

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

**MI State Chapter National Wild Turkey Federation
Board of Directors Meeting**

August 29, 2009

The meeting was called to order by Herb Lorentz, President, at 9:20.
We recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Introductions and Roll Call

Present Region 1: Roger Shoemaker (Vice President), Ken Buchholtz
Present Region 2: Herb Lorentz (President), Pete Demos
Present Region 3: Troy Hopkins (Treasurer), Jan Kuhtic (Secretary), Phil Kuhtic, Gary Salmon, Bert VanderWeele, Tony Snyder, Sam Giese, High Marx
Present NWTF National Board: Al Bobrofsky, Present NWTF Staff: Steve Sharp
Absent Region 2: Craig Meredith, Absent Region 3: Gary VanDyke, Absent Past President: Mike Kennedy

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of January 17, 2009 were approved. (Pete, Phil, carried).

Treasurer's Report (Troy)

The balance of the General Fund is \$25,999.99.
The Winter Survival balance is \$639.21.
The Patch Program balance is \$90,409.84.
The Treasurer's report is accepted (Pete, Bert, carried).

NWTF Board Report (Al Bobrofsky)

Al is required by the National Board of Directors to communicate with assigned state chapters.

1. NWTF National Board of Directors and George Thornton, CEO, have used Project Tom to find out what the membership wants. A survey of 4,000 customers, including 400 lapsed members, say there is a lack of communication at the national, state, and local levels, which is true for all directions, especially from state chapters to local membership. MI memberships dropped from 11,000 to 5,500 members. Why are members not renewing? Nationally, memberships are down 28%, and again poor communications are blamed.

How will we motivate the membership to renew? Our 3 MI Regional Directors are within the top 12 in the nation. We do not want to change the Super Fund

right now. Staff at NWTF has been cut from 340 to 270. 93% surveyed say that the web site cannot be the only means of communication.

2. IRS requirements for 501.c.3 organizations are being reviewed at NWTF. Revised bylaws and guidelines are drafted by the National Board, but not yet approved. We have a draft copy to review. Eventually, our adoption will be required. Local chapters will get information in time. Each chapter has a federal tax identification number, listed on financial reports from NWTF. The State Chapter is # 57-056-4993. Any chapter may ask Steve Sharp for their chapter id.
3. Regrettably, the NWTF relationship with Mexico has deteriorated due to cultural differences. At this time it is fragile, and may even be discontinued.
4. The NWTF has introduced one magazine, Turkey Country, which replaces the Turkey Call, Women in the Outdoors, and Wheelin' Sportsmen magazines. One communication from NWTF serves all these groups. JAKES and Extreme JAKES still remain a separate magazine.
5. The MI State Chapter sincerely thanks Al for dedicated service on our behalf at the national level.

Regional Director Report (Steve Sharp)

Ken Buchholz, Randy Showalter and Craig Albright (DNR Biologist) are working with tree projects in the UP. They have kits of 25 container crab trees, shelters, stakes, weed mats, and a slow release fertilizer for \$107. Any local chapter who wants to help out can use the green form, attention Greg Boozer, for this "Adopt a Flock", helping long term Northern Michigan winter survival. Ken has other projects in his area. They recommend planting 8 foot trees protected by fence, in cooperation with local nurseries. Northern MI chapters are focusing their planting projects near winter roosting sites.

The MI Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus is September 22, 2009 at the Capital. Al Bobrofsky and Steve Sharp will represent us. We will have a display of the successful turkey patch project. The \$90 booth fee will be paid (Tony, Gary, carried). More members are welcome to attend.

Chapters are encouraged to come up with a JAKE of the Year. Try to identify an outstanding child, then mentor this child (fish, hunt), make him/her a committee member, and maybe a future leader. Announce this honor at your banquet, and put the family at a reserved table. The State Chapter should also choose a JAKE of the Year from the chapter winners, similar to our chapter scholarship award. The State Chapter will adopt this concept right away. The Awards Committee, along with Sam Giese, Outreach Chair, will work on the guidelines, and see that the chapters are informed. (Pete, Roger, carried).

For the Lt. Governor's turkey hunt, the state scholarship winner was first choice, but this did not happen. Steve chose another scholarship winner, and had a good hunt. We should try to include the State Chapter President next year, have a dinner, and

give some hats or some merchandise/clothing. A budget could be set at the January meeting.

The power point projector that was approved last January should be purchased soon for Tom Karsten's use. Steve can recommend a specific product.

For the RDs, trailers are covered by their car insurance. NWTF merchandise is insured by NWTF. Super Fund does not supply RD sound systems, so the user insures it. Individual insurance should be purchased for what the RDs have, and they may ask for reimbursement from this chapter.

An inventory of available equipment needs to be published so chapters know what is available. The RDs need to help make the list, then the board will be informed, and in turn the chapters will be informed.

The Patch Program monies should replace the storage unit that was burned. (Tony, Roger, carried)

Steve is the designated RD to oversee the State Chapter. The other RDs are not here because their travel budget is very limited, and this meeting cannot count for time worked. Can RDs or volunteers turn in travel expense statements for reimbursement? Shall we approve funds to have them attend? We will communicate our disapproval of this limitation to the national board. If this does not change before the January meeting, we will re-address at that time.

The Board went to a closed session for personal reasons at 11:15 (Herb, Phil, carried).

The Board reopened the general session at 11:40 (Jan, Tony, carried) .

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Fundraising Committee (Troy, Ken):

Troy reported on the Patch Program. The database is up to date. The bulk mailing for the new patch is done. The "unique" 2010 patch is in the works. Patch expenses are \$8,686.75, revenue \$37,773.92 for a total profit of \$29,087.17

The DNR Turkey Patch checkbook is for DNR projects, belongs to the DNR, but the checkbook says NWTF. Is this a violation of our 501.c.3? Need to spend down this account. Our biologists certainly have projects to recommend, or maybe each chapter could apply to use this for conservation projects. We are an extension of the NWTF as a state chapter, and subject to IRS requirements. The Regional Directors and chapter presidents will receive information shortly from NWTF regarding IRS requirements. The Executive Board will discuss this in more detail with Al Stewart.

Ken reported on the State Chapter Knives for Ron Hopkins. There are less than 20 of the 2008 knives left, and less than 20 of the 2009 knives left. For 2010, a Hess knife has been chosen. Should we order less? We will give information about the knives in the newsletter, hoping to sell the 2008 and 2009 knives.

Winter Survival (Pete, Ken):

Pete reports that the gun raffles are going well. Chapters may ask for a raffle gun through Pete, Ken, or Craig. Steve needs to project NWTF guns each June for the following year, or chapters may buy locally. Use Winter Survival forms, and send reports to the Winter Survival committee. Proceeds from one raffle supports the next raffle, ideally.

Crab apple trees are being improved all the time. The trees we consider are checked by biologists for use in northern MI zones. Tree shelters should be cut in half to keep rabbits out, then use fence to protect the trunks. If a trunk is kept covered too long, it won't support its top. Support it at 20 inches high, fence around it, but most of all, start with a bigger tree.

Ken reports that with the co-pay, the people are feeding turkeys on their own money and are encouraged to plant trees for the long term benefit. The Deer Range Improvement Project is cooperating with NWTF for tree planting.

A northern district meeting/ fund raiser/ golf outing will be held at a resort in Hillman in 2010. The Winter Survival Committee requests state board sanctioning for this event. (Gary S, Troy, approved.)

Some Conservation Officers are zealous about turkey feeding/deer feeding infractions, with local infringements ticketed. Our Winter Survival committee will contact Dean Molnar to discuss feeding enforcement. Turkey feeding suffers from the CWD fallout and resulting laws.

Winter Survival takes from General Fund for temporary help, only as needed, as in the past.

Rules & Regulations (Hugh):

Hugh sent a letter to MI DNR with recommendations with a copy to all the board. The committee recommends the following to the MI DNR:

- 1 keep the same spring hunt,
- 2 move the start of the fall hunt to Sept. 15,
- 3 a two bird fall tag in areas of SW MI,
- 4 move the ZZ boundary north of M-20 to include Mecosta, Oceana, and Newaygo counties,
- 5 support a youth hunt before the regular season opens,
- 6 change the price of regular youth license to \$1,
- 7 issue leftover ZZ permits as a second bird tag, and

- 8 explore the possibility of turning 234 into an unlimited hunt.

Super Fund (Roger):

Roger reports that the Green Forms are now electronic forms, so all chapters need to know this. In the past, the committee would meet in December to sign the forms, then forward them to NWTF after board approval. By committee request, we agreed to authorize Mike Kennedy, committee chair, to sign the forms on behalf of the President, Al Stewart, and Randy Showalter after their review. The requests are due by Dec. 1, by email from chapters. These should be sent to Mike at mike.kennedy@greenstonefcs.com. We will still have the spreadsheet. Each request must be accurate, with all the details complete.

The committee recommends the Super Fund expenses, and the State Board has never objected to committee recommendations, although they give their official approval at the January meeting. We agreed to skip the board approval (Bert, Gary S., carried), which means that the transfer of funds happens faster. Steve, Tom, and Keith can help chapters with electronic forms.

The spreadsheet can be sent by email for review by the board after the committee approves it. Roger will print and send to board members if requested.

Conservation Seed (Herb):

Herb and Dave reported that this past spring our costs were only \$6.99 per acre planted. The orders were fewer than last year. Total acres planted 3,945, for a cost of \$27,590. The mix is as follows: Corn 925, Sunflower 299, Oats 426, Soybeans 263, Corn Mix 272, Soybean Mix 574, Total 2757 bags.

To avoid confusion, we should change the name, since it is not the same as NWTF Conservation Seed.

The MI Conservation Seed planting program is an example for the nation. The State Chapter pays half, and the member pays half the cost. Directions for planting and fertilizing are included and must be followed.

Outreach Committee (Sam):

Sam reports that several chapters cooperate on the Ft. Custer turkey hunt for youth in the spring. Several local chapters support the Shiawasee deer hunt for the disabled. Bluewater and Lapeer support a turkey hunt for the disabled, and Turkeyville Toms have a fall turkey hunt for disabled veterans.

Extra state knives could be made available for outreach events if they don't sell to individuals or chapters.

Convention Committee (Jan):

Jan reports that the annual convention will be held at the Holiday Inn, Big Rapids on January 15 and 16, 2010. We have meeting rooms for the board meeting, hospitality, seminars, and a large space for the dinner and auctions. They kept the

hotel room rate at \$89. We will feature a hospitality area for Friday evening with snacks and a bar. Saturday the board meet 9:00 till 1:00. One seminar with Dr. James Earl Kenamer, NWTF Chief Conservation Officer and Al Stewart, DNR Upland Game Bird Specialist will be 2:00 till 3:30. The banquet opens at 4:00 with a 5:30 dinner. Awards, auctions, and raffles fill the agenda. We have secured a live band that plays a great variety of music for our listening and dancing pleasure. Ticket price is \$35 each. Publicity will be by a mailing to chapter officers and banquet chairs, the MUCC member page, the web site, and possibly others (MI Outdoor News). Our partners will be acknowledged, but we will emphasize and honor the volunteers all evening. We are working on a hospitality plan.

Awards (Bert):

Bert reports that award nominations are due November 1 for Outstanding Service, Conservation Officer, and Corporate Sponsor, August 1 for the national Lapham award, December 1 for local scholarships, January 1 for state scholarship. If there is a candidate for the Doug Johnson award, send that to Bert also. Updated forms, available on the web page, need to get to chapters. All award nominations may be sent to Bert, committee chair. The Ken Buccholtz nomination for the Lapham award will be resubmitted with new information.

Old Business

Al Bobrofsky is not re-running for the NWTF National Board of Directors. How can we keep a representative from MI? They are required to attend 3 board meetings at Edgefield (one is convention), with their own travel expense. This is a volunteer position.

In January, we voted to approve money for the turkey patch display at Jay's in Clare. Who is taking care of it? Herb or Troy will check with Keith, Dale Elshoff, and Al Stewart.

Ken reminds us that for our banquets, we should be charging individual prices, not "couples" prices, since we need to maximize the memberships.

New Business

Communication solutions by the State Chapter Board:

- 1 The President or Vice President will respond to phone or email messages. We all understand job changes or personal problems that can interfere with our communications, but it must happen.
- 2 A calendar will be created and communicated by Jan, to include award deadlines, Conservation Seed orders and pick-ups, board meetings, green forms, scholarships, and nominations for elections.
- 3 Our standard board meeting dates will be the third Saturdays of January (or at the convention), July, and September (Phil, Troy, carried).

- 4 Meeting location in January is the convention site, July is at the Johnson Center in Cadillac (coordinated with the chapter president's meeting), and September at Jay's (if available).
- 5 Local chapters will receive communications from the state chapter. Each chapter will receive the minutes using bulk mail, with postage requested from Super Fund. There will be a newsletter in October, created by Jan, to include the calendar, patch information, elections information, board member contact information, and a reference to the web site. The convention information and a summary of the minutes will be included.
- 6 The general membership will receive communication about ballots and elections. Nominations should be requested in July, back by August, announced in September. Election ballots should be out in November and returned in December. Voting can be by a web page ballot or by return mail, with the results announced in January.
- 7 Each chapter will be assigned a board representative, who will communicate at least quarterly by phone or email. Phil and Steve will coordinate this, to be done in 30 days.

These resolutions are a commitment to communications by all of us, for the benefit of our membership (Gary S., Pete, carried)

Appointments: There are 3 vacancies on the Board now: the positions of Jason Hyska and Sue Tabor from Region 3, and Tim Miller from Region 2.

We have known interest from 3 individuals in Region 3. Since all of them are well qualified, we used a secret written ballot to state our preferences. The President announced the appointment of Dave Godley to fill the 2009-2011 term, and Frank Brazynetz to fill the 2008-2009 term. The board supports these appointments (Phil, Roger, carried).

An election will not be held in January, since no names were received with the necessary signatures. It is noted with apology that proper notice was not given for the August nomination deadline. Those eligible for term renewal are Herb, Ken, Pete, Troy, Phil, Hugh, and Ron. All of these agreed to accept another term on the board. The executive board is elected in January.

Steve reports that the MI State Chapter received an award for being #10 in the nation for net dollars raised. Herb received the award on behalf of the membership.

The Deer Spectacular, a major sports show in February at the Lansing Center, is an opportunity to showcase our organization and sell some knives and raffle tickets for a winter survival gun. We will include patches and give information. The State Chapter will pay \$400 for the booth (Bert, Ken, carried). This show will be managed by our PR committee. Steve will be there with Frank and other volunteers.

We need a display for the state chapter to use at major sports shows, similar to the ones used at Beards and Spurs and Huron Valley. Steve will get ideas and estimates and this will be discussed in January.

Roger and Ken need an overnight stay to attend board meetings. We agreed to pay for one night from our Super Fund (Tony, Jan, carried). All of us drive, some long distances, so consider the price of attendance for all members. Discussion is tabled.

The State Chapter has maintained 5 Star status. Now the criteria have changed. This is being discussed at the national level. For now, we will commit to 5 Star status. A new form is used, which saves us money.

Gary S. notes that our hunting rights are being attacked more than ever. We must communicate with our Congressmen. We should be promoting ourselves, and reporting what we do in our communities. We should be actively supporting the existing conservation groups. We need to motivate our hunters and overcome apathy. Doing nothing amounts to going against ourselves. We already have a clearly expressed mission. The NWTF again made a decision to support the US Sportsmen's Alliance. For now, what specific action can we take as an individual or a group? If we decide on a billboard, NWTF would help with graphics, and Herb knows a billboard owner. For now, explore the idea, get bids, and identify our audience (probably Wayne and Oakland Counties).

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned 3:15pm. (Phil, Roger, carried).
Jan Kuhtic, Secretary