



**Sonoma County Fish and Wildlife Commission
Meeting Minutes
April 19, 2012 – 7:00PM**

Commissioners Attending:
Crystal Norris
Jim Lynch
Don McEnhill
Al Gerhardt
David Cook
Julian Meisler

Commissioners Absent:
Caroline Christian
Andrew Pozzi
Jo Bentz
Brock Dolman
Al Ferris
Jeff Holden

Others:
Greg Horton, SC Water Agency
Nick Geist, SSU
Melissa Kelly
Lisa Coreia
James Reed, DFG

Chairperson Norris called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. There was no quorum; Agenda items will be voted on at the April meeting.

Adoption of Minutes

Crystal Norris asked if there were any additions or corrections to the March 2012 minutes. David Cook asked that the minutes be amended to reflect in Gregg Horton's presentation the wording Mark West Spring Creek should be corrected to Mark West Creek.

The adoption of the April minutes will be tabled until the May meeting.

Correspondence

The following correspondence was received:

1. Correspondence from California State Fish and Game Commission.

Financial Report

In March 2012, the Abalone Fund received \$75.00 from Central Collection leaving a fund balance of \$252.43 in that account. The General Fund received \$1,340.95 from Superior Court, \$47.95 from Probation, leaving a budget balance \$29,338.23.

Crystal asked if there are any additions or corrections to the March financial reports. There are none. The adoption of the March financial reports will be tabled until May.

Agricultural Commissioner Budget and Review

Assistant Agricultural Commissioner, Lisa Correia, addressed the budget issue with regards to Cost Sharing Proposal between Sonoma County Fish & Wildlife Commission and Agricultural Commissioner's Office (hand outs provided). Lisa asked if we could work together to provide services and share in those expenses as our Agricultural Commissioner's Office general funds decrease. Based on an analysis of administrative support time provided to the Commission over the last three fiscal years, the department estimates that these services will cost approximately \$5,500 per year (details on this area included on pages 3 and 4 of this document). This assumes that these services will be rendered by an extra help administrative staff member. In comparison, the department's cost to provide these services has typically averaged approximately \$10,000 per year due to the fact that services were provided by a permanent staff member. There was an itemized list of Administrative Services Provided to the Fish and Wildlife Commission and Related Costs. All throughout our department we are looking at streamlining processes and we are happy to provide ideas of improvement.

Crystal said that the scholarship committee will be taking on a greater roll in the process over the next couple of years due to changes the subcommittee is working on. This would relieve a large part of the hours listed in the breakout.

Jim Lynch says he wouldn't want to change what has been submitted for approved by the Board of Supervisors for the next fiscal year 12/13. Lisa mentioned that if you want to go that route then the first of September the Commission could put something together to have Board of Supervisors amend revenue for grants.

Don McEnhill stressed that he really wants to avoid going to the board asking for more money. Crystal mentioned that the by-laws state that they cannot go below \$100,000.00 in their fund balance. The projections are \$151,000.00 will be in the fund balance for the end of the fiscal year.

Crystal was concerned that once they shift the costs to come out of their budget that she is afraid it might never change.

David Cook asked what was the Board of Supervisors thinking years back regarding the history of the administrative costs. Crystal replied that up until the early 1990s the

Commissioners took the minutes and typed them up, at that point there wasn't the money, the budget was no near what we deal with now and the grants were only once a year. It got to the point where it was very difficult for Commissioners to try to be taking notes and participate so the F & W Commissioners went in to the Ag Commissioner and discussed to Board of Supervisors approved this or was it something that just happened.

Jim Lynch replied that the Commission came out of the California Department of Fish and Game Codes stating that the local commissions could receive 50% of the fine monies levied in those counties which had Commissions. Immediately they asked the Board of Supervisors back in 1974 to form the committee. But how it came about and was going to operate under the auspices of the Agricultural Commissioner's Office he didn't know. Jim indicated that he had been on the commission since 1979 and it was not nearly as regimented as they are now and it just kind of evolved. Maybe a big year would be if we had a total of maybe \$10,000.00 but fine money kept coming in and all of a sudden the treasury grew and we added scholarships and increased our grant applications and with that the paperwork grew.

Crystal said they will reduce the number of meetings to 10 meetings per year but they couldn't limit the meetings or grant approvals because it excluded many people. They did discuss approving the grants only once a year but found it caused more problems and they needed to have more frequent grant approvals.

Don McEnhill asked about the scholarship and grant process splitting the difference? He stated that he was very skeptical to give up 10% of the budget for overhead costs.

Jim asked Lisa what she needs to form our commission response. Lisa asked for continued input and comments to the budget sub-committee. Lisa will set up a future meeting to discuss this item.

Al Gerhardt asked if an "intern or scholarship" person could be used. Lisa stated yes, and, that is a great idea.

Old Business

Gregg Horton, Sonoma County Water Agency was requesting a grant in the amount of \$10,000.00 for *Downstream Migrant Trap for Juvenile Salmon and Steelhead*, second reading.

Greg gave a presentation on Anadromous Salmonids in the Russian River.

Crystal state with no quorum item is tabled until May meeting

New Business

2012 Scholarships

The qualifying 2012 scholarships submissions will be reviewed and voted on at the May meeting.

Melissa Kelley, Sonoma County Regional Parks Foundation is requesting a grant in the amount of \$4,000.00 for the *Tolay Fall Festival Night Time Creature Barn*, first reading.

Melissa Kelly, Executive Director, is requesting support of the popular Night Time Creature barn. Melissa says that this event is held at the Tolay Lake Regional Park outside of Petaluma and has more than 18,000 visitors each year. The family event features live animals and demonstrations.

Melissa says that this grant would help offset costs to the wildlife groups who provide services during the festival.

Al Gerhardt asks when the best time he could visit and Melissa told him that during the weekends it is a bit more festive.

Crystal states this is the first reading and the second reading will be held at the May meeting.

Nick Geist, Professor, Sonoma State University, is requesting a grant in the amount of \$2,400.00 for a study of *Diet and Feeding Ecology in Northern California Populations of the Western Pond Turtle, *Emys marmorata, first reading.**

Nick Geist gives a presentation on the diet and feeding ecology from prior work in urbanized creeks in Sonoma County. With the current grant they would perform comparative analysis of the stomach contents of local western pond turtles to assess how urbanization effect predator-prey interactions and diet for these turtles.

Nick says the equipment and drugs purchased will be for newly developed anesthesia that will minimize harmful effects to remove stomach content. The telemetry transmitters will be used for tracking movement patterns, habitat size and foraging pools in the study area.

Don McEnhill asked if the study could increase in the City of Santa Rosa due to the macro diet and changes from the Fountain Grove development that diminished the Brush Creek area. Don also inquired if the study included weight, age etc.

Nick confirmed that they are collecting this information as well as sex of the turtle. Nick mentioned he traps from Fulton out to Willowside Creek. Crystal said there is a Waldorf

School out at the Willowside Creek that would be wonderful to deal with the turtle collection.

Crystal states this is the first reading and the second reading will be the May meeting.

Board Reports & Comments

David Cook: Nothing to report

Julian Meisler: Nothing to report

Jim Lynch: Nothing to report

Al Gerhardt: Nothing to report

Don McEnhill: Nothing to report

James Reed, DFG: Salmon season is going well and abalone is back on. The first week was good for DFG, only two that were rescued out of the water. A couple of checkpoints are coming up next month. Jim Lynch asked James if the boundaries are marked in the Fort Ross area. James stated almost everything is closed south of Fort Ross right now.

Crystal Norris: Fawn Rescue finally got their taxidermy badger and they should make a presentation to the commission soon.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Gretchen Melendy
Acting Commission Secretary