

NEW HAMPSHIRE FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT

FEBRUARY 21, 2023 COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Location: NH Fish & Game Department, 11 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH 03301.

Commissioners Present: P. DeBow, M. Lachance, J. Caveney, A.J. DeRosa, R. Green, B. Temple, E. Stohl, C. Hodgdon, & S. Price.

Seacoast Commissioner: Vacant

Commissioners absent/excused: M. Hodgson

Executive Director Mason – Present

Chairman Green called the meeting to order at 1:00p.m., and asked the audience to join in the pledge of allegiance. He informed the audience that the public is entitled to attend all Commission meetings and when recognized by the Chairman, the public may speak on any item on the agenda. The Chairman reserves the right to limit comment to the extent necessary for the orderly conduct of the meeting.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Commissioner S. Price moved to approve the January 17, 2023 Commission Minutes and Commissioner A.J. DeRosa seconded. Commissioner M. Lachance abstained from voting, as he was absent at the January 17, 2023 Commission Meeting. The motion carried.

1a.) On behalf of the Commission, Chairman R. Green presented the 2021 Youth Conservationist Award of Excellence to Jack Dalton, of Manchester, NH.



Chairman Green reported that Jack’s mission is to protect animals and the environment through the power of education and inspiration. Jack Dalton, who goes by the name “Kid Conservationist”, may be a child, but he is already an animal activist, public speaker, educational YouTuber, and author. Even though he is only 11 years old, he has already been recognized for his work both locally and globally, including the 2021 Presidential Environmental Youth Award, a 2021 International Eco-Hero by Action for Nature Notable Mention, and a Top 20 Finalist for the first-ever TIME Kid of the Year in 2020.

He further reported that Jack provides presentations at dozens of schools and libraries in New Hampshire about the ways kids can be involved in helping to protect wildlife for years to come.

In addition, Jack showcases his work on his YouTube channel “Kid Conservationist”, which includes kayak river clean ups in Nashua, an interview with Nashua Mayor, Jim Donchess, about ways cities can go green to protect the environment. Jack’s biggest project here in New Hampshire this year is his “Save the Forest Lake” campaign, to help protect Forest Lake

State Park and voice his concerns about what would happen if a landfill were located close to the park. Some of the other topics he presents on are plastic use, palm oil, trash clean up, how to reduce paper usage, the importance of getting out in nature, and many other tips to help wildlife and the environment. NHPR, NH Chronicle, The Union Leader, and the New Hampshire Journal have all interviewed Jack Dalton.

Chairman Green thanked Jack & his parents for coming to the meeting and congratulated Jack on his achievements and receiving The Youth Conservationist Award.

The audience applauded.

2.) Consent Agenda – The following items were grouped together and noticed as consent agenda items to expedite action on routine matters, which may not require public discussion. Commission members may remove certain items, if further public input or discussion is deemed necessary.

2a.) The Commission accepted the following donations totaling \$6,650.00 made to the Search & Rescue Account:

• John Berry -	\$5,000.00
• Kim LaCrosse -	\$1,000.00
• Judy Kenison-	\$ 200.00
• Steve Wheeler -	\$ 200.00
• Laura Beeler -	\$ 150.00
• Ryan Chiasson & Matthew Kopyt	<u>\$ 100.00</u>
	Total: \$6,650.00

2b.) The Commission accepted the following donations totaling \$275.00 made in memory of Ralph Rannacher of Moultonborough, NH & Fort Pierce, FL, for deposit into the Small Gifts & Donations Account & earmarked for Hunting & Fishing Programs.

• Roger & Dorothy Simpson, Center Harbor, NH -	\$100.00
• Sharon Eaton, Meredith, NH -	\$100.00
• Donald & Gerry McGillicuddy, Moultonborough, NH -	\$ 50.00
• Stephanie Henrichsen, Sutton, NH -	<u>\$ 25.00</u>
	Total: \$275.00

2c.) The Commission accepted the donation of \$50.00 from the River-Woods Manchester Residents, Manchester, NH, for use in Conservation Education Programs. This donation was made in appreciation of a talk that Volunteers Douglas Whitefield & Dennis Walsh provided to the residents.

2d.) The Commission accepted the donation of \$5,000 from the NH Charitable Foundation Melinda Richmond Fund, to support the Nongame & Endangered Wildlife Program.

2e.) The Commission accepted the donation of \$100.00 from Daniel Dockham, Jr., Gilmanton, NH, for deposit into the Small Gifts & Donations Account.

2f.) The Commission accepted the donation of \$60.00 from Mary Lesser, New Haven, CT, in memory of Jack Miller, NH, for use by the Hunter Education Program.

2g.) The Commission accepted the donation of \$200.00 from Lonnie Schorer, Moultonborough, NH, earmarked for moose management.

2h.) The Commission accepted the donation of a Cap-Chur dart projector, valued at \$100.00, from Cynthia Hall of Atkinson, NH, earmarked for immobilization work by the Wildlife Division.

3.) Dan Bergeron, Chief, Wildlife Division, Andy Timmins, Game Program Supervisor, and Game Project Leaders, presented an overview of the Department's biennial rulemaking proposals. (See Attached proposals): <https://www.wildlife.state.nh.us/hunting/season-setting.html>.

Dan provided the dates for the Rulemaking Public Hearings as follows:

Public Hearings:

*March 30, Thursday – NH Fish & Game Department, 11 Hazen Dr., Concord, NH
6:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. (east & west conf. rooms – first floor)*

*April 4, Tuesday – Keene High School, Room 620, 43 Arch St., Keene, NH
6:00 p.m. -8:30 p.m.*

*April 5, Wednesday – NH Fish & Game Department, Region 1 Office, 629B Main St.,
Lancaster, NH - 6:00 p.m. -8:30 p.m.*

At this time, Commissioner A.J. DeRosa moved to go forward with the rulemaking process and Commissioner E. Stohl seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

INFORMATION ITEMS:

1.) Kathy LaBonte, Chief, Business Division, offered to answer any questions relative to the financial statement.

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE:

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE:

Public policy development & recommendations, as well as Commission advocacy before legislature.

Commissioner Price, Chair; Commissioners: Caveney, DeBow, Hodgson & Stohl.

Staff members: Kevin Jordan & Marty Mobley.

Commissioner S. Price reported that the committee met the morning of the Commission Meeting.

Commissioner S. Price moved to take no position on HB 32-FN, relative to possession or discharge of a firearm in a safe school zone, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to take no position on HB-56, relative to permits for the siting of new landfills, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to take no position on HB 59-FN, relative to requiring a background check prior to any commercial firearm sale, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to take no position on HB-113, relative to the physical fitness performance requirements for law enforcement officers, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to take no position on HB-117, relative to the termination of tenancy at the expiration of the tenancy or lease term, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to take no position on HB137, relative to boating safety equipment rules, and vessel numbering rules, and establishing a committee to study boat registration fees, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to take no position on HB-149-FN, relative to the handling of requests made under the right-to-know law, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to take no position on HB-156, relative to misconduct by a law enforcement officer, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to take no position on HB-205, relative to testing private wells, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to take no position on HB-208-FN, relative to establishing greenhouse gas emission reduction goals for the state and establishing a climate action plan, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to support HB-221, relative to the acquisition of agricultural land development rights, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to take no position on HB-232-FN, relative to adopting section 1910 OSHA standards for public sector employees in New Hampshire, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to take no position on HB-247-FN, relative to protective well radii, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to take no position on HB-254, relative to remote participation in public meetings under the right-to-know law, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to take no position on HB-266, relative to notice and public access requirements for hybrid and virtual agency public comment hearings for rulemaking, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to take no position on HB-302-FN-A, relative to including education in the United States Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the NH Constitution for NH Law Enforcement, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to take no position on HB-321-FN-L, relative to the expectation of privacy in the collection and use of personal information, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to take no position on HB-347-FN, establishing a superior court land use review docket, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to take no position on HB-474-FN, relative to enforcement of federal firearms laws and establishing penalties, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to take no position on HB-481-FN, relative to arrest warrants and search warrants, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to take no position on HB-503-FN, relative to the rights afforded to a person accused of a crime, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to take no position on HB-592-FN, relative to buffers around wetland, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to take no position on HB-602-FN, relative to landfill siting, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to take no position on HB-609-FN, relative to energy facility siting, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to take no position on HB-647-FN, relative to causes of action for individual rights, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to take no position on HB-650, relative to prohibiting suspension of driver's licenses due to nonpayment of fines or fees, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to take no position on HB-652-FN, relative to nonpublic sessions under the right to know law, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to take no position on SB-23, relative to establishing a committee on meat processing, and Commission P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to take no position on SB-56-FN, relative to payments for restoration of certain jurisdictional resource losses, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to take no position on SB-122-FN-A, relative to construction of a public pier on Hampton Beach and making an appropriation therefor, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to oppose SB-164-FN-L, relative to biodiverse environments, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to oppose SB-226, relative to the use of bait for hunting bear, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to oppose SB-228-FN, relative to the Hilton Park boat ramp, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner S. Price moved to support SB-256-FN, relative to establishing a safety program for off-highway recreational vehicles, and Commissioner P. DeBow seconded. The motion carried with 7 in favor, 2 opposed (R. Green & E. Stohl).

Chairman R. Green reminded the Commission to be cautious when discussing gun legislation.

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE: Commission professional development, education & policy recommendations related to Commission conduct & activities.

Commissioner Caveney, Chair; Commissioners: Lachance & Temple.
Staff member: Cheri Patterson.

Commissioner J. Caveney reported that the committee did not meet.

SUSTAINABILITY & STRATEGIC PLANNING: Agency funding, development & oversight of strategic plan.

Commissioner Hodgdon, Chair; Commissioners: Caveney, DeRosa, Hodgson & Stohl.
Staff member: Scott Mason.

Commissioner C. Hodgdon reported that the committee met the morning of the Commission Meeting.

He reported that he distributed a copy of the Draft Outreach Plan for Stakeholders Survey & the Stakeholder engagement questions to the full Commission.

He further reported that the process would consist of the following:

- Stakeholders will receive a letter introducing the planning process and requesting their input. Responses will be in letter form and written responses will be returned to the committee.

He identified the Stakeholders as:

- Organizations with a 501c(3), 501c(4), 501c(5), 501c(6) IRS designation whose mission intersects with the NH Fish & Game Department.
- State Representatives, State Senators & Executive Councilors.
- Inter-agency committees & commissions who intersect with the F&G mission.
- Examples: Rivers Management Advisory Committee, Lakes Management Advisory Committee, Public Water Access Advisory Board, Advisory Committee on Marine Fisheries.
- Department Staff.

At this time, Commissioner C. Hodgdon moved to that the Commission support the Strategic Planning Committee's Outreach Plan for Stakeholders Survey & questions, and Commissioner A.J. DeRosa seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

RESOURCES & INFRASTRUCTURE: Policy recommendations related to agency infrastructure; including facilities, public access, habitat & wildlife.

Commissioner Temple, Chair; Commissioners: Caveney, DeRosa, & Lachance.
Staff member: Dianne Timmins.

Commissioner B. Temple reported that the committee did not meet.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT & EDUCATION: Engagement, partnership, awards, public recognition & education strategies for the public & interest groups.

Commissioner DeRosa Chair; Commissioners: DeBow, Hodgdon & Price.
Staff members: Dan Bergeron, Kevin Jordan & Cheri Patterson.

Commissioner A.J. DeRosa reported that the department was looking at bringing in a third party to consult regarding the R3 position.

LAKES MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE: Commissioner Price. Commissioner S. Price reported that the committee met on January 18, 2023 and discussed legislation.

NH RIVERS MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE: Commissioner Hodgdon. Commissioner C. Hodgdon reported that the committee met on January 18, 2023 and discussed legislation.

Director Mason confirmed that the Governor nominated Commissioner C. Hodgdon to serve on this committee.

OLD BUSINESS: N/A

NEW BUSINESS: N/A

COMMISSIONERS REPORTS: Commissioners will report on their recent activities as it relates to Fish & Game Commission duties and responsibilities. This is an informational item only.

Commissioner A.J. DeRosa thanked Karen Bordeau, Small Game Project Leader, for allowing him to join her during the Wing & Tail Survey and for answering all his questions.

Commissioner S. Price reported that there were two reports of bobcats infected with rabies in 2022.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Director Mason reported that he recently attended the Bear Hunter's Meeting and the NH Trappers Association Banquet.

He reported that the Governor has presented his budget proposal to the Legislature.

He reported that the Governor has agreed to return a portion of the department's general fund monies, which were lost during the COVID period.

In addition, the Governor has also agreed to fund the four (4) unfunded Conservation Officer positions, two (2) of which will be funded out of the OHRV Fund and two (2) out of the general fund.

Governor Sununu also increased the department's GOFERR (Governor's Office for Emergency Relief & Recovery) grant for the Hatchery Rebuild Project by \$3.55 million dollars, in addition to proposing a capital budget item to replace the roof at Fish & Game HQ, recommending it be paid for with general fund monies.

Director Mason further reported that the Business Division did not get the new position funded, as requested, however, reported that it would be requested again before to the legislature.

He further reported that the request to move the part-time BOW (Becoming an Outdoor Woman) Coordinator position to a full-time position was also denied.

In closing, Director Mason reported that there is a proposed 10% staff salary increase for FY'2024 and a 2 % raise for FY'2025. He reported that the Governor has proposed to pay for the first two years with general fund monies; however, the question arising now is how self-funded agencies will pay for the raise in future budgets, and what that may look like, which could involve radical changes.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

Becky Philbrick, Hillsborough, NH – reported and described her attack by a rabid bobcat on her property. She reported that the both the States of Maine & Vermont have a bobcat season and asked the Commission to consider having a season for bobcat in New Hampshire as well, to manage the animals.

Kristina Snyder, Chester, NH – inquired as to whether Conservation Commissions were included as stakeholders, and whether they would be able to participate in the Stakeholders Survey of the Draft Outreach Plan, as they work closely with the Fish & Game Department. She recommended obtaining Conservation Commission’s feedback.

At this time, 4:17 p.m., Commissioner J. Caveney moved to adjourn and Commissioner E. Stohl seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Ray Green, Chairman
NH Fish & Game Commission