

**Fish and Wildlife Board
Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday, October 7, 2020

The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board held a meeting beginning at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, October 7, 2020 via video conference. Members of the public joined the meeting via conference call by calling: **929-436-2866** and entering meeting ID: **849 5371 2152**

Agenda:

- 1) Review of Previous Meeting Minutes.
 - September 23, 2020
- 2) Public Comments (Limited to 2 minutes per speaker)
- 3) Big Game Reporting Rule—Third Vote.
- 4) Commissioner’s Update
- 5) Roundtable Discussion

Board Members in Attendance: Tim Biebel (Board Chair); Jay Sweeny; Brian Bailey; Marty Van Buren; Dennis Mewes; Mike Kolsun; Bryan McCarthy; Michael Bancroft; David Fielding; Wendy Butler; David Robillard; Bill Pickens; and Nancy Matthews.

Department Staff in Attendance: Louis Porter, Commissioner; Mark Scott, Wildlife Director; Col. Jason Batchelder, Law Enforcement Director; Catherine Gjessing, General Counsel; Adam Miller, Wildlife Program Manager; Chris Bernier, Wild Turkey Project Leader; and Will Duane, Executive Assistant.

Members of the Public in Attendance: Brian O’Gorman

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 5:01

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

The September 23, 2020 meeting minutes were approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

Public Comments (Limited to 2 minutes per speaker)

No members of the public chose to address the Board

Big Game Reporting Rule –Third Vote

The Big Game Reporting rule at 10 V.S.A. App. §22 was approved by the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules on Monday, October 5th. The final action by the Board in this rulemaking process is a third vote prior to the final filing with the Secretary of State’s Office. The Department

anticipates having electronic reporting of turkeys ready for the 2020 fall shotgun season. Electronic reporting of deer for archery hunting may take place in 2021.

Motion: Bryan McCarthy moved that the rule be approved as drafted. Jay Sweeny seconded the motion.

Vote: The final version of the rule was approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

Commissioner's Update

- The next board meeting is scheduled for January 20, 2021. It might be worthwhile to have a training for the board on the new fish regulations sometime between now and then.
- Informational meetings for the new fish regulatory proposals begin on Tuesday, October 13, and
- Wednesday the 14th. Both start at 6:30.
- Sea Lamprey control work is going forward this fall though it has been delayed slightly by both low and high water conditions. The Winooski river has been treated, the Lamoille, LaPlatte and Missisquoi rivers will be treated soon.
- Two celebrations were recently held at Sand Bar WMA and our newest WMA in Shrewsbury to commemorate 100 WMAs in 100 years. There will be another celebration at Dead Creek on November 6th at 2:00 PM. We'll have the results of a children's art competition there. The Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs and the Vermont Trapper's Association donated prizes for that contest.
- Several Game wardens have stepped up in recent years by cutting meat and roadkill animals for food selves and families in need. So far this year they've donated 3,000 pounds of moose, deer, and bear. Lt. Gallant has been instrumental in this program's success.
- Nighttime enforcement for illegal taking of deer is underway with some recent arrests.
- The moose archery season ends today, we know of 4 moose taken so far. 3 were bulls. 44 hunters including 3 special opportunity hunters will begin the rifle season on October 17th.
- The migratory waterfowl season starts on Saturday, October 10th.
- The House and Senate Natural Resource Committees have made it clear they intend to evaluate the makeup of the Fish and Wildlife Board in the coming legislative session. It would be beneficial for legislators to meet with Board Members to get a sense of the current makeup and to learn who you are.
- Brad Ferland from Hardwick will likely be confirmed for the Fish and Wildlife Board before our next meeting. He will replace Johanna Laggis as the Caledonia County representative.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:31PM

The mission of the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department is the conservation of all species of fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the people of Vermont.

As Approved on Third Vote

ANNOTATED

10 App. V.S.A. § 2. Report, big game

(a) ~~A-Unless otherwise specified in the 10 App. V.S.A. section relating to the specific big game species, a person taking big game, as defined by 10 V.S.A. § 4001(31), pursuant to the seasons provided by law or regulation of the Fish and Wildlife Board, shall within 48 hours report the taking and exhibit the carcass in the manner required by the Commissioner. The Commissioner may authorize a person taking big game to report in the following manners including but not limited to; electronic reporting via email or website or mobile application, telephone, or in-person reporting. The Commissioner may waive the exhibition of the carcass unless requested by a warden. The Commissioner shall publish the reporting and exhibition requirements. to the nearest game warden, official Fish and Wildlife Department Reporting Station, or to a person designated by the Commissioner to receive the reports.~~

(b) Notwithstanding the reporting requirements of 10 App. V.S.A. § 7 subsection 8.3 of the Bear Management Rule and 10 App. V.S.A. § 33 subsection 14.3 of the Moose Management Rule, in the event of an emergency, the Commissioner may authorize any person who takes big game to report and exhibit the carcass in the manner required by the Commissioner. The Commissioner shall publish the reporting and exhibition requirements during the emergency period. For the purposes of this section, "emergency" shall mean "a serious, unexpected, and dangerous situation that poses a threat to public health or safety, or to wildlife or natural resources, and requires immediate action

(c) No big game carcass shall be transported out of the State without first being reported as required herein.

(d) The Commissioner shall pay to the authorized agent a fee of \$1.00 for each report taken on species where reports are required by law.