



6-7-20 NCNWTF Board Meeting

Conference Call

2:00 pm

Members Present: Henry Smith, Howard Rumfelt, Robert Smith, Ken Moore, Tim Draughon, Ted White, Perry Bryant, Bonni Stephenson, Richard Plattenberger, Roger Reynolds, Greg Ward, Brent Phillips, Luke Gibson, Jessi Sackett, George (Jason) Huffstetler

Members Absent: David Lee, Bill Collart

Guests: Ryan Stanley, Chris Kreh, Chris Coxen, Trey Oliver, Terri Campbell, Zac Morton, Bryan Perry, Phil Ferrare

Robert Smith started the meeting at 2:04 pm with opening remarks and welcomed all board members and guests.

Ken Moore gave the invocation.

Robert Smith presented the minutes from the last meeting. Motion to approve by Ken Moore, 2nd by Perry Bryant. Minutes were approved.

Henry Smith presented the financial report. Currently the State Chapter has \$13,261.20 in the checking account, \$5,942.12 in the seed program account, and \$180,484.31 in the superfund account. Ted White inquired about the check for the state scholarship winner and that check has been issued and is in the mail. Motion to approve by Ken Moore. 2nd by Ted White. Financial report was approved.

Chris Coxen presented the DB Update.

- The Superfund is currently frozen, and all banquets cancelled. All projects under strict review currently and funds committed are postponed. Chris has reached out to our partners to make them aware of this decision. Chris wanted to thank the NCWRC for allowing the postponement of payments until the current situation improves.
- Chris also made the Board aware that no new projects are considered for the Fall.
- Jason Huffstetler had a follow up question regarding if this was a NC decision or a nationwide decision and Chris stated this is a nationwide decision.
- Perry Bryant had a follow up question on the current burn projects conducted throughout the state and they are on hold as well. May revisit in the future and brought back to the Board.
- Chris made the Board aware that Gordon Myers has retired from the NCWRC and Cam Ingram has been named the new Executive Director of the Agency. Robert Smith stated Cam was a great asset and a good step forward for the Agency, and Cam has been very supportive of the NWTF efforts in the past.

- Chris touched on the Uwharrie National Forest project for forest management projects. Seeking \$60,000.00 in start up funds and they are seeking \$25,000.00 from another provider. More to come but this is the first step in a great program.
- Chris updated the Board on the Turkey Research Project video and article produced by the NWTF media group. Great information on the project.
- Chris updated the Board on the Nantahala National Forest project; June 29 is the deadline for final comments. Project consist of woodland restoration and burning and is a good plan. It has a lot of support at this point but must be implemented.
- Chris brought up Sunday Hunting on State Gamelands (public lands) to the Board. Meeting upcoming to discuss with key stakeholders. Chris feels it is a good opportunity as hunter numbers are decreasing.

Chris Kreh presented the Turkey Project Leader Update.

- Chris reported on the turkey harvest figures and 2020 was the highest harvest rate to date. The initial numbers show 23,431 turkeys were harvested in NC. This was achieved due to fact more hunters and a lot more time to hunt due to Covid 19. More turkeys were harvested in the coastal region with a 37% increase and less in the mountain region.
- Chris stated they learn a lot from a year like this about turkeys, hunting pressure was up in all parts of NC and the harvest was slightly down on Gamelands. Gobbler harvest was up 18% and Jake harvest was up 87%. More youth hunters were in the woods and youth hunting week harvest was up 110%.
- Chris stated the hunter survey are mailed out and underway.
- Robert Smith asked about thoughts on the years ahead and Chris stated a lot of positive comments from hunters and some not so positive. For the most part long term seems fine with no major concerns in decline but could see regional declines.
- Chris provided an update on the Turkey Ecology Project conducted by NC State University. The project got off the ground in January and all trapping was complete before Covid 19. Overall, they caught 287 turkeys, trapping went well in the mountains and piedmont and fell a little in the coastal region. Monitoring of the turkeys thus far 15% of males got taken during the Spring season, monitoring 100 nests thus far with a 20% success rate which is low.
- Robert Smith asked about potential impacts to the Turkey Ecology Project due to Covid 19, only impact thus far was not hiring an additional technician but funding has not been affected.
- Chris commented hunting licenses and fishing licenses were way up this year. This is good.
- Greg Ward asked about getting the equipment back on a harvested turkey, did we get it back and Chris responded yes. Each bird receives a leg band with a contact phone number to call.
- Howard Rumpfelt asked about the impact of predators and so far, it has been a lot according to Chris.

Ryan Stanley presented the RD Update.

- We need your patience through this difficult time, and he introduced Phil Ferrare-Director of Field Operations for the NWTF.
- Phil stated that what is currently going on with Covid 19 will affect the NWTF, but we will come out of this better and stronger than ever because of our members. So far, the NWTF has weathered the storm well.
- Getting back to normal will be on a case by case basis due to the current state and local restrictions on Covid 19.
- Phil stated the NWTF is assessing opening back up and reviewing restrictions on number of people and PPE.
- Phil thanked NC for their efforts, and everything is on the table currently, we are ready open up and get back at it.
- Jason Huffstetler had a follow up question on who has the authority on banquets and that would be Becky Humphries and top-level management at the NWTF. Phil stated you should coordinate with your RD to establish guidelines, but the event needs to be profitable.
- Richard Plattenberger had a follow up question regarding who furnishes the PPE the Chapter or the State? This is an issue that needs to be discussed.
- Phil touched on current restrictions in NC and things are currently shut down and the statewide restrictions need to be lifted to get back to some normal activities. Some banquets are starting back up in other states currently.
- Trey Oliver touched on all the online raffles being conducted and thank everyone for their support. Robert Smith requested an updated Chapter and contact list from Trey and Ryan and they are compiling and will forward to Robert.

Howard Rumpfelt presented the Seed Program update.

- Howard stated the program is running well so far, there is a shortage on corn this year, but Zac Morton found more in SC. Soybeans arrived last week.
- Howard mentioned Bobby Trantham and what a huge help he has been on this program.
- There should be no issues getting rid of the seed and everyone that ordered received seed this year.
- Robert Smith commented that this was an important program our members and supporters.

Roger Reynolds and Richard Plattenberger provided an update on the reverse raffle. The event has been postponed due to the facility not allowing people in due to current Covid 19 restrictions.

Tim Draughon provided an update on the Frogman Event on July 25 at Sage Creek Archery in Surry County. This event has been postponed due to the current Covid 19 restrictions and we need to look at a date in 2021.

Bonni Stephenson provided an update on the State Youth Hunting Photo Contest. The contest has received a lot of positive feedback, touched a lot of youth and was good exposure. We did

experience one issue with the rules, so we need to work on the rule clarifications. The winner has been notified and arrangements have been made to pick up the prize.

Henry Smith and Bonni Stephenson provided an update on the State Raffle.

- Really need to sale raffle tickets, Henry has 8,000 and Bonni has 10,000 currently.
- Requests have picked up over the last 3 weeks.
- Prizes are in hand with approximately \$70,000.00 in prizes purchased.
- Discussion was to move forward with the raffle and push tickets!
- Robert Smith asked Henry on sales information from last year, we sold 21,155 tickets. The State Chapter's cut was \$109,125.00 with \$72,000.00 in expenses.
- People outside the NWTF are selling the largest number of tickets.
- The Board discussed several points regarding the raffle, it makes sense to get our name out there and continue for this year. It was discussed that we may possibly need to look at changes for next years raffle, possible smaller prizes or less prizes.
- The Board decided to hold for future discussion.

Brent Phillips provided an update on the museum. Due to the current restrictions not a lot to update on. The facility is shutdown to visitors, and he is awaiting feedback from the staff.

Roger Latham Award nominations were discussed. We have 2 nominations for this year, Ken Moore and Richard Plattenberger and we need to have a vote to determine the nominee. It was decided by the Board to conduct an anonymous email survey vote. Bonni was asked to assist with getting this sent out to the Board this afternoon for a vote. Bonni will email the Board and give a 2-hour window from 6:00pm to 8:00pm for the Board to cast their votes.

- Vote was conducted by the Board and Richard Plattenberger received the 2020 nomination.

Robert Smith brought up the current state of the NWTF and we need all hands-on deck to get through this. Need to review money sitting in Chapter checking accounts and funnel back to the NWTF to assist during this time. Zac Morton discussed challenges from other states to help the NWTF financially. Further discussion was conducted on this topic:

- Henry Smith brought up we currently have \$13,000.00 in the State checking account. Henry made a motion to commit \$5,000.00 to the NWTF. 2nd by Ted White.
- Robert Smith discussed committing \$30,000.00 over the next 3 years as a pledge.
- Bryan Perry brought up the current situation for the NWTF. Please understand were we are, \$5M - \$8M for banquet packages, this is like nothing we have ever seen before and we will have a difficult time getting out of this and the fate of the organization lies in the next 12 months.
- Zac Morton discussed the major donor program and the commitment can be pulled in, and states can do this as well.
- It is a time of survival for the NWTF due to the current situation.

Robert Smith made a motion to table the discussion and Henry Smith recedes the current motion and amends to \$30,000.00 over the next 4 years and challenges other

states to do the same. \$7,500.00 per year and doesn't have to be in equal payments.
2nd by Howard Rumfelt. Motion was approved.

Ken Moore made a motion to adjourn. Motion was approved.

Meeting adjourned at 4:30pm.