

TOWN OF ISLESBORO
DEER REDUCTION COMMITTEE

Meeting of Thursday, February 26, 2015, 4:30 PM, Town Office

MINUTES

Present: Linda Gillies, Don Johnson, Jr., Gilbert Rivera, Rachel Rolerson-Smith, Ken Smith, William Tilden (chair)

Absent: Michael Boucher, Andrew Coombs, Paul Hatch, Jr., Carol Macaulay

Also attending: Sandra Oliver

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

Approval of the draft minutes for the meeting of January 28, 2015. Upon MOTION made and seconded, the minutes were approved as written.

Report of deer taken to date in Special Hunt. Rachel Rolerson-Smith reported that 39 deer had been tagged: Rachel - 5, Laura Houle - 30, Carol Macaulay on 700 Acre - 4.

Report from the Vector-borne Disease Laboratory (V-bDL). Linda Gillies circulated a report submitted by the V-bDL of deer tick surveys and tick infection prevalence studies for 2014. According to the report, the number of adult ticks found per hour decreased from 22.3 in 2013 to 14.7, the infection rate decreased from 36.4% in 2013 to 31.2%.

Report on preparations for Stantec pellet count. Linda said that letters to landowners requesting permission for biologists from Stantec Consulting to access their land during the deer pellet count scheduled for late March/early April were sent out on February 20th. The survey includes 48 east-west transects on Islesboro and 15 transects on 700 Acre Island; 431 parcels and 370 individual landowners are involved. She thanked Marjorie Mills, Ken Smith, and Arch Gillies for helping with the large mailing. Bill suggested that people who received the letters might be encouraged to reply promptly if the deer survey were put up on Facebook. Gil and Linda thought that doing so might lead to unnecessary controversy, and it was decided not to proceed.

Review of draft request to MDIF&W, previously circulated. Ken said that the draft was a conglomeration, combining text from the 2012 request to MDIF&W, ideas from discussion at previous DRC meetings, and comments from several DRC and community members with whom he had met individually. The principal changes from the 2012 request are:

- The hunt will start at the beginning of November rather than after the end of the Expanded Archery season in December and will go through January rather than through February. Don Johnson said it was hard to go out after the 2nd week in December.
- The hunter safety program will be more rigorous. Hunters could attend one of two two-hour sessions. The program will be run by members of the Islesboro Sporting Club, although others could be brought in to support their work, such as a Game Warden, Public Safety Director, or perhaps Advisory Council member Gunnar Gunderson.
- During the period that the Special Hunt overlaps with Expanded Archery, everyone who hunts will wear blaze orange.
- Violations should be reported to Islesboro's Police Department (the Public Safety Director) or the Maine Warden Service. Either can be reached through Waldo County Dispatch.

Bill asked about whether buckshot could be used. It was agreed that it should be allowed. Gil asked about hunter safety. Don said that although it was clear during the range tests that some hunters were not qualified, it was hard to say no to them. It was suggested that the decisions about whether hunters were qualified to participate could be made by a small DRC committee, rather than just by one person.

Ken Smith made the following MOTION:

The Deer Reduction Committee moves to submit the draft request to the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife for permission to hold the Special Hunt for three additional years to the Islesboro Board of Selectmen for its consideration.

The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Sandy Oliver mentioned that a Town vote to consider the DRC recommendations should be held at a Special Town Meeting scheduled for after Town Meeting on May 9th, as Town Meeting already has a full agenda, and three out of the four previous votes relating to DRC issues have been held at Special Town Meetings.

DRC schedule in the coming weeks. Bill asked what steps need to be taken in connection with obtaining MDIF&W approval for the request and presenting the new plan to the Islesboro community. Linda circulated an outline comparing key dates in the 2012 MDIF&W review process with what needed to happen this year. Bill said that Keel Kemper had forwarded an email from Commissioner Woodcock's office indicating that the Commissioner would like to meet with DRC members before they attend the March Advisory Committee meeting, which will probably be scheduled in the week of the 23rd. The following timetable for March was discussed:

Week of March 2

- Ken to discuss draft request with Gunnar Gunderson and Keel Kemper.
- Linda to discuss with Mike Boucher a possible meeting in week of March 9th to get community input for the MDIF&W request.
- Bill to call Commissioner Woodcock's office to schedule an appointment in the week of March 16th.

Week of March 9

- Possible community input meeting - Mike Boucher to organize.
- Linda to incorporate ideas from that meeting into the MDIF&W request.

Week of March 16

- DRC members meet with Commissioner Woodcock
- March 19 - DRC meeting. Approve final draft of MDIF&W request.
- March 20 - Send request to MDIF&W.

Week of March 23

- DRC members attend Advisory Council meeting
- March 25 - DRC members present final MDIF&W request to Board of Selectmen, request that the recommendations be considered at a Special Town Meeting in May.

Review of DRC budget for 2015/16. Ken Smith said that no specific company should be mentioned in connection with the camera survey count to be conducted in the fall of 2015. Linda said that White Buffalo was cited because we had an estimate from them. Don Johnson suggested that Mike Boucher should investigate alternative companies.

Ken Smith made the following MOTION:

MOTION: The Deer Reduction Committee moves to accept the proposed DRC budget for deer reduction activities in 15/16 as amended.

The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

DRC meeting schedule. It was agreed that the next DRC meeting will be held at 4:30 on Thursday, March 19. As another meeting has been scheduled for that afternoon in the Town office meeting room, Linda will ask if the Public Safety office is available. Additional meetings have been tentatively scheduled for Thursday, April 9 and Thursday, May 7.

Upon MOTION made and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 5:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Gillies, Secretary

Follow up:

- Discuss draft request with Gunnar Gunderson and Keel Kemper (Ken)
- Discuss with Mike Boucher a possible meeting in week of March 9th to get community input for the MDIF&W request. (Linda)
- Incorporate ideas from meeting into request. (Linda)
- Call Commissioner Woodcock's office to schedule an appointment in the week of March 16th. (Bill working with Keel Kemper)
- Investigate companies to conduct camera survey in the fall. (Mike)
- Find out if the Public Safety room is available for the DRC meeting on March 19th.

C: Janet Anderson; Sandy Oliver; Laura Houle; Fred Porter; Cindy Gorham; Maggy Willcox; Keel Kemper; Mark Merrifield; Peter Rand, MD; Chuck Lubelczyk

Approved 3/9/15