

AD HOC DEER HERD COMMITTEE MINUTES OF WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2015

A meeting of the Ad Hoc Deer Herd Committee was held on Wednesday, October 7, 2015 and called to order at 3:00 p.m. in the Second Floor Conference Room, City Hall.

PRESENT: John Brakora, Josh Penland, Barry Peterson, Roger Zielinski, Tom Bruce

ABSENT: Bob Hornkohl

OTHERS: Tony Aderman, USDA District Supervisor

PURPOSE: To develop a long-term strategy for deer herd management; providing recommendations to City Council.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Discussion on meeting notices, agenda preparation and other committee functions. Agendas will be prepared and emailed approximately one week prior to meeting by the Recording Secretary. Please submit agenda items prior to that so a meeting packet can be prepared and posted.

MOTION by Roger Zielinski, second by Josh Penland, to approve the agenda as presented. Voice vote - Motion carried.

PRESENTATIONS

Roger Zielinski introduced Mr. Tony Aderman, District Supervisor, USDA Wildlife Services. His department participates in human/wildlife management. Currently working in Ingham County to remove deer and test for Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). Between June and September they have removed 516 deer in a two-mile radius; two of those deer tested positive for CWD. Charge for services varies depending on the degree of work requested and process used. Some areas simply approve a set budget amount and they work within that. The State might not allow some of their methods in certain areas; however, shooting is their preferred method.

Discussion on Manistee's perception and experience regarding deer herd management. Brakora noted an increase in population in recent years. Mr. Aderman said a good first step is to adopt a feeding ban to stop attracting the deer. He felt that a cull in Manistee would be experimental in nature and recommended utilizing the harvest to feed the hungry. Tom Bruce discussed the cull process previously scheduled for last January. Area food banks could not accept and anyone accepting a deer would be responsible for processing costs. There was more than enough interest at that time to have all the harvested deer distributed. Mr. Aderman recommended having deer tested for CWD in the interest of research. The USDA said they would cooperate with local

department as much as possible to keep the costs down. Extensive discussion on methods used, security, protests or other incidents, and safety. If hired, the USDA would be the responsible party should an incident happen; however the USDA has a perfect safety record. City would need to acquire permission from private property owners and find locations where bait piles can be placed. Permission would be required from the City and the MDNR. Mr. Aderman noted that this is a sensitive issue with many citizens. Culling is probably the cheapest method, wouldn't recommend contraception, and the USDA does not live trap. Discussed timeframe - USDA felt that winter is the best time as they try to avoid orphaning fawns from early May to mid-July. Mr. Aderman provided his contact information:

Tony Aderman, District Supervisor
USDA – APHIS Wildlife Services
Tony.Aderman@aphis.usda.gov
989-705-8467 x 224

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- **Ordinance to Ban Feeding** - At their meeting of October 6, 2015 City Council took action to adopt an ordinance amending Chapter 606 of the Codified Ordinances of Manistee to include a Section 606.08 Feeding of Wild Mammals. The ordinance will take effect ten days after enactment.
- **Deer Herd Survey** - At the previous meeting the survey deadline was shortened to October 1. Josh Penland compiled the survey results and shared them with the Committee. Additional survey forms were received past the deadline date.

MOTION by Roger Zielinski, second by Barry Peterson to accept and incorporate surveys received after the deadline. Voice vote - Motion carried.

There were 113 responses included in the first draft compiled by Josh Penland. Penland verbally shared an email from the Humane Society of Michigan Ecologist with comments on survey results. Penland felt the reason for the survey was to get feedback from residents; the second step is for public education. John Brakora would prefer to call the process a managed hunt rather than a cull. Penland will incorporate additional surveys and make format clarifications as requested by the committee. Revised document will be shared with the committee for further review.

- **Humane Society Follow-Up** – Penland said there are no grant funds available in Michigan through the Humane Society for an aerial survey or PCP contraception program. If further information is needed City Council would have to request a presentation.
- **Public Education** – This should be part of the Committee's recommendations when a report is drafted for City Council.
- **Work Session with City Council** - Committee previously requested some direction from the City Manager on what should be prepared prior to requesting a joint work session with City

Council. Per City Manager Bifoss this “Committee should have firm recommendations and clearly state, in writing, before the work session, the reasons and costs for the recommended course of action. The Committee should then be prepared to answer questions from the Council and public on those recommendations.” To be scheduled with City Council for December or January pending completion of a report document.

John Brakora will begin crafting a Findings of Fact Report for future committee review. The final survey document and committee minutes will be made a part of this report.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

COMMENTS BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

None.

ADJOURN

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 4, 2015 at 3:00 p.m. in the Second Floor Conference Room.

MOTION to adjourn by John Brakora, second by Barry Peterson at 4:57 p.m.

Cynthia Lokovich, CAP-OM
Executive Secretary