

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

Conference Call

January 16, 2021

Bert called this meeting to order at 9:00AM.

We recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Steve offered a prayer.

Present Region 1: Ken Buchholtz, Chris Stewart

Present Region 2: Ryan Longanbach, Pete Demos

Absent Region 2: Frank Darling, Evan Traynor, Brian McPhail

Present Region 3: Bert VanderWeele, Hugh Marx, Jason DeFrenn, Jonathan Edgerly, Zach Mulder, Jon Gray

Absent Region 3: Art Pelon, Jan Kuhtic, Tony Snyder, Dave Godley, Mike Black

NWTF Staff Present: Tom Karsten, Steve Sharp, Tom Glines, Aaron Shaughnessy

Minutes, Agenda, Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

NWTF thanks us for responding to the *Call For All*. We are still in the black, thanks to our volunteers.

The minutes of the September 2020 meeting were approved (Pete, Ryan, carried).

There are no changes to the agenda.

MUCC Report (Pete)

The pheasant stamp was approved, which will add money for putting pheasants in the state. During Covid, there were day camps but no resident camps. Cormorant control is ongoing. Asian carp discussed. We opposed the resolution for turkey hunt changes, to be discussed in June. NRC chair Carol Rose keeps us informed.

Treasurer's Report (Tony- written report)

The balance of September 23, 2020 was \$9,711.43. Deposits were \$49,916.00. Expenses were \$45,080.00. The current balance is \$14,547.43. The deposits and expenses were mostly calendar related.

The Treasurer's report is approved (Jason, Jon, carried).

NWTF Staff Reports

Ryan (written report) reports on the NWTF 2020 accomplishments. Our match ratio was 17:1. Acres conserved 4,764. Acres opened for access 445. NWTF Michigan maintains a strong commitment towards hunter access. We helped the MI DNR acquire 445 acres in Eaton County, called the Potterville State Game Area, open to public hunting. NWTF Michigan continues to expand work on the Huron-Manistee National Forest. The NWTF secured an additional \$410,000 to expand efforts to restore declining oak savanna habitats and improve wild turkey brood habitat. Total project costs on this agreement are nearing \$1 million.

Tom reports trying times, need to find alternative ways to generate money without face-to-face contact. Always open to suggestions. Some events will be virtual, but not entirely online. Some have membership raffles with 2 tiers of product offered from a direct vendor. 11 chapters have product now, which needs to get out. Tom has sample tiered membership raffles to review. 6 chapters have committed to this.

The NWTF national convention will not be in person in Nashville. All members can participate online with live and silent auctions, games and raffles.

Our future banquets will use preferred vendors with chapters ordering guns and product directly. 50 vendors are ready now. The chapter chooses, the RD approves, plus NWTF core of 12-15 items. This pandemic has forced us to consider all options and think differently. Need help with Waterloo's core package – move and store.

Aaron is back! Trying to catch up. Ready to get virtual or online events booked. Ticket packages can be ordered online or by mail. We are trying not to delay banquets till late summer. We can't afford to lose memberships. If banquets are online, we need to follow up on the non-participants. Some chapters changed RDs. Aaron has his old list except Elk Country, Flatlander, and Eaton County, and has 15 chapters in Ohio. He has the same email as before. Daron has 3 chapters in the UP, but lives in WI.

Steve reports that expanded the list of Save the Hunt coordinators. He added Ken Buchholtz, who does extensive hunting with Wheelin' Sportsmen, and Jan Kuhtic, who has coordinated many WITO events. Ken received WS volunteer of the year last year. His group spent 67 days in 2020 taking people out hunting.

Last November, the Learn to Hunt trailer was vandalized. We were able to receive a grant from Cabelas Outdoors to replace clothing, vests, and calls. MUCC started a Go Fund Me page netting \$1500.00. With our 75/25 split, it will be repaired and stocked, and be ready for the spring turkey hunt.

The mentor/mentee drawing will be done at the end of January. The winners will get a Yeti cooler. Steve is still accepting mentor and mentee names for the drawing.

Both spring and fall turkey tags increased. The Learn to Hunt events had to cancel, so it's up to us to take out new hunters.

The State Park schedule for the Jakes Take Aim trailer is given to us, along with the instructions. Help is welcome. Pierce Cedar Creek hunt is still open, but may have to cancel. The skeet shooting class invitation went to previous participants, and is booking quickly. Wing Shooting 101 starts in June with shotguns. An alumni Learn to Hunt turkey hunt will be offered with equipment provided, and camping at Yankee Springs. Information is available on the MI NWTF Facebook page.

Tom Glines (NWTF Development) thanks the State Chapter for the \$20,000+ contribution, which made us a Patron Life sponsor and entered us in the Tenth Legion Club (for \$10,000 or more in a calendar year). The award will be shipped to Bert. Several corporations are recognized for their donations: Woodhaven Calls, Wonders of Wildlife, Reeds Sporting Goods, Henry, Federal Ammunition, and Mossy Oak.

Sponsors and over \$250 donated (cash) will get a tax letter.

Full Strut is an effort to include NWTF as a beneficiary in estate planning/will/401k/life insurance.

Tributes and Dedications is to recognize individuals making major commitments and/or differences in the state.

DNR Report (Bert)

We are watching for turkey hunt survey results. We need to know about hunter satisfaction, public land hunting pressure, harvest numbers, etc. Steve is contacting other states about turkey decline and rule changes. We need to know the result of our changes. We are the group that exceeds in hunting experience over the years.

Turkey hunt applications are available February 1.

The patch is being produced, not available yet.

PR, Media, Website (Chris)

You may have received a questionnaire about the state web site. Maybe the media should use more social outlets, and expand beyond the chapter presidents and state board. This is our future, and the sign of success. Chris welcomes emails (not texts).

R3 (Jon)

Welcome to Ken and Jan. We have monthly Zoom meetings (second Tuesdays). Please send Jon updates of chapter presidents and their emails so he can keep them informed.

Habitat Improvement (Pete)

Thankfully, we have a mild winter so far. Some turkey feeding within guidelines. Trees planted in the past are successful with turkeys and grouse feeding. Pete will keep making approved turkey feeders. Pete is our go-to person for turkey feeder specs.

State Convention (Tom)

Tom and Jan visited Holiday Inn Big Rapids to try to arrange our convention with restrictions. After our efforts, we decided to cancel it for this year. We were not charged or penalized. We will transfer the contract from 2021 to 2022. Jason is looking at other sites for the future.

Super Fund- no report

Patch Program (Bert)

As of today, 7500 patches are ordered but delayed at a cost of \$5700.00. Evan is stocking up on mail supplies and post cards. Evan will tell us when the patches are available. Some problems with late delivery are resolved. Did the 2020 patch design winner get the \$100 award? Bert will check. For the 2021 winner, NRC will recognize, and we will proceed as before.

Rules and Regulations (Hugh)

We are early in the 3-year cycle, concerned about the rule changes. We need to see the survey results, not reported yet.

Conservation Seed (Ryan)

In 2020, 2,800 acres were impacted. Even without Super Fund, people are still getting seed. We have enough corn for the 2021 orders. If we order from NWTF next year, we need to pay upon delivery. Tentative pick up date is April 12-17. Using Google Sheets to keep information up to date.

Awards and Scholarships (Jon)

Thanks to Highbanks chapter, a \$1,000 state scholarship was awarded. No money was used from the state budget.

All scholarship applications go directly to NWTF now. Chapters can request this information for local chapter awards.

Finance and Budget

No report. Tony and Bert will present a budget for approval later and send it to the board.

Old Business

Turkey Tracts are still on hold.

Tom and Aaron need help to promote membership virtual events. Keep thinking about memberships and money, forward all ideas to them.

New Business

Steve requests that the state chapter purchase 2 Yeti coolers for the winners of the mentor and mentee drawing. We will pay up to \$600 (Ryan, Jason, carried).

Will we support the Ft. Custer Legislative Turkey Hunt? Jonathan will check with Tony about Turkeyville Toms money. We previously approved \$500 annually. Rusty Merchant also covers some expenses.

Ken Buchholtz reports a great disabled hunt year with 15 deer, 5 turkeys harvested.

Adjournment

We adjourned at 11:22 AM.

Our next meeting is July 31, hopefully in person. Bert is taking suggestions for location.

Submitted by Jan Kuhtic (from audio recording)

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