

MI State Chapter
National Wild Turkey Federation

October 5, 2023

Google Call

Jon called the meeting to order at 8:02 PM.

We recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Tony led us in a prayer.

Roll Call, Correspondence

Present Region 1: Chris Stewart

Absent Region 1: Ken Buchholtz

Present Region 2: Ryan Longanbach, Mike Arnold

Absent Region 2: Frank Darling

Present Region 3: Bert VanderWeele, Jon Gray, Tony Snyder, Jan Kuhtic, Hugh Marx, Jason DeFrenn, Erin Sattazahn, David Potter, Justin Mitchell

Absent Region 3: Shannon Fryer

NWTF Staff Present: Aaron Shaughnessy, Brandon Nutt, Ryan Boyer

We received a note of thanks from Pete Demos' daughter for attending his memorial.

Approval of Minutes, Agenda

The minutes of July 2023 are approved (Hugh, Erin, carried).

There are no additions to the agenda.

Treasurer's Report (Tony)

The balance of July 16 was \$973.43. Deposits were \$20,368.93. Expenses were \$556.36. The balance as of Sept. 29 is \$20,786.00. The detail of deposits and expenses is provided. We have a check due from Conservation Seed. The Treasurer's report is approved (Jan, Bert, carried).

NWTF Staff Reports

Aaron reports that the calendars for 2024 are all out to the chapters. We need to return the stubs and chapter check to Aaron or Brandon as soon as they're sold.

MI ranks 15th in memberships. Our goal was 250,000, and we have about 225,000. Our net growth was 40,000 members. Make sure everyone at every event is a member. No 'couples' tickets, and track the information carefully.

NWTF's big focus now is growth in 2024. We can grow existing chapters, restart chapters, and start chapters in new or old areas. This takes a team effort. The fund-raising model changed, so there is no set pattern for banquets or events.

Chapters should be working on budgeting for 2024. Chapter meetings with RDs are ongoing. The event goal is 50% net to gross. Limit spending, and get items donated or sponsored. Online ticket sales help us all, so keep pushing this option (it's our future).

Brandon reports that he's had 2 events since July. A new banquet in Ravenna with 60% net to gross and a WITO event with almost double the previous attendance and a better net.

The Core Package book is out, and the vendors are updating for 2024 events. Banquets are registered, and dates are set. Remember, we don't have to take all the items in the Core package.

In Brandon's area, there is growth in the Holland area with Long Range Longbeards, planning for an April banquet. Tri County is returning this year. Another new area is Whitehall with Lakeshore Longbeards. 28 chapters are planning events for 2024.

The NWTF convention is February 15-18, 2024 in Nashville, TN. Contact your chapters, invite them to go!

Ryan reports that 4700 acres were conserved in fiscal year 2023. He is developing success reports with the RDs, probably a flier.

2 projects remain active in Manistee and Baldwin, and 2 DNR grants are ongoing till fall.

Ryan attended Deer and Turkey meetings in North Dakota, had good conversations with other biologists.

The MI Grasslands Coalition is broadening its scope, so the focus is on more than pheasant habitat.

We are reminded to recommend Conservation Officers for the state award. In the next 2 weeks.

Ryan is working with Mike Arnold on the SF and budgeting. Then we look for partners to help us accomplish our mission.

From Adam Bump: The recent MI wild turkey brood survey is not analyzed yet. Total submitted surveys were 7,647. Total hens reported 16,944, total poult reported 39,480, and total number of males reported 7,400. Happy with response this first year. This is a long term project intended to show trends.

The model is being updated to gather more widespread data.

R3 Report (Jon)

A message from Morgan Register: still filling the MI role until the new person is chosen. There have been over 30 candidates that applied. The interviewing team has narrowed the prospects to 3. Hoping for a decision next week. The goal for MI is 40 R3 events, which Morgan exceeded. She has taken an R3 position for NWTF, but still lives in MI. She reminds us to register all events. She is encouraged by the good partnership with the MI DNR.

Super Fund (Mike)

Ryan (Boyer) thanks Mike for developing a very thorough budget proposal for the 2024 SF. Youth events including JAKES, Scholarships, Archery in the Schools, and local shooting sports is \$17,000. Other outreach including WITO and Wheelin' Sportsman, conservation program project supports, FY23 special projects carry-over, and DNR research support is \$107,131. Support for convention attendees, marketing, and legislative hunt, new chapter support, recruitment, Learn to Hunt events, Glassen scholar internship, Shiawassee hunt, and turkey tracts is \$27,650. Awards is \$1,000. Total budgeted SF grants \$156,781 and non-budgeted grants 5,646, total grants \$162,427. Mike provided a copy with more detail to the board members and was available for questions.

This proposed budget is accepted (Jason, Ryan, carried). Mike would appreciate help from others on this committee.

Nominating Committee (Ryan)

The committee will accept nominations for President and Vice President up to October 27. The by-laws require a ballot, so that will be prepared for the January meeting. The committee will contact the nominees, who will accept or reject their nomination.

Conservation Seed (Ryan)

Ryan talked to Sissy at NWTF, and obtained seed prices. Ryan will work with Erin to create an order sheet, and copy it to Aaron and Brandon. We do have sorghum left over. Prices continue to go up, not expected to go down. Since we order from 2 sources, we will clarify how checks are written.

Communications, Marketing and Social Media (Erin)

Erin looked at a MI map, and listed chapters and board members within a reasonable driving distance in order to have a useful communication tool. She will send this out to the board for our opinion and comment. She will then finalize, and email chapter presidents telling them that they may expect a board member to contact them. On our part, we should contact chapters within a week of receiving the revised list, probably this month.

As for the web site, adjustments will be made, and it will be kept current.

MUCC (Chris)

Bert is on the Wildlife Committee, hopes soon to be replaced by Chris. A tree will be planted to memorialize Pete Demos. Most discussion is on deer. Pleased with the status of turkeys.

MI State Chapter Convention (Jason)

The convention is January 12 “meet and greet” and January 13 banquet. At the same location in Flint. Jason will give us information on room reservations. Trying to think of ways to have more chapters attend. Considering a pheasant hunt fund-raiser, but need more research first due to day and time issues. A simple email survey will be sent to the board. Other dates can be considered if not January. The Muzzy’s hunt includes breakfast, hunt, lunch, and follow-up for \$300.00 each hunter.

Patch Program (Bert)

The patch design is chosen, details being finished on the 4-inch circle. We will order 5,000 patches. Steve Sharp makes labels, Bert mails, and NWTF send us the money.

The 50th anniversary patch money, \$20,000 will be deposited in the state chapter account. There are a few patches left.

Rules and Regulations (Hugh).

No changes to report.

Awards and Scholarships (Jon).

The nominations for the Conservation Officer are due by the end of October to Jon or either RD. We ask the Law Division for a nominee. In addition, any chapters can nominate an officer for this award, since they may have first-hand knowledge of turkey-related C.O. activities.

We should remind our chapters to have scholarship applications completed on the NWTF web site. We can view the applicants, choose a state winner, and forward to NWTF for national award consideration. The local deadline is November, the state deadline is before the January meeting, please (technically, February 1st).

Fund-Raising

Need to form a committee. In MI, we cannot do online raffles. Please consider this opportunity to raise money for the NWTF projects.

New Business

Committee choices are due to Jon. Refer to the email already sent. We prefer that the members choose their committee, rather than being assigned. Need members for Constitution and Bylaws, Finance and Budget, Habitat Enhancement, Super Fund, and Fund-Raising. With a bylaws change, some committees could be combined, or a committee could be inactive for a time. Bylaws changes must be submitted to the board, voted on, and approved by NWTF.

Can we use money to promote a MSU student on a wing-shooting team? Seems to align with our mission. Opinions to Mike Arnold.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn (Jan, Erin, carried) at 9:40 PM.

The next meeting is at the January convention.

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