

TOWN OF HARVARD DEER MANAGEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES

***ZOOM MEETING 7:00 pm – 8:00 pm
Monday August 28, 2023***

Bob Douglas, Joe Pulido, Tom Cotton, Ben Urquhart, Jessie Panek

Bob opened the meeting with the standard introduction.

Eve Wittenburg stated that Jessie Panak has joined the ConCom and DMS John Lee will take over as the non-voting Associate member as John Iacomini has left.

Joe announced date Sept 11 as hunter meeting. Bob will invite Env Police and Fish and Wildlife

Bob mentioned day time meeting with Todd Bitner of Cornell Gardens. Bob offered feedback.

Tom spoke on different methods on deer assessment of numbers mentioned by Bitner. Bob mentioned "oak sentinels" - Jessie mentioned she had heard of it.

Bob mentioned that Cornell has tried many different methods of deer control including methods including night snipers and sterilization.

Bitner had mentioned that all management is usually long term, monitoring over the long haul of 15 years or so.

Ben, the oak sentinel method can be yearly.

Bob mentioned that both Bitner and previous conversations with Quabbin managers is that they were envious of our position that we could do management with bows and arrows and not the drastic methods (snipers/shotguns). "Use every tool you can" We can do the small steps (bows).

Potential new properties:

Old Mill - Unanimous Stewardship Vote - Unanimous vote DMS

Tripp - Unanimous Stewardship Vote - Unanimous vote DMS

Tufts Scorgie Smith (Stewardship wanted more information)

Scout Osmer gave brief report. Fair amount of deer.

Joe - Stands are being set for the season.

Joe - Notifications sent to hunters, hunter meeting coming up, assignments made. Getting data from hunters. Doe tag info will come end of September. Bob mentioned information may be shared with Liz via index cards or paper.

Bob welcomed Robb Ricker to meeting.

Bob Mentioned New Bylaw allowing hunting by permission on town owned land outside of Conservation.

Stewardship approved Warilla and Gravel Pit. Bob has communicated with Erin. The Town meeting article (of which neither Land Stewardship or DMS were notified) voted required that any hunting on Town Land to have permission of the Selectmen. There is currently no process for this permission/vote.

Commissions draft policies and procedures.

Tom Shared Screen.

Bob mentioned how at the ConCom Chairman's request the DMS has voted on a procedure for sharing hunter information in a n information sheet. To our surprise this was not share with the ConCom and the ConCom came up with their own sheet "Procedures and Policies for Deer Management Subcommittee"

This is our third meeting on this.

Meetings- Next meetings Sept 11 prior to ConCom. Jessie mentioned Mondays are not ideal. Bob mentions having a 630 meeting prior to ConCom at 630 a week from Thursday.

Communication

Letter A is ok

Letter B - Bob stated he had not seen language of this nature before. All communications monitored and Bob stated he objected to it. No subcommittee has monitoring all of their communication.

Ben offered that this is communication of the Committee is copied to ConCom secretary.

Bob said this would include requests to the town hall for dump stickers as currently worded.

Jessie recommended that the language be changed "communications from the DMS committee" so it does not refer to an individual.

Eve Wittenburg, meant to streamline. Jessie: Can be clarified to specify subcommittee.

Bob Reviewed letter B - things to be reported weekly.

Some discussion on what information can hunters see, asked Joe.

Osmer: Would be interesting to see what other hunters are doing.

Letter C - We will share information with the ConCom, Bob mentioned that our document agreed to by the Conservation Chairman included - but is not included

here in this document is how it is how information we shared. We would like a way to let the hunters coming in know how their information will be used and protected and what level of safety and security they have.

(45:00) I recommend we ask for a letter D in how this information written by the Agent or ConCom on how will be handled. Some past meeting the ComCom has said in meeting it has been said to us that all information given is public knowledge - other meeting it has been said the information is secure and redacted. Bob said this is "Not a heavy lift for the town to tell us how it will be treated." Joe reiterated that it would be a good thing to have a statement how it will be protected - and possibly released under the freedom of information act. Usually, a statement of protection goes with personal protection of data information.

Tom: Good to capture how the town will store it. I know we will be asked.

Jessie: There is a place to store it - makes sense to have it at Town Hall.

I would assume there must be something standard. "Routine protections".

Bob: The commission can state their procedure. Generally, information on policeman participants is protected.

Ben: Not worried about it.

Joe: Bullet point B. Date of Birth is PII information and should be stricken. Copy of licenses, permits - change to verifications. Confirmed at range. Verification as opposed to copies. Motion made by Joe

Jessie, someone needs to check - we don't need all the actual documents just verification.

Joe, Strike DOB, change copy to verification of season stamp and antlerless permits, license plate number and get their MA number.

Note: Jessie made detailed notes.

Passes 4 to 1 with Ben objecting. "I'm tired about talking about this letter".

Equipment not in use can be kept at town hall.

Qualifying testing. Change to DMS member and a designee. DMS or chair can designate. Motion change language by Tom seconded by Joe ,
Passed unanimously.

No objection to equipment storage

Agreed to have subcommittee member and designee to staff range during tests.
Unanimous test.

Agreed on current test.

Suggested by Tom new language "Poundage checked per state regulations"
Motion by tom second by Joe - Unanimous.

Bob- Annual checklist is a work in progress.

Application materials, archery test takes place, parcels to be added, abutters notified (only town that does this).

Jessie: Is March 31 critical?

Bob: Unclear as to Commissions conclusion as there was discussion and withdrawal by proponent at ConCom.

Eve Wittenburg - sets date by which the list itself will be updated.

Jessie: Dates set by march.

Bob: Recommends we table. This was a guide Wendy and I put together.

Jessie: We can update and put in dates that of what we are aiming for, we don't need to go with the actual date. Commission is asking for the dateline to be done - the planning before march. It's a guide.

Bob: Dates are not set in stone and the actual dates may differ.

Jessie: Annual checklist shall be reviewed and updated with plans for the year before March 31. Will change every year.

Mission: We have been looking at monitoring techniques. It has been a moving target as State guidance has changed.

Wittenburg: "We will be reviewing the mission - some are outdated - Jessie and Don Richie are working on this as part of a review in a meeting that was had."

Bob: Was the meeting recorded or videotaped? Eve: No.

Joe had point on letter C.

DMS said they will defer to Don Richie and Jessica will work out language.

Bob thanked the DMS for all the time put on this.

Jessie will check notes.

(Bow poundage; and hunter information; storage of information protections)

Bob may pursue on his own more information on this.

Next meeting 630 pre meeting before ConCom

Sept 11 EPO invited for meeting

Bob thanked team for hard work on this.

Tom motion to adjourn Jessie second

Declare unanimous. 828pm.