain Anthony Khabir reported early details of a bear incident that was ongoing. He also reported 6 fatalities out of 20 boating accidents and 3 fatalities in 18 ORV accidents. He also notified the Board of a Snapping Turtle poaching case where the OLE is pursuing criminal charges.

Captain Khabir reported that the State of Wyoming was sponsoring the nation's annual EPO conference, which began the day of the meeting. He was very pleased to report that two Massachusetts EPOs were being given prestigious awards this year: Lieut. Matthew Bass was to receive the 2018 National Lifesaving Award from the fraternal group, the North American Wildlife Officers Enforcement Association, and Major Pat Moran would be awarded the 2018 Humane Enforcement Award for his work protecting marine species from poaching. The Captain also reported to the Board with regret that Lieut. Colonel Brian Perrin would be resigning as of July 31, and that the agency is conducting an internal search to fill his position.

Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Advisory Committee Report

Dr. Larson reported that he had not been able to attend the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Advisory Committee's July meeting, but he reported that the Advisory Committee's work on updates to the MESA species list is continuing. He stated that the list was distributed to the committee for comment. He also reported that longtime Chair Betty Anderson has stepped down from the Committee's chairship, citing poor health. The Chair also reported he had two new proposed members to discuss with the Commissioner. This concluded his report.

Mr. Foster asked that Southeast Wildlife District Manager Zimmer report on the details of the site tour planned for the Board members before the August meeting at the Joint Base Cape Cod. Mr. Zimmer stated that the tour will start at 9:30 a.m., from the same location as the meeting site.

Set Meeting Date

Members discussed dates for the September Fisheries and Wildlife Board meeting. Members selected September 25, 2018, 11:00 a.m., at the Connecticut Valley Wildlife District office.

Member's Comments

Mr. Winthrop, Dr. Van Roo, and Secretary Booth reported no comment.

Mr. Foster stated that he and the entire Board were looking forward to working with Director Tisa and his staff.

Mr. Sears reported he was looking forward to working with Dr. Tisa as Director.

Vice Chair Roche stated that he was really looking forward to working on the different priorities that the new Director had listed with him and with his staff. He stated that he wanted to spend time at the next meeting talking about ways for the Board to help the Director accomplish his goals.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Secretary Booth to adjourn. Seconded by Vice Chair Roche, the motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 2:05 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie Booth
Secretary

List of documents presented to the Board in its July meeting packets

July Agenda

Draft June meeting minutes for review

Personnel Report

Printed copy of email: **From:** Crystal Rose **Sent:** Saturday, July 07, 2018 1:53 PM **To:** Wildlife, Mass (FWE)

Subject: Hero employee [Jesse Caney]

Spreadsheet of Natural Heritage Fund Taxpayer Donations (1992 to 2018)