

This is a draft copy of minutes, subject to change and approval at our next meeting.

MI State Chapter Board of Directors

National Wild Turkey Federation

January 17, 2019

Art, Pelon, President, called this conference call to order 7:00 PM. The purpose of this call is to shorten the January 19 meeting by giving some committee reports.

Committee Reports

PR and Media Jon would like more board member pictures with wild turkeys for the web site. Please visit the web site. We keep it updated and welcome input.

Habitat Enhancement Pete says due to oak wilt, we need to plant less susceptible red oak trees. We need to keep planting oaks to keep our turkeys eating acorns. Pete is ill, and will not come for the convention. We owe him immense gratitude for his tireless work with habitat in MI.

Convention Jan reports that the Core package and guns have shipped. Set up is Friday. All help is appreciated. Gary Salmon will assist with games and raffles. The board members are expected to help in some way. Thornapple Valley and Grand Valley will send helpers.

Conservation Seed Mike reports that Conservation Seed orders are in. Steve visited some food plots and reports awesome plants in Barry County. Additional seed order forms will be available Saturday at the convention.

Super Fund Mike reports that the December meeting went well. The State Chapter Super Fund balance on December 1, 2018 is over \$89,000 which includes 50% of every chapter's Super Fund (\$46,000). We will review and approve the recommendations at the convention. The chapter spreadsheets will be separated from the State Chapter spreadsheet.

Patch Program Evan reports that most everything has been transferred from Troy to him. The amount left after new patches were purchased is about \$22,700. Troy has enough money to complete some transactions, then the rest of the money will be transferred. New patches will be at the convention.

Awards and Scholarships Bert reports that the awards are set. He is accepting chapter scholarships for consideration at the state level.

NWTF Steve will offer a 6:00 PM meeting on Friday evening of the convention with pizza for mentors and all interested in R3, including the State Board.

Adjournment 7:43 PM

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January 19, 2019

Art Pelon, President, called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

We recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Tony led us in a prayer.

Roll Call and Introductions

Present Region 1: Ken Buchholtz, Chris Stewart

Present Region 2: Brian McPhail, Frank Darling, Evan Traynor

Absent Region 2: Pete Demos

Present Region 3: Art Pelon, Hugh Marx, Tony Snyder, Jan Kuhtic, Dave Godley, Phil Kuhtic, Bert VanderWeele, Jon Gray, Jonathan Edgerly, Zach Mulder, Al Bobrofsky, Mike Black

NWTF Staff: Tom Karsten, Aaron Shaughnessy, Ryan Boyer, Steve Sharp

Others present: Ryan Longanbach (Conservation Seed), Mike Kennedy (Super Fund), Al Stewart (MI DNR, NWTF Technical Rep), Ross Melinchuk (NWTF Vice President of Conservation), Sam Giese (Turkeyville Toms), Gladys St. James (Elk Country), Martha Darling (Elk Country), Mike Orzol (Huron Valley), Lee Riley (Beaver Creek), Ann Bobrofsky (Turkeyville Toms), Gary Salmon (Grand Valley), Tom Glines (NWTF Director of Development)

Correspondence, Agenda, and Minutes

Thanks for the sponsorship to the July MI Youth Hunting Education Challenge.

The NWTF will give a L.A. Dixon award to the MI State Chapter at the national convention.

Art received the Legislative Caucus calendar of events.

The minutes of the October 17, 2018 Conference Call were approved (Phil, Dave, carried).

The agenda is approved (Bert, Chris, carried).

Treasurer's Report (Tony)

In July, 2018 the checking account balance was \$28,647.93. Deposits were \$7,236.27 and expenses were \$17,224.31. The current balance is \$18,659.89. Detail is provided. The Treasurer's report is accepted (Jan, Phil, carried).

NWTF and DNR Staff Reports

Ross Melinchuk, NWTF Director of Conservation. Greetings from Edgefield. Fiscal year '19 is underway. The national convention is looking good with attendance better and hotels booked. The federal shutdown may have impacted the Secretary of Agriculture and others who plan to attend.

Thanks for the strong finish for 2018. We came from a deficit and got ahead. MI has good staff. Development is strong. The MI DNR is a great partner. Banquets are successful. MI is strong on the national scale. We will hear about renewed interest in volunteer empowerment. Our emphasis is net dollars, net efficiency and less waste.

Tom Glines, NWTF Director of Development. With 24 years of Regional Director experience behind me, I am poised to do more than ever. We found some problems from our past to fix, such as the Glassen Foundation that has been so generous in MI. Their many gifts have not been properly acknowledged. Tonight they will receive an award at the banquet.

We will be presenting some new life member pins today. Many thanks to these upper level donors: Phil and Jan, Tom and Kathy, Art, Bert, Dave, Steve Sharp, and Al Stewart. The levels have been adjusted to allow for product donation, husband-wife teams, etc.

NWTF reports some recent restructure in the field. We do not have Shawn Dickey. Darron Bohn is the Midwest DFO. The replacement Regional Director for the UP is Troy Pietrosky, a chapter leader.

Tom needs suggestions before May for participants to attend the leadership conference Oct 3-6 in Edgefield.

Two chapters have been reorganized: Gold Coast in Ludington with a banquet planned for March, and St. Joe Valley with 4 new people and an April 27 banquet.

Three recruitment meeting have resulted in 16 new committee members. Every chapter can improve. Recruit new people, make a succession plan. Volunteers need empowerment and training. Be ready for online records and online banquet registrations.

In 2020 we will have single ticket membership for banquets.

Thanks to Tom Glines, Al Stewart, Jon Gray, Phil and Jan for their work on this convention.

Aaron thanks us for selling the calendars. The response was positive. In the future, we can sell 2 sets.

We had 40,000 people attend banquets that were not members, so not in our system, which is a good reason to have single ticket sales in 2020.

Recruiting events for chapters can occur every 3 years. It is usually a no charge open house. Aaron can provide slides. Will the state Super Fund support recruitment events to invest in our future? Could we use money from the calendar profits? Across the state, it will benefit chapters, and is necessary for chapter survival and success.

The State Board needs to allocate \$2,000 in funds for chapter recruitment (Jon, Chris, carried).

Ryan thanks us for the volunteer help. In his accomplishment report, we see that the NWTF chapters in MI raised nearly \$500,000 towards the NWTF mission. The NWTF committed over \$38,500 towards over \$1,545,630 in total project costs throughout the state averaging a 40:1 match conserving over 2,122 acres. The report is the back cover of the banquet program.

Note that 2 grants were awarded in October for \$422,000. Combined with NWTF and 15 partners, habitat work will be done in 11 counties. We have 3 active agreements with the USFS that started with the Karner Blue butterfly.

Turkey Tracts are placed in 3 locations. This spring we hope to place more with the help of state and local chapters, including local support from stores, hotels, and restaurants.

Three new awards were created by NWTF geared towards the SHT2 goals.

Ryan has an account of all special funding, including money and acres impacted.

Steve reports that the first 3-year commitment for R3 is completed. The program will continue. 90-95% of funding comes from sources outside NWTF. The DNR is committed, Glassen Foundation supports, along with national sponsors including Cabela's and Yeti.

The R3 purpose is still misunderstood at times. It is intended for adult new hunters, mentored, then encouraged to include a family lifestyle change with regular hunting experiences. Youth, women's, and disabled events are great, but they usually do not result in a continuation of regular hunting experiences with social support, knowledge of how to hunt, and where to go. Recruitment includes creating awareness and interest, then a trial of shooting and/or a mentored hunt with a positive experience. Retention continues the support with more variety of hunting and continued contact with the mentees and other new hunters. Reactivation calls back hunters lapsed because of disability, access, or job changes, and tries to reduce barriers and provide social support.

The Call to Action Plan is vital, outlined in the October 2018 meeting minutes. Steve provided a list of Learn to Hunt and State Park events, and emphasized the need for help, since a team is needed for each event. Each shooting event at the state parks should be done entirely by the local chapters.

Steve loves this job, but needs an exit strategy. This program is too important to slow down!

Al Stewart reports that the Turkey Tracts are successful.

The new Executive Director of the MI DNR is Daniel Eichinger. He was involved with MUCC in the past, has worked for the DNR, and was a government staffer.

When we consider regulation changes, we keep in mind the goal of the spring hunt: to maximize hunting opportunity, provide a quality hunt, 60% hunter satisfaction, low interference, and success rates above 20% based on the survey. The goal of the fall hunt is to maintain or reduce turkey numbers with similar quality ratings.

The tentative timeline for fall turkey regulations are: January and February regional discussions, February 18 recommendations to Al, March 4 information to Wildlife Division Russ Mason, March 18 fall turkey units, dates, and license quotas WCO (Wildlife Conservation Orders) due for executive signing, April 11 WCO to NRC, and May 9 WCO to NRC for action.

The tentative timeline for spring turkey regulations are: July and August regional discussion, August 12 recommendations due to Al, September 6 information to Wildlife Division Chief Mason, September 16 units, and quotas WCO for executive signing, October 10 WCO to NRC for information, and November 14 WCO to NRC for action.

Budget Committee (Tony)

We plan to send a select group from the state to the NWTF conference in October, so we need to check the Outreach account for available funds.

We will combine the State Convention and State Banquet in one column (Dave, Phil, carried). Habitat Enhancement will be left alone since tree planting is likely.

The budget report for the 2018 year shows our reductions in expenses, with \$10,900 allowed but not spent out of our \$19,275 budget.

Rules and Regulations (Hugh)

In Al Stewart's report the timelines for regulation changes are outlined.

Discussion on turkey regulations. The possibility of 3 seasons instead of 4 doesn't bother us. We are not opposed to turkey hunting from tree stands. The DNR is neutral, so may allow that.

This is the 5th cycle of our 3-year regulation cycle. In MI we can legally harvest more turkeys than in any other state, including leftover licenses. Even with more liberal regulations and many barriers eliminated, we are still losing hunters.

In December, the legislature authorized \$260,000 for pheasant releases. The DNR will distribute this money to hunt preserves for pheasant releases using state game areas. The DNR will evaluate this for future renewal. Participation will increase in State Game areas, and increase hunter satisfaction. 6,000 rooster pheasants, raised by game breeders, will be released in 10-15 areas during the regular pheasant season in October and December. MUCC brokered this because clubs came forward and made a request. The process in local club to state level. The goal is to bring back pheasant hunting. The pheasant hunting includes habitat, R3 and youth opportunities.

Conservation Seed (Ryan)

Buckwheat was new this year. We will eliminate one of the MI Mixes next year.

Chapter orders totaled 40 bags of sunflower (\$35), 543 bags of corn (\$35), 119 bags of oats (\$11), 200 bags of soybeans (\$30), 25 bags of MI Mix #1 (\$30), 130 bags of MI Mix #2 (\$30), 407 bags of Green Fire (\$25), and 116 bags of buckwheat (\$30). Total seed fee \$46,019.00.

Note that only the corn comes from NWTF, paid out of Super Fund. When the seed is paid by chapters, the money gets back to SF, then to NWTF. Seed pick up dates are April 6 and 7. A notice will be sent.

Super Fund (Mike Kennedy)

We reviewed the chapter Super Fund recommended allocations. The State Chapter is listed on a separate page. Note that the 50% of chapter's Super Fund was \$46,624.00. The state chapter budget is already reduced by 50%. The state scholarship amount is \$2,500. The Focus Project is \$16,357.00. The total SF amount for the State Chapter is \$48,561.77. Next year in December the budget will be made when the 50% number is known.

We approve the committee recommendations for Super Fund (AI, Phil, carried).

Mike will wait for State Board approval before sending our SF requests to NWTF. Delay for the chapters will be minimal.

State Board Positions and Assignments

The Director positions up for renewal now are Jan, Pete, Ken, Phil, Jonathan, and AI. Pete decided not to take another term at this time. This leaves a gap in Region 2 and a representative at MUCC. Except for Pete, all will renew. AI wished to be replaced by a younger person if there is interest.

Ryan Longanbach is interested in the Region 2 position. We have no other nominations. Ryan is nominated and accepted (Dave, Phil, carried).

Pete is thanked for his many years of service on the Habitat Enhancement Committee and serving as our representative at MUCC. If someone is interested in the MUCC position, please talk to Art. A member needs to attend the Wildlife Committee meetings to represent the NWTF. Brian is seeking more information.

Positions are renewed for another term for Jan, Ken, Phil, Jonathan, and Al (Bert, Dave, carried).

Committee assignments were reviewed and changed.

Old Business

The State Chapter NWTF Bylaws were approved with no changes.

The glass case for the turkey mount at the Glassen Foundation building will be completed in 2-3 weeks.

New Business

We need to complete a sound system for use when multiple banquets are on the same night. Cost is expected to be about \$600.00. We will spend up to \$600 (Evan, Al, carried).

A new R3 trailer will be purchased. 2 bids are in, need a third. The State Chapter will pay 25%, estimated to be about \$1,100.00 (Jonathan, Dave, carried). The trailer will transfer to state inventory and be stored at the Plainwell DNR office. The graphic wrap is about \$1500 more, MI DNR to provide.

We will support the Fort Custer Legislative Hunt every other year, since it's a struggle on election year. We will contribute this year because we need to keep this hunt.

MI Turkey Tracts – 3 kiosks are made, 2 ready for delivery before April 1. One goes to Holly, others to Lapeer, Port Huron, Maple River, and Manistee. Jonathan may have a storage location.

We will continue to support the 2019 Legislative Caucus. Ryan will attend this event in May at the Capital Sportsmen's League. We will purchase 100 knives for about \$240.00.

The Pure Michigan drawing is done. We need someone to attend the presentation in February at the NRC. We will give vests, patches, and calls for about \$400.00. As the first donor, we make this presentation at the Lansing Center. Chris or Jonathan will attend.

The IN State Board approved a joint board meeting with us. They have a Ft. Wayne location at the Isaac Walton League. The cost is \$250 with trap shooting available. The dates are July 12-14, with arrival on Friday, habitat day and hospitality. Saturday, separate board meetings, then a collaboration session. After that, Saturday dinner and

sporting clays. Sunday breakfast and departure. Ryan is our contact for now. For this joint meeting with the IN State Board, we need commitments to attend. Jonathan and Bert cannot attend.

For the April and May meetings on turkey hunts, someone from this board needs to attend. Please talk to Art if you can.

Tony is checking on our MUCC membership status.

Guest Lee Riley thanks us for the scholarship awarded to his local chapter member. He brought a donation to the live auction from artist R. Lawrence. He suggested that Rod Lawrence should be recognized for his many donations.

Gary Salmon of Grand Valley will do the state turkey calling contest again.

The committee for the banquet needs help with the games and raffles tonight.

We are on our 6th year of the Strategic Plan. We need to review and update this plan and make adjustments. We are on track to achieve our ambitious goals. Many barriers have been addressed, especially access. We will consider a separate date for interested board members to discuss.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn (Jan, Dave, carried) at 2:00 PM.

The next meeting is July 12-14 in Ft. Wayne, IN.

Submitted by Jan Kuhtic, Secretary

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