

TOWN OF ISLESBORO
DEER REDUCTION COMMITTEE

Meeting of Friday, August 14, 2015, 4:30 PM, Town Office

MINUTES

Present: Michael Boucher, Linda Gillies, Paul Hatch, Jr., Don Johnson, Jr., Gilbert Rivera (chair), Ken Smith

Absent: Rachel Rolerson-Smith

Also attending: Sandy Oliver, Fred Porter

Gil Rivera called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm. A quorum was established.

Approval of the draft minutes for the meeting of August 11, 2015. Upon MOTION made and seconded, the minutes were approved as written.

Consideration of proposals for deer camera surveys. Ken Smith said that he had received no further proposals. Linda circulated a proposal from Charles S. Evans of Objective Ecology, LLC (OE). She said that Mr. Evans, who has recently received a graduate degree from the University of Georgia, has been a student of Anthony DeNicola of White Buffalo, who recommends him highly. She pointed out that the proposal had two options, a full coverage survey using 56 cameras with a budget of \$24,259.52 and a subsample survey using 28 cameras with a budget of \$13,759.76. Discussion of various aspects of a camera survey followed:

- Cameras. Ken showed a camera made by Wildgame Innovations, model #K 8i20d, 8 mg, that he had purchased for \$73, considerably less in price than the one for \$130 recommended in the OE proposal. He said it was recommended by a former military person whose job was to evaluate optics for the military - cameras, scopes, etc. Ken suggested that with instruction from a qualified company, local people could be trained to do their own camera survey. This was suggested on several web sites. It takes time and commitment but it would be cost effective if Islesboro wants annual surveys. Linda Gillies said that the first camera survey should be done by experienced professionals, and that local people should be trained step by step. Fred said that the cameras should be labeled.
- Local assistance. Gil said that there was no budget for the local person who would have to be hired to work with OE to install the cameras, keep up with the baiting for two weeks, take the cameras down, and send the memory cards to OE. Gil suggested that the person be paid \$15-20 per hour. Fred suggested that the Town could use an Americorps fellow.
- Full coverage survey vs subsample survey. Mike Boucher said there were more deer on the north end of the island than on the south end and that a partial survey would not give an accurate estimate. Fred Porter said that deer had been seen on West Bay Road, Maine Road north of Big Tree Beach, on Alumni Drive, and Mill Creek and Ferry Roads; there have not been many deer/vehicle crashes. Gil said that the DRC could rely on DRC members who were hunters to decide where the cameras should be placed. Sandy Oliver pointed out that the Stantec sites were selected randomly and asked how objectivity would be ensured if in a camera survey specific sites were selected. Mike said that he thought a partial survey would lack credibility and would be discredited by the community; He said a full-coverage survey would be more scientific. Don said that a full-coverage survey would be more comparable to the Stantec pellet count. Mike proposed going back to the voters at Town Meeting next spring for the additional funds to underwrite a full-coverage survey a year from now.

MOTION. The Deer Reduction Committee recommends that the camera survey be postponed for a year. At Town Meeting 2016 the DRC will request the additional funds required for a full coverage survey, to be held in late August 2016.

The motion was seconded by Ken and was approved unanimously.

New business/old business. Sandy questioned Ken about his statement reflected in the minutes of the August 11th DRC meeting that he intended to request a meeting with Commissioner Woodcock to discuss the options that Islesboro might have for deer reduction, including bringing more off-island hunters to the island. She said that for protocol and transparency, the decision to meet with a head of a State department - who should attend such meetings and the agenda - should have the approval of the Board of Selectmen. She proposed that a delegation request an appointment with the Commissioner. Ken responded that at the August 6th Advisory Council meeting the Commissioner had said, "There are options that the Town can pursue on its own." Ken said that the purpose of the proposed meeting was to clarify this statement. Linda asked Ken if he had talked to Keel Kemper about the matter. Ken said that he had not. Mike said he believed that Keel favors sharpshooting and does not represent what the Town wants. Mike then proposed that Ken send the Commissioner a letter asking for clarification of his statement made at the August 6th meeting.

MOTION: The Deer Reduction Committee proposes that Ken Smith, working with Janet Anderson, write a letter to Commissioner Chandler Woodcock asking him to clarify possible avenues for deer reduction in lieu of the Special Hunt.

The motion was seconded by Gil Rivera and carried by a vote of 5 (Boucher, Hatch, Johnson, Rivera, Smith) - 0, with one abstention (Gillies).

Next DRC meeting. The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, September 22nd at 4:30 in the Town Office meeting room.

Upon MOTION made and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Gillies, Secretary

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

Approved 9/22/15