

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
July 21, 2018**

Art Pelon, President, called the meeting to order at 9:16 AM.

Art led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Tony, Treasurer, led us in an opening prayer.

Roll Call and Introductions

Present Region 1: Chris Stewart

Absent Region 1: Ken Buchholtz

Present Region 2: Pete Demos, Frank Darling, Evan Traynor

Absent Region 2: Brian McPhail

Present Region 3: Art Pelon, Tony Snyder, Jan Kuhtic, Dave Godley, Phil Kuhtic, Hugh Marx, Jon Gray, Zach Mulder, Al Bobrofsky

Absent Region 3: Bert VanderWeele, Jonathan Edgerly

NWTF Staff: Tom Karsten, Aaron Shaughnessy, Ryan Boyer

Guest: Mike Black

Correspondence, Agenda, and Minutes

Senator Schmitt thanked us for the Fort Custer Legislative Hunt.

Gary Salmon resigned as our Vice President and Region 3 Director. He has been on the State Board since the 1980's, has served in many capacities. We accept his resignation with sadness. He remains a NWTF member of the Grand Valley Chapter, and will continue to coordinate the state turkey calling contest.

The minutes of January 20, 2018 were approved (Pete, Dave, carried).

The agenda is approved with one addition under New Business: the turkey mount in this lobby (Glassen Shooting Education Center).

President's report:

Plenty of trips to Lansing, Clare, the Legislative breakfast, and taking a position on the MUCC season proposals. Thankfully, the proposed changes lost its momentum, thanks to us and others. It did not even merit a vote. Many thanks to Hugh, Pete, and Art, and all who gave an opinion. We wonder how we can expand our radar to see issues like this as they arise.

The Fort Custer Legislative Hunt was great with 4 birds harvested.

Treasurer's Report (Tony)

We have \$8,833.50 from Super Fund left in the state checkbook. Any requests will be processed by Art and Ryan. For now, we will leave this in the checkbook (Pete, Hugh, carried).

The balance on January 20, 2018 was \$2,604.47. Deposits totaled \$64,514.50. Expenses

were \$38,471.04. The current balance (July 21, 2018) is \$28,647.93. Tony provided a detail of deposits and expenses.

The Treasurer's report is accepted and approved (Jon, Phil, carried).

NWTF and DNR Staff Reports

Tom reported a good banquet season with only one disappointing banquet.

The Barry kiosk is up.

Gold Coast Chapter in Ludington is reorganized.

The North Ottawa Gun Bash is August 2. We received a flier.

The Regional Directors will have District Director meetings in September or October.

They may be used to host banquets when the RD's have multiple banquets on the same date.

We need to revisit the State Board to chapter connections for better communication.

The 2019 product and guns are ordered from NWTF. The art work is scaled back. The Core Package includes 5 giclees and 3 guns. The price has not changed.

The 2018 DNR turkey patches are available.

The Legislative Hunt was well run and well received. There will likely be some benefit to the NWTF after this positive hunting experience.

The State Convention committee would appreciate some new help.

The DNR Patch Program will transition in 2019. Troy will transfer information to Evan, establish a P.O. Box, change the checkbook, move the safe, update the web site, etc.

Aaron reports that his banquet season was great, with 6 under budget and no huge deficit. Cass River had the best banquet ever, thanks to a new committee. Flatlander has a new committee. Timber Ghost has a new committee. Hoping to do some recruitment events to gain more committee members for even better banquets. Fresh activities have been tried at some banquets. Whiteford and Hillsdale chapters will move back to Aaron from Lloyd. Daron still has the UP chapters.

We have a raffle license for a 2019 calendar raffle. The calendar is done, now being printed. We will have 1,000 for MI at \$50 each. The state gets \$5, and the local chapter gets \$20 from each calendar sold. The printing cost is covered by the state. Each chapter should sell at least 20 to anyone, not only members. All sales should be completed by mid-November. The guns will go to the FFL nearest to the winner. The winning numbers are the evening daily 3 on Wednesdays. Each calendar has a unique number. Aaron is the administrator. The stub on the calendar is filled in, and goes to Aaron with \$50. Winners will be announced on our Facebook page.

In the UP, Keweenaw is struggling. Superior Turkey Trackers had a \$2,500 net increase. Menominee increased memberships and \$2,500 at their banquet.

The Bays de Noc chapter is good. Ken's Wheelin' Sportsmen are going strong. A Baraga chapter is possible in the future.

Steve reports that he is developing an action plan for R3. In MI, we have lost 400,000 hunters since 1985. The Baby Boomers are aging, and are not being replaced. We need to retain and support our hunters. We need to keep our voice in conservation.

Learn to Hunt fliers are being made for future events.

Pierce Cedar Creek is opening 400 more acres for access.

Ryan reports that \$4.3 million in project costs have been completed, secured and/or are ongoing since 2014! 4 new turkey tracts are planned in the MI DNR SE region at Holly SRA, Port Huron, Cass City, and Sharonville SGA. Our partners in Union Sportsman's Alliance are making 6 kiosks for us, one of which will replace the one destroyed in Allegan SGA.

Ryan recommends that we read an article on Chronic Wasting disease from the Wildlife Professional magazine that gives background and current status of the disease.

Ryan has submitted 2 proposals requesting funding from the MI DNR State Wildlife Habitat Grant to complete \$818,000 in project costs across 11 counties. If successful, this will see a match of 54:1. Partners include USFS, US Fish and Wildlife, MI DNR, Pierce Cedar Creek, MI Nature Assoc., Land Conservancy of West MI, ITC Power, MI Army National Guard, and the Ruffed Grouse Society.

We have a new agreement with the USFS on the Baldwin/White Cloud Ranger District totaling \$250,000, good for 10 years. The Huron-Manistee agreement is wrapping up with 1,100 acres impacted, and totaled over \$750,000.

USFS Chief will visit the Baldwin Ranger District to meet with USFS staff and to visit our savanna and Karner Blue butterfly habitat restoration sites. Ryan will speak on behalf of NWTF as the lead partner for the agreements and the project work, and show the impacts we have enjoyed since we established the Focal Landscapes Projects.

The Hayes Road Acquisition will be finalized soon. Request for \$4,500 will be sent to DU and we will count the 19 acres toward our STH2 goals.

MI Out of Doors TV featured some R3 efforts, our habitat projects on Camp Grayling, and the military hunt.

Ryan read and provided a copy of the official NWTF Feeding Wild Turkeys Resolution of February 18, 2011.

Thanks to a truck driving school partner that helped us move trees, the volunteers that planted crab apple trees, and 2 brewing companies that gave us rice hulls.

Ryan developed a spreadsheet for MI Special Projects account to track and report.

Habitat signs are here, available for purchase.

Ryan reported for Al Stewart – Thanks for the turkey tracts, recently highlighted in DNR publicity.

73% of spring hunters had a good experience in 2017. The 2018 statistics are not out yet.

Board of Directors (Art)

Since Gary resigned, we need a VP to fill his term and a Region 3 Director.

We have a person present interested in the Region 3 position, Mike Black. He has experience with NWTF in KY and IN, moved now to MI. Already helping at Beaver Creek, lives in West Branch, endorsed by his previous RD. Art will appoint Mike to take the Region 3 position, motion to approve (Phil, Tony, carried) for term 2018 to 2021.

For the Vice president, Tony nominates Jon, who declined for now, since it is understood that the VP may become the next President. Hugh offered to take the VP position, but does not want to be the next President. Hugh will finish the VP term until 2020 (Phil, Dave, carried).

Budget Committee (Tony)

We are working to trim the budget for 2018. The Executive Board will go from \$2,000 to \$1,500. The PR/Media will go from \$2,500 to \$2,000. The State Convention will go from \$2,500 to \$1,000. The State Calling contest will go from \$2,500 to \$1,000. Awards and Scholarships will go from \$5,000 to \$4,000. NWTF Staff/RD will go from \$2,500 to \$1,500. We trimmed \$4,500. Motion to approve budget changes (Chris, Dave, carried).

PR/Media (Jon)

Our web site continues to be maintained. Any input from us is appreciated. Still need some pictures of board members with turkeys. Chris to join Jon on this committee. Chris suggested we use other platforms to use already established information to extend our reach to thousands more people. For \$100 a week, we can target new audiences, and with specific time periods chosen, could reach 50,000 more people. This reach can target areas of need, gaps where no banquets are, etc. So the return on this investment can be huge without an addition to our budget.

Super Fund

No report offered. Letters explaining the Super Fund changes were sent to every chapter with no objections.

Habitat Improvement (Pete)

Any turkey feeding needed is now absorbed by individuals. We are working with local biologists to expand food plots, since we have experienced both drought and flooding. Our long term feeding includes crab apples. We recommend using 6-24-24 fertilizer. The red oaks are getting the blight, so we need hybrid oaks to replace these. We will ask MSU extension for advice on trees for fast acorn production. We need to leave money in the budget for these trees.

Conservation Seed (Art)

Seed pick up day went well. Bags of seed sold increased by 5%. All seed is picked up. 2 chapters still owe money. The money goes to Wildlife Seed and Ryan's project fund. Next year chapters can subsidize seed or not from Super Fund.

State Convention (Jan)

We have a new 3-year contract with Holiday Inn, Big Rapids. 2 other places were considered, but were not able to supply our needs as well as the Big Rapids facility. We are seeking a speaker from NWTF for next January. The date for the state convention is January 18 and 19, 2019. Mike will join this committee. We are taking suggestions for speaker topics.

Patch Program (Troy)

For 2018 so far, expenses are \$9,826.26 for patches, postage, and supplies. The revenue for 4406 patches sold is \$22,032.28. Total profit is \$12,206.02. This program will transition to Evan's management for 2019.

Rules and Regulations (Hugh)

We are in the middle of the 3 year turkey regulation cycle. We will continue to follow the MUCC activities, the NRC Commission, and especially the Wildlife Committee and attend all pertinent meetings. The DNR knows the long-standing interest of the NWTF. We have a copy of the position paper used for the MUCC resolution giving 3 clear reasons to not change the current season structure. Hugh will check on our membership status with the MUCC.

Awards and Scholarships

No report at this time.

Board Member Committee Assignments

Chris will join the PR/Media Committee. Mike will join the Convention Committee and help with R3 activities. Frank will join Habitat Enhancement. Evan is Patch Program in January.

Old Business

The new NWTF guidelines were incorporated into our MI State Bylaws. Art read all the resulting changes. With our Bylaws matching the NWTF, the NWTF staff will finalize the MI State Chapter document, then after their approval we will approve and implement. Motion to refer the proposed revision of the MI State Chapter Bylaws to NWTF (Pete, Phil, carried with 1 abstaining). The new State Chapter Bylaws will become the local chapter template.

We need to schedule a meeting to review and update our MI strategic plan. We can change our goals or revisit our previous goals. Suggest December 1, location to be determined. Art, Ryan, any from state board may attend. Jason and Phil Ferrare will be invited.

The Allegan kiosk will be placed in a new location, using 1 of 6 being built. Ryan will tell us when it's ready to be placed. It will be stored at the local DNR until placement.

New Business

We reviewed information about the MI Youth Hunter Education Challenge. This annual 2 day event sponsored by the NRA and others is being planned for August 18 and 19 at the Lansing Area Sportsmen's Club. The event has 4 shooting events and 4 responsibility events. We will give \$100 (Evan, Jon, carried) and try to provide a speaker for Saturday.

Art attends meetings with our Senators and Representatives in Lansing on the MI Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus Advisory Council. Dues are \$750 a year. We will renew this membership (Dave, Al, carried).

Do we need a policy about feeding turkeys in CWD regulated areas of the state? Ryan read the official NWTF stance from the technical committee that does not support feeding. Pete will talk to Keith and Russ of the DNR about not including turkeys in the

deer feeding ban area. Ryan is the NWTF policy contact for us. Be careful with conversations, and indicate that they are personal when making comments to the NRC by phone or email. The NRC does not vote on this issue until fall.

We have no objection to turkey hunting from elevated stands with shotguns or archery.

We would consider a combined state chapter board meeting with IN in the future. We could help each other, and still have separate meetings. This could be next summer, maybe a Friday and Saturday. We will plan with Pat McFadden of the IN state board.

The NWTF trailer stored at Tony's is for sale to the highest bidder. A \$400 offer was made and accepted (Phil, Pete, carried).

Gary Salmon is willing to manage the state calling contest.

The turkey mount donated for this facility, Glassen Shooting Education Center, deserves a glass case around it. Zach will measure, make an offer, and take care of it. We set a high limit of \$200 (Hugh, Chris, carried).

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn (Dave, Phil, carried) at 3:40.

We will have a Conference Call meeting in October, date to be announced.

Submitted by Jan Kuhtic, Secretary

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