

TOWN OF ISLESBORO
DEER REDUCTION COMMITTEE

Meeting of Thursday, October 9, 2014, 4:30 PM, Town Office

MINUTES

Present: Andrew Coombs, Linda Gillies, Don Johnson, Jr., Carol Macaulay (by phone), Gilbert Rivera, Rachel Rolerson-Smith, William Tilden (chair)

Absent: Paul Hatch, Jr.

Others attending: Mike Boucher, Ken Smith

Bill Tilden called the meeting to order at 4:35 pm. A quorum was established.

Approval of Minutes, meeting of September 18, 2014. Upon MOTION made and seconded, the minutes were approved as amended.

Review of meeting with the Selectmen, October 8, 2014. Bill said that Board of Selectmen chair Arch Gillies had invited DRC members to discuss next steps after the September 30 Special Town meeting, at which the petition in favor of a sharpshooting program to replace the Special Hunt was voted down 148-87. He reported that Arch emphasized that the DRC's mandate, approved by the Town on August 24, 2011, was to reduce the deer on Islesboro to 10 per square mile. Any DRC member who was not in agreement with this goal should resign from the committee. Bill also reported that at the meeting, Doug Welldon said he had been on the DRC for a year, the amount of time he had agreed to serve, and that he intended to resign.

Discussion of three DRC vacancies. Bill called on Ken Smith, who had expressed an interest in serving. Ken circulated a written Deer Reduction Proposal outlining his view of how the DRC should proceed (attached); he said that that the Town should use best practices to address this long-term issue, and that they should cost the Town little or no money. He said that he wanted to be helpful in finding the most effective way to kill as many deer as possible; he thought he could play a role in working with IF&W.

MOTION: The Deer Reduction Committee will recommend to the Board of Selectmen the appointment of Ken Smith as a member of the committee.

The motion was seconded and carried by a vote of 6-0.

Bill then called on Mike Boucher. Mike said that his fourteen-year-old daughter had been close to death with Lyme disease and that he wanted to do everything possible was to reduce the risk of tick-borne disease on the island. He was committed to reducing the deer herd 10 per square mile and taking other measures, such as controlling the mice. He had wanted to join the committee for three years but had not been voted on, and his comments had been cut off when he spoke at meetings. He said that during past special hunts he had killed more deer than just about anyone, even shooting them from a window last year when an injury prevented him from hunting out-of-doors, and that he could help to train the hunters in the Special Hunt to be more effective. He proposed that there should be a hunting season with guns beginning in November. It should be open hunters from the mainland, and more land should be open to hunting. He suggested the preparation of a map that drew 100-yard exclusion circle around every house. He added that landowners should be better educated

in how to manage their properties in order to reduce the risk of tick bites. He said that public opinion about the DRC, which he felt had been run into the ground, had to change.

MOTION: The Deer Reduction Committee will recommend to the Selectmen the appointment of Michael Boucher as a member of the committee.

The motion was seconded and carried by a vote of 4 (Gillies, Johnson, Rivera, Rolerson Smith) to 2 (Coombs, Tilden).

After the vote Andrew Coombs left the meeting.

Discussion of deer counts. Bill stressed the importance of knowing how many deer there are on the island. Ken said that while the computerized camera survey described by Anthony DeNicola seems to be a good system, it would be best to use the Stantec pellet survey in the early spring. Don Johnson said it was time to get a count now and that the DRC should look into having the camera survey this fall and a pellet count in the early spring; Gil Rivera felt the camera survey would be more accurate. Mike felt that a survey this fall was unnecessary, and that a better indication of deer population is to look at the deer kill charts. He also said that having camera baiting sites during the Extended Archery Season would put the hunters at risk. Carol Macaulay said that hunters would have less chance of killing deer because people baiting and hunters would get in each other's way. Linda Gillies, who had circulated a draft schedule of what would be involved if a survey were held in November 2014 (attached), questioned whether all the necessary steps could be accomplished in time; she also pointed out that the White Buffalo budget of \$12,530 (attached) did not include the stipend for the local assistant, which would be paid by the Town.

MOTION: Shall the DRC organize a deer count using the camera survey method this fall?

The motion was seconded, and the vote was split: 2 for (Johnson, Tilden), 2 against (Gillies, Rolerson-Smith), 1 abstention (Rivera).

At the end of the meeting there was further discussion about the deer counts. There was consensus that it would be best to have one count in late March/early April. In all probability, it will have to be a pellet count, for the camera survey is based on the buck/doe ratio and must be done in the late fall. Linda said she would check with White Buffalo.

Arrangements for Special Deer Hunt 2014/15.

- Applying and qualifying. Linda circulated a draft boxholder mailing about the application and qualifying process as well as securing landowner permission. Don and Gil said they would verify the dates for the safety briefing class and the range exercises with Laura Houle.
- Permits. Linda will arrange for printing the same permits as in previous years.
- Storage/refrigeration. Gil will contact Phil Berry about the availability of Leach's Express refrigerated truck, which was used last year.
- Transport. Babe Hatch will handle, as he did last year.
- Butchering. Babe Hatch will confirm that Boucher's Custom Cutting in Winslow will assist with the butchering, as they did last year.

Next DRC meeting. The next DRC meeting will be on Thursday, October 23, 2014 at 4:30 in the Town Office.

Upon MOTION made and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 5:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Gillies, Secretary

Follow-up:

Check with White Buffalo about timing of camera survey (Linda)

Special Hunt:

- Verify dates of 2014 safety briefing class and range exercises with Laura House. (Gil, Don)
- Arrange for printing of permits. (Linda)
- Check with Phil Berry about use of refrigerated truck. (Gil)
- Confirm butchering arrangements with Boucher's Custom Cutting. (Babe)

C: Janet Anderson; Sandy Oliver; Cindy Gorham; Maggy Willcox; Keel Kemper; Peter Rand, MD;
Chuck Lubelczyk

Approved by DRC 1023/14