

TOWN OF ISLESBORO
DEER REDUCTION COMMITTEE

Meeting of Thursday, February 7, 2013, 4:30 PM, Town Office

MINUTES

Present: Pete Anderson, Jacob Bethune, Linda Gillies, Don Johnson, Carol Macaulay (by phone, had to leave the call during meeting because her pipes were freezing), Gilbert Rivera, Rachel Rolerson-Smith, Scott Sienkiewicz, Fred Thomas (chair),

Absent: Andrew Coombs, Paul Hatch, Jr., Laura Houle, Philo Hutcheson, William Tilden

Fred Thomas called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm.

Approval of Minutes, meeting of January 24, 2013. Upon MOTION made and seconded, the minutes were approved as written.

Report on conference call of 2/1/13 with Keel Kemper, MDIF&W and contact with Anthony DeNicola of White Buffalo.

Fred first reported on the call, in which Fred, Pete Anderson and Linda participated to discuss ways in which Islesboro's Special Hunt can be more effective.

- *Expanding season.*
 - It is very unlikely that MDIF&W would allow Islesboro to suspend the extended season.
 - Keel advised against expanding the Special Hunt into the regular recreational season, for hunters are not happy with each other and there is a safety risk. Bow hunters would have to wear orange. DRC could expand the Special Hunt going forward, into January and beyond.
 - Pete pointed out that finding someone to butcher during the winter months would be difficult.

- *Better tools.*
 - The DRC should try to get community approval for rifle use.
 - Allowing many people to bait would be counterproductive. It is best to have a few baiting stations.
 - Using sharpshooter techniques is a possibility. They would be particularly effective on 700 Acre Island. Keel recommended ballistics expert Anthony (Tony) DeNicola of White Buffalo, Inc. (WB), the company that did the Monhegan and Peak's Island hunts. He thought IF&W and DRC could "ease in" WB to supplement the Special Hunt; WB could train local hunters in sharpshooter techniques. He suggested that the DRC contact WB and said that he would call Tony DeNicola about this possibility.

- *Questionnaires.* Rather than asking hunters to fill in questionnaires after the Special Hunt, DRC should have given them a log to be kept during the hunt. The accumulation of that information would be useful, especially when it comes to sighting rates, which could replace the Stantec surveys. Keel said he would send a sample log (which he subsequently did).
- *Driving.* While driving with a big group (10) is dangerous, hunting with 3 hunters should be OK – he will check this out with the Merifields.
- *Permits.* He is working with MDIF&W to allow Islesboro to cut a check for permits for the number of deer killed after the hunt.

Fred then reported that following an introductory call by Keel, on February 5th Linda Gillies spoke with Tony DeNicola. Tony said WB could work in three ways on Islesboro: 1) do the sharpshooting, as they've done on Monhegan and Peak's; 2) do sharpshooting in the first year, training local hunters in the process, and then phase out over the next two years; 3) work with law enforcement to put a program in place. He said he thought the second option would be most appropriate for Islesboro and offered to send a proposal; Linda emailed him the maps of land open to the Special Hunt prepared by the Town Office. The proposal arrived on the morning of February 7; Fred will discuss it with Keel before distributing it to the DRC. Fred did say that the WB budget for sharpshooting and training local hunters in sharpshooting techniques was \$177,050 - \$133,100 in the first year, \$32,050 in the second year, \$11,900 in the third year. WB expected to take 300 deer in the scope of this work.

After discussion DRC members came up with the following observations and recommendations to be discussed with Keel and the MDIF&W Advisory Council.

- Fred said he thought that Islesboro's long-range plan would have to involve specially trained local hunters using sharpshooter techniques, with permits from MDIF&W.
- Scott Sienkiewicz said DRC should ask MDIF&W for permission to bait in a few areas and for depredation permits.
- The WB cost for sharpshooting and training is extremely high. DRC should talk to them about the possibility of limiting WB involvement to training 4-5 local hunters and what that would cost.
- Several people asked if any other person/company does this work. Scott has the name of someone and will get it to the DRC.
- DRC should talk with Keel and the MDIF&W Advisory Council about:
 - Suspending the expanded archery season on Islesboro so that the Special Hunt could begin in September and then resume after Thanksgiving.
 - Use of rifles (choice of weapons does not require we MDIF&W approval).
 - Sharpshooting by local hunters – the whole package: training, baiting, other tools.
- Fred said that one Advisory Council member understands Islesboro's situation and is willing to think out of the box. Linda agreed and thought there might be other AC members who would be willing to go along with an innovative plan. She said the DRC is lucky to have a MDIF&W staff member such as Keel who is willing to work

hard to advocate for new solutions. Gil Rivera said DRC may want to enlist the help of legislators such as Senator Mike Thibodeau.

Issues still be discussed for future hunts: It was agreed to defer discussion until the next meeting.

Review of draft DRC budget for 2013/14. In view of possible changes to the budget, it was agreed to defer discussion until the next meeting.

Library meeting. Fred reminded everyone that he will be speaking about the Special Hunt at the Alice L. Pendleton Library at 3 pm on Sunday, February 10.

DRC meeting schedule. The next scheduled DRC meeting will be held on Thursday, February 21, 2013 at 4:30 pm in the Town Office.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Gillies, Secretary

Follow-up:

- Work with Keel Kemper to come up with a new proposal to the MDIF&W Advisory Council. (FT, PA, LG)
- Draft new language for hunter eligibility for consideration by the committee. (PH, LG)
- Check with Merifields about 3 people hunting together. (KK)