

TOWN OF HARVARD DEER MANAGEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES

***ZOOM MEETING 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm
Monday May 24, 2023***

Bob Douglas, Joe Pulido, Tom Cotton, Ben Urquhart

Bob gave the introduction.

March 20, 2023 meeting minutes were approved without edits.

Joe remarked on that the majority of deer state-wide were taken by archery.

Motion Tom, Second Ben - Unanimous.

Candidate Sites for inclusion in the Fall hunt were discussed. Bob consulted with Stewardship.

Don discussed Warila parcel near RT 495. It is an oak area with deer trails and near existing Damon-Stephenson areas which are hunted now. It is Town land not ConCom land.

Bob mentioned new bylaw passed at town meeting that approval of hunting on Municipal Land must be granted by Select Board.

Bob recalled high grazing of winterberry showing there were deer there years ago.

Old Mill Road parcel was discussed as a candidate. Bob said it's small but could be successful like Maxant was last year. Don stated, "fair amount of deer sign there". Backs to Deven which is a "deer haven". Joe confirmed deer sign.

Stow Road Gravel Pit discussed by Don - property continues to Brown/Tripp property. *[DMS notes this statement is incorrect. The Brown and Tripp properties are not near the Town Gravel Pit.]*

Bob asked for more scouting. Bob thinks it's a good candidate.

Bob spoke with Selectmen on how to open the town properties.

Tom made a motion to forward Warila to Select Board. Ben asked question about who will approve. Advance Warila to Select Board and ConCom for approval.

Bob asked that the Gravel Pit be scouted tomorrow and reported to meeting tomorrow night.

Tom motion, Ben second unanimous. We will revisit tomorrow.

New Business - Joe is contacting hunters to see if they will return. Looking at placement of hunting team and setting up Qualifying rounds (Quals). Dates mid to late July.

Bob discussed Town Meeting Article regarding hunting on Town lands passed at Town Meeting. All municipal lands must have the approval of the Select Board to be hunted. Poachers will be able to be arrested under the new bylaw. We can add this to our posters.

Joe: Non-program hunters can just get permission from Select Board?

Bob read bylaw as approved. Bob assumes DMS is approved as we have been on designated ConCom land. Ben is not worried about hypotheticals.

Bob stated that he thought the genesis was the reaction to the two poachers caught by the police. I think he [Chief Babu] used the Boxborough hunting bylaw as a template for the Harvard bylaw.

Hunter info handling:

How do we handle info given us by hunters for presentation to EPO and HPD for vetting.

Bob read draft. Name, address, DOB, Customer ID.

Address, plate number, cell, email, land line.

All info is retained by Harvard Conservation Commission.

This lets the hunters know what information is required.

Ben voiced approval.

This document came out of good faith meeting with the Conservation Commission Chairperson.

Joe: ok with sharing info as needed. Is the ConCom gathering info from other people that use ConCom land? Is it just DMS volunteers required to give information? Is the Garden Club or Snowmobile Club required to give the same information?

Bob: I don't know.

Don: Snowmobilers register with Club and accessed by Police.

Bob: Code of Conduct states information must be kept securely.

I would like to get assurance from the town that information will be kept confidential.

Joe: Are we treated equally?

Bob: Information went to EPOs and Chief Babu for their comments, and they are ok.

Tom: Motion we forward to Commission for Consideration. Unanimous.

Bob: Will forward to ConCom chair for changes.
Note Change made.

New Volunteers: Joe: several new individuals have come forward.

Joe: Looking for ways to increase involvement. Set a number for trips to hunt. Looking at six visits in a 12-week season. Thanksgiving cut off - to open non-hunted properties.

Bob: Dr Feehan - have a cutoff point - if someone is not going out in the woods - get someone who will.

I think replacing hunters that don't show is a good idea.

Ben: Mid-stream course correction.

Don: number seems right, but not hard and fast rule. Should ask circumstances. It can't be zero.

Tom: Agree. Perhaps tough to scout in a short time.

Joe: We do encourage during scouting time to look at all properties. They may have ideas about other lands and be able to move in.

Bob: Sometimes we have footprints in the snow in December. Also, team hunting has good potential. A team of two did harvest our first doe last year.

Joe confirmed it worked well.

Action items:

- Research keeping track of cut off dates
- Scout gravel pit

Bob Thanks crew.

Bob asks if questions from guests (50:47):

Joanne Ward any questions? "Not at the moment."

Eve Wittenburg "No Comments."

Tom motion to adjourn - Joe second.

Unanimous.