

TOWN OF HARVARD DEER MANAGEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES

***ZOOM MEETING 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm
Monday August 7, 2023***

Bob Douglas, Joe Pulido, Tom Cotton, Ben Urquhart

Bob gave the standard introduction.

July 17, 2023 meeting minutes were presented for approval.

- Bob commented that these minutes will be helpful in drafting a response to the proposed rules from the Conservation Commission.
- There was a brief conversation about who will be the future liaison from the Conservation Commission.
- Some positive discussion about the timing of our regularly scheduled meetings.
- Joe offered a minor word changes to the minutes, Tom took note and made these changes,
- Ben moved to approve as amended.
- Tom seconded.
- Minutes were approved unanimously.

A group discussion began regarding the August 3rd - Conservation Commission meeting, where additional lands were proposed to be added to the deer management program. A motion was made, but there was no second.

- Bob felt disappointed by this event and commented that this is partly about the request to prove the effect of the deer management program.
- Guest – Rob Ricker asked to speak about this meeting and said, “Felt that you were a little outnumbered.”
- Tom was in attendance at the Concom meeting and was surprised at the lack of a second, but stated that this gives us a chance to speak again.
- Joe asked for comments about the process by which the town Selectboard might approve parcels for deer hunting.
- Ben asked for clarification on whether or not we were advancing properties for inclusion in the deer management program outside of the Concom.
- Bob responded yes that it is ultimately the decision of the Selectboard.
- Joe agrees.
- Tom agrees that it does not hurt to ask.
- Ben responded that our committee is a subcommittee of the Conservation commission, to whom we report.

- Bob concluded by saying that our information and request has been shared but that it is not clear what will happen. In any case there is nothing more for us to vote on in this situation.

Hunter Information handling –

- Bob commented that we can handle this question in our reply to the Conservation Commission and that we have reached out to the local law enforcement for their input.

Qualifiers and summer scouting – anticipated fall deliverables.

- Bob asked the group to comment on where we are on our deliverables.
- Joe responded to say that we have held the qualifications over two weekends. All of the participants who attended passed their test of marksmanship.
- Joe plans to make assignments of properties by mid to late August and that he is hoping for clarity on the new properties that may or may not be included.
- When asked if there was anything else on the timeline, Joe responded that the next thing was to assign the hunters and collect any necessary information., then the creation of hunter IDs, posted signs, tree tags, and finally the hunters meeting in mid-September.

Town Meeting Article – Not on any Agenda?

New business.

Discussion on Archery qualifying procedure and frequency.

- This subject was tabled last time.
- Bob asked the Environmental Police (EPO) and is waiting to hear back but commented that in his understanding all towns use a “one and done” system, and that the Trustees of Reservation and MA Audubon follow the same practice.
- Bob commented that the Sudbury Valley Trustees have a hunter evaluation and approval every five years and that this might be a compromise.
- Joe prefers a one-time approval process.
- Tim thinks that every five years might work.
- Ben commented that periodic testing is a good idea.
- Bob concluded by saying that we should hear back from the EPOs and we tabled the conversation until then with no objection.

New interested volunteers for Deer Management

- Robb Ricker is interested in helping the DMS
- Joe asked if we are adding new members.
- Bob commented that this should be a 5 person board but that we have been 4, he will approach the Concom chairman for more info.

Other deer management related issues.

- A review of the draft proposed policies and procedures from Concom.
- Ben commented that this document requires communication with Liz as Conservation agent.
- Bob commented that we must be careful as a group to keep our work public. No one person makes policy.
- Bob asked about what information is being kept public on the hunters and that we should ask for clarification on this subject.
- Tom said that two people could be present at qualification tests, either two members of the DMS or one member and a rangemaster,
- Bob suggested that past participants could be designated as scouts.

Next meeting date discussion.

- The group considered meeting on the 14th and 21st.

No questions or comments from other attendees of the meeting.

Motion to adjourn from Tom, seconded by Joe.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:12 pm