

**Michigan State Chapter Board of Directors  
National Wild Turkey Federation  
January 20, 2018**

Art Pelon, President, called the meeting to order at 9:05 AM.  
Gary Salmon, Vice President, led the Pledge of Allegiance.  
Jan Kuhtic, Secretary, led an opening prayer.

**Roll Call and Introductions**

Present Region 1: Ken Buchholtz  
Present Region 2: Pete Demos, Brian McPhail, Frank Darling, Evan Traynor  
Present Region 3: Art Pelon, Gary Salmon, Tony Snyder, Janice Kuhtic, Dave Godley, Phil Kuhtic, Bert VanderWeele, Hugh Marx, Jon Gray, Jonathan Edgerly  
Absent Region 3: Zach Mulder  
NWTF Staff Present: Tom Karsten, Regional Director; Aaron Shaughnessy, Regional Director, Steve Sharp, R3 Coordinator, Jason Lupardus, Conservation Field Manager  
Others Present: Al Stewart, MI DNR Game Bird, DNR/NWTF Technical Rep.; Al Bobrofsky, former NWTF National Board, Turkeyville Toms; Ryan Longanbach, Conservation Seed, Flatlanders; Mike Kennedy, Super Fund and Conservation committees; Pat McFadden, Indiana State Board; Ann Bobrofsky, Turkeyville Toms; Lee Riley, Beaver Creek; Vicky Kennedy; Sandy Snyder, Turkeyville Toms; Michelle Pelon, Flat River; Martha Darling, Gladys St. James, Bobby Thompson

**Correspondence, Agenda, and Minutes**

Art received numerous compliments from the national board for the MI State Chapter hosting the NWTF summer meeting.

Art received an invitation to the MUCC Presidents' Day at the Kellogg Center for the presidents of all the member conservation groups, and will attend on February 9, 2018.

A national convention for trappers will be held in Escanaba on July 26-28, 2018. We are invited to attend and volunteer our help.

The July 15, 2017 minutes were approved (Dave, Bert, carried) with the following correction: (end of Super Fund paragraph) "Motion to allocate 50% of each chapter's annual Super Fund for the State budget (MI Focus Initiative funding will be included in the State budget) and cut the State Chapter Super Fund expenses by 20%."

The September 2017 Conference Call minutes were approved (Pete, Dave, carried).

The agenda was approved with 1 addition: New Business, Shiawassee Hunt

### **Treasurer's Report (Tony)**

As of September 20, 2017 the checking account balance was \$14,993.17. Deposits were \$881.78. Checks written for \$4,436.98. The balance on January 20, 2018 is \$11,437.97. A check will be written for \$8,833.50 to NWTF for Conservation Seed, so the balance after that will be \$2,604.47. The detail of deposits and expenses was provided. The Treasurer's report is approved (Bert, Dave, carried).

### **Budget (Tony)**

The Audubon Society has joined many other conservation groups, including the NWTF, to make a beautiful calendar filled with information, event dates, etc. They have accepted hunting as an aspect of conservation. To get events in this calendar for 2019, they must be in by April. Suggested price for calendar purchase is \$5. We will use a calendar tonight for a raffle. This is one new item in our budget for \$450.

The Regional Directors have been approaching all chapters about the 50% of chapter Super Fund going to the State Chapter for 2019.

The State Chapter will reduce our budget by 20% for 2019. One change will be the state scholarship amount awarded. It has been \$2,500 for first place and \$1,000 for second place. In 2019 it will be \$1,500 for first place and \$1,000 for second place (Phil, Pete, carried).

Gary will reduce the amount requested for the State Calling contest by \$500.

The budget will remain at \$24,275 for 2018 (Pete, Ken, carried).

### **NWTF and DNR Reports**

Jason thanks us for our commitment to the NWTF and its mission. Many staffing changes are happening at headquarters. The VP of Conservation position is available since Dr. James Earl Kennamer retired. The R3 growth is aggressive, with a coordinator needed under Mandy Harling, and 2 more staff positions.

We have a new Development Officer, Matt Phenol.

The NWTF national convention is already ahead of last year.

In the conservation arena, the future depends on R3 and STH, STH. NWTF staff is commended for its successes. We are over halfway to our 10-year goal.

Ryan (by Jason) reports 6,808 acres of conservation work is done, 2500 acres from the seed program. No access projects are planned for this year. Nationally, 2,276,231 acres have been conserved, 440,000 acres of access created, and 980,196 hunters were recruited.

The newest Turkey Tract on the Flat River State Game Area was unveiled in August of 2017. The next kiosk will be on the Barry State Game Area in the spring of 2018.

Thanks and praise for the National Board visit last summer, hosted by Art Pelon, the State Board, DNR, and many others.

Tom thanks Jason for coming to this meeting and convention.

Thanks to our banquet chairs, Jan and Phil Kuhtic, thanks to Jon for preparing the power point for tonight, and thanks to all who helped set up the banquet yesterday.

Consistent with policies and protocol, always make sure to use ladder of command; for example, converse with Art first, then the RD, then NWTF. We may have public relations persons here tonight, who may request interviews.

Ryan is working on an accomplishment report to show us graphically what has been done.

Aaron and Tom are restructuring the District Director program this summer. Chapter numbers are stable now, but new growth is needed. The state lost 23 chapters due to the recession and other factors. New ideas are always welcome for chapter activities. A mentor might reorganize a chapter in Dowagiac. The RDs are willing to have recruitment meetings for chapters to gain committee members.

Thanks to the MI DNR – we are together on our mission. Thanks to all of us who keep moving the needle forward.

Aaron will head MI calendar raffles. We can make \$20,000 if 1,000 are sold, with money going back to benefit the local and state chapters. We hope to sell a minimum of 800 in the fall for \$50 each. A gun a week is given away by NWTF, winning numbers determined by state lottery numbers. The State Chapter will pay the printing costs to NWTF. The State will get a raffle permit and use a local FFL. Aaron will track sales. No paper work is done at the chapter level. If advertising space is sold, that could boost our income. This has been very successful in other states. Motion to start MI state calendar program, to be carried out by chapters and individuals, starting after our July meeting (Tony, Frank, carried).

West Branch chapter is re-starting and now recruiting committee members.

Steve – shares a national concern that experienced hunters are aging and not replaced. All hunters are challenged to find and mentor a new hunter age 18-40, get him/her into a local chapter, and continue to mentor in hunting and conservation. We are losing too many hunters, and in turn losing conservation dollars.

On the NWTF web site, we can register Hunter Safety student numbers. Every chapter should identify an instructor, include him/her in the chapter, and register the students. State Park events can be fun and successful in introducing people to shooting. We can gain families outside our usual sphere of influence. With the JAKES Take Aim unit, 4 people need to run it. We have a list of parks and dates for this summer with need for volunteers.

R3 events coming up: Pierce Cedar Creek April 27-28, target college age, cost \$130 includes lodging, food. Advanced turkey hunting at Yankee Springs May 11-12, cost \$25.

121 R3 events were done in 2017. The Glasson Foundation provided the trailer which holds the shotguns, clothing, blinds, and decoys in one place.

Al Stewart reports that the spring turkey hunt guides are available. Workshops are listed. We are in the middle of the 3-year stabilized regulations. Think about regulation changes, talk to your local biologists.

Ryan has been successful in acquiring competitive grants. MI DNR matches our dollars 10:1.

The National Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus was held in Traverse City this fall with a fall turkey hunt experience.

The DNR has many habitat projects and many partners. The DNR helps the R3 with Learn to Hunt, and pays some of Steve's salary.

CWD in deer will impact conservation in MI, as does finding TB in NE MI. Thankfully, we have an excellent wildlife lab at MSU. The DNR hosted the national CWD Symposium at MSU.

Russ Mason will be joining the banquet tonight.

### **Board of Directors (Art)**

The Executive Board officers are elected every two years. The present officers are: Art Pelon, President; Gary Salmon, Vice President; Tony Snyder, Treasurer; and Jan Kuhtic, Secretary. Nominations for officer positions were open, and there were no nominations. Nominations were closed (Pete, Bert, carried). Art, Gary, Tony, and Jan stated that they were willing to continue in their positions. The board accepts these officers (Pete, Frank, carried).

The committee assignments remain the same. Troy mentioned that he may want a replacement for the Patch program. Evan expressed interest.

We reviewed the terms of all the board members. We have 16 members now, but should have 18. Art is in a position to appoint members as needed with our approval. Al Bobrofsky offered to fill the vacancy in Region 3 for the 2016 to 2019 term (Bert, Jonathan, carried). Since there is a vacancy in Region 1 with no applicants and no interest found, Art appointed Chris Stewart to make the 18 member board complete (Gary, Frank, carried). The terms and members are affirmed as follows:

2016 to 2019	2017 to 2020	2018 to 2021
Buchholtz	Traynor	McPhail
Demos	Darling	Pelon
P. Kuhtic	Gray	Salmon
J. Kuhtic	Godley	Snyder
Edgerly	VanderWeele	Marx
Bobrofsky	Mulder	Stewart

### **Conservation Seed (Ryan Longanbach)**

Ryan reports that the chapters are on track for seed orders. With 38 chapters participating, we will impact 2,747 acres. A detailed report of seed bags and acres was provided.

### **Web Site, Media (Jon)**

Event reports are always welcome for the web site. We need updated pictures of board members to post.

We need to give more information from MI to our Turkey Country magazine. Pictures and stories are needed, just be sure it's presented well.

Jon is working with Steve on some R3 projects.

### **Habitat Enhancement (Pete)**

Red Oak Wilt is affecting our trees, especially in NW MI. Asking Jason and Ryan how the tree/acorns can be replaced.

In the UP, hybrid oaks were planted which replace the dead trees.

The crab apple trees are fertilized, doing well.

We used metal signs to mark our habitat project last year. Ryan has some, so obtain them from your RD at \$20 each. Jon would like a picture of the projects with a sign for the web page.

Ken reported that a habitat project is being done in Marquette with the NWTF and many other partners.

### **State Convention (Jan)**

The banquet is ready for tonight. We have 160 meals planned. 15 chapters donated \$100 and 5 others gave us a product or service. Thanks to those who set up on Friday, and thanks to those who socialized together last night. We trust that every board member will actively contribute at this banquet.

We have completed our 3 years of contracts here. For next year, we will check locations at Tustin, Roscommon, and here at Big Rapids.

### **Super Fund (Mike Kennedy)**

The Board applauds Mike for his time and effort spent on our Super Fund.

The total Super Fund contributions are \$86,630.96. Requests were \$94,853.00 with \$68,637.00 approved.

As of December 1, 2017, the MI Super Fund balance was \$64,917.29. \$3,719 is “overspent” and taken from next year, and we realize the fluid nature of this money coming in and going out.

Problems: Three things are not funded: the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of a 3-year commitment to fund Ryan’s salary, or \$10,000.00; the legislative Hunt (as yet not requested or approved) at \$500; and the \$1,500 to send the winning Conservation Officer to the national convention.

Solution: Should we transfer money to pay for all or some of this? Can we use the patch checkbook, intended for wildlife management, to fund all or some of this?

Al will re-visit the patch checkbook purpose and contract with Mike and Art.

This shortfall can be covered next year because the chapter contribution changes from 20% to 50%.

The Super Fund committee recommendations are accepted (Phil, Brian, carried). A detailed handout is provided.

### **Patch Report**

In 2017, expenses for 8,000 patches was \$9,596.17. Revenue was \$25,142.02. Total profit was \$15,545.85.

Thanks to Ron and Troy for managing this patch program for many years. Evan, with Brian, offered to continue the work.

### **Rules and Regulations (Hugh)**

We are in a 3-year cycle of regulations. Notice that the guide states, “Stalking with a handheld decoy/silhouette is illegal”, discussed here previously.

MUCC has a proposal to change the ZZ hunt to 6 weeks. We re-state that no changes are needed. We believe that our input has value because of our long history being the turkey “experts” with science- based regulations and experience that stand up to scrutiny over time. The turkey hunter work group model shows that the present system works. Pete, representing the NWTF, will go on record opposing this proposal.

The chair of the NRC is now Vicky Ponce, who will join us tonight at the banquet.

A reminder to be clear when stating personal feelings or commenting as an NWTF board member.

### **Awards (Bert)**

Please turn in your state scholarship award nominations to Bert by Feb. 1.

Many awards are ready to be given tonight. Thanks to Art and Jon for all your work.

### **Old Business**

Al – The National Sportsmen’s Caucus met in Traverse City. They enjoyed field trips showing GEMS, turkey habitat work, and fishing. Al gave a formal presentation.

Thanks to some chapters who contributed \$500 for this event. They stated that this was the best national event they ever experienced.

Discussion about the 50% SF change in chapter contributions. This will be discussed with the RD and every chapter for a clear understanding.

Aaron got a sound system that we will use today.

### **New Business**

Jason will update our state strategic plan. When ours was first created, it was used as a national model. Art, Jason, Tom, and others will attempt to draft this before our July meeting.

NWTF sent a template for reviewing our state bylaws. Now, 50 states have 50 different bylaws. We will compare ours to this new template, and make amendments as needed. Al Bob offered to help the Executive Board. The National Board must see our changes before action is taken. Local chapter bylaws follow the state bylaws. NWTF is responsible for financial oversight.

Pete needs a position paper from us to present at the June MUCC meeting about the proposed change to the ZZ turkey season. If we lobby in June, it should not make it to the NRC. We will list reasons we do not approve this proposal: findings of turkey work group, safety, increased success rate, fairness, more hunters afield, elimination of some hunts, not affecting quotas, and scientific management. Pete, Art, Hugh, and others will meet in Clare to prepare, and will be present at the June MUCC meeting. This recommendation to not approve this Proposed Resolution #03 of the MUCC is supported by this board (Pete, Bert, carried).

The Ft. Custer Legislative Hunt is May 7. Jonathan is working on buildings. Sen. Mc Gregor, co-chair of the Sportsmen's Caucus, is getting more participants. Learn to Hunt equipment is available, and mentors are set.

The MI legislative Sportsmen's Caucus will meet May 9 (tentative date) for an afternoon outdoors with dinner at the Capital Area Sportsmen's League. Help is needed to set up targets, furnish guns, targets, and demonstrate turkey hunting for 150 participants. We dug into our pockets and came up with enough money to pay for some prizes (knives).

On March 15 the winners of the Pure MI Hunt will be announced. 3 turkey vests will be donated from chapters.

The MI turkey tracts kiosk for Barry County State Game Area will be placed at the North Country Trail parking lot on M179. The signage will be completed in April, as well as partner and sponsor commitments. The next kiosk will be in the east central state.

An unnamed foundation from Missouri will give the NWTF \$100,000 if we can make \$100,000 in net profits over last year between now and the end of the national convention. This may include special raffles, commitments for upper level memberships, major donors, corporate partners, etc. Tom and Jason have more details. We have a letter given to us from Dave Mahlke at NWTF.

Vicky Kennedy gave us a detailed report on the Shiawassee Non-Ambulatory Deer Hunt supported by the state Super Fund. With 864 hunts to date and over 31,000 volunteer hours, this annual event has touched numerous lives with a memorable hunting experience even with disabilities. In the near future some platforms, blinds, and heaters will need to be replaced. Funding ideas are welcome, since there are no reserve funds left. She thanked the MI State Chapter and local chapters for the support over the years with money and volunteer hours, and invited all of us to participate. Lee thanked her for the scholarship given to an applicant in his area. The 2018 hunt is November 15-18.

### **Adjournment**

The next meeting is July 21, 2018 at the Rose Lake Glasson Building (tentative location).

Motion to adjourn (Jan, Evan, carried). We adjourned at 1:40 PM.

Submitted by Jan Kuhtic, Secretary

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