



FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION

Minutes of the March 16, 2006 Meeting

Attending Members

Jim Lynch
Al Ferris
Pierre Gadd
Dave Cook
Andrew Pozzi
Jo Bentz
Jeff Holden

Absent Members

Brock Dolman
Crystal Norris
Dennis Rosatti
Martin Bauman

Others

Ned Hill, approved commission on March 14, 2006
Alida Morzenti, The Bird Rescue Center
Martha Bentley, The Bird Rescue Center
Don Lullock, citizen
Mark Green, Laguna Foundation
Steve Riske, Department of Fish & Game
Brandon Bredo, Sonoma County Regional Parks
Michael Chiesa, Sonoma County Regional Parks
Doris Duncan, Sonoma County Wildlife Rescue
Veronica Bowers, Laguna Foundation
Deanna McAulay, Ag. Commissioner's Office

Co-Chairperson Andrew Pozzi called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Adoption of Minutes

A motion to accept the February minutes was made by Al Ferris with a second by Jim Lynch. Motion carried.

Correspondence

The following correspondence was received:

1. Mendocino County Fish and Game Commission sent a book in regard to the Grants Program from 1993-2002 titled *Volunteers with a Vision: The Funding of Our Future*

Financial Report

Old Business

Proposed Budgets for Fiscal Year (FY) 2006-2007 – discussion began regarding the proposed budgets for the FY 06-07.

On February 23, 2006, Jim Lynch and Crystal Norris met with Sonoma County's Agricultural Commissioner, Lisa Correia, to discuss transferring \$40,000 from the Net Reserve fund into the grant budget for FY 05-06. They were told that if approved by the Board of Supervisors (the Board) that the transfer might not happen in time for the April meeting.

Jim Lynch stated that the current FY 05-06 General Fund is out of budgeted grant money. Officially the commission cannot fund or approve grant requests, Jim stated. The commission decided to not take a straw vote at this time on the two grants that will be heard for a second time tonight. However, they will hear the second readings of the two grant requests tonight with the knowledge that the requestors will need to return at a later meeting for approval or denial of their grant requests provided that the Board approves the money transfer.

The commission began discussing the increase in expenditures for the FY 06-07 Proposed General Fund Budget. Jim explained the position of the Agricultural Commissioner's Office that having the projected expenditures exceeding the projected revenues would be acceptable because of the money available in the Net Reserve fund. If proposed budget for FY 06-07 projected amounts are correct then \$20,000 would be abstract from the Net Reserve.

Andy Pozzi brought up a rumor that he had heard regarding the Board taking money from the Commission's Net Reserve Fund. He contacted the Board and found out that it is just a rumor. He did add that the Board does have the power and right to take monies from the Net Reserve Fund at any time to use for fish and game habitat in the County of Sonoma.

A motion to accept the proposed General Fund Budget for the FY 06-07 was made by Al Ferris with a second by Jim Lynch, and an opposed vote by Andy Pozzi. Motion carried.

A motion to accept the proposed Abalone Fund Budget for the FY 06-07 was made by Jim Lynch with a second by Andy Pozzi. Motion carried.

Second Reading The Bird Rescue Center – Alida Morzenti and Martha Bentley from The Bird Rescue Center were present requesting a grant for \$6,000 for Songbird Diet Research & Improvement.

Al Ferris asked Alida how the crickets and worms are maintained? Alida replied that the crickets and worms are ordered as needed. The Center had tried to farm/raise worms but maintenance of the worms was costly. So a sack of 1,000 mealworms runs the center about \$46. Alida added the busy season is from mid April to mid September during baby bird season.

Andy asked what is wrong with what you have been feeding the baby birds in the past? Alida stated that baby birds couldn't be raised on anything and released. The center would like to release birds at optimal health by studying the birds' diet and nutrition.

Al asked if the grant money requested was for research and improvement? Alida said, yes it is specifically for research and feeding which includes time and effort to discover nutrition requirements for different species. As part of the research they plan on following the soft releases up to three weeks. Alida hopes to duplicate actual weights as wild birds and base the research on scientific data.

Andy thanked Martha and Alida for attending and explained that there is no money left in the FY 05-06 grant budget. Therefore the commission cannot approve this grant at this time, so there will be no vote tonight. There is a possibility of available money for the April meeting. The Agricultural Office will notify you if the Board approved the money transfer.

Second Reading "Learning Laguna" – Mark Green and Veronica Bowers of Laguna Foundation were present requesting a grant for \$3,600 for their "Learning Laguna" Education Program.

Mark Green passed out additional quotes for the scope and taxidermy.

Al inquired what the distance is that the scope would be expected to view? Mark stated at times up to a mile. Mark agreed with Al in regard to the scope does not need to be the top of the line because of the users being school children.

Jo Bentz added that she supports the taxidermy and scopes but has a problem with funding buses. Mark responded the money allows schools that do not have buses available through their district to transport children on field trips. Some school districts do not allow the parents to transport children on field trips due to liability. Al added that transportation is not what commission was designed for. Mark added that ten percent of the classes who attend a field trip to the Laguna need transportation assistance. The total amount budgeted for the transportation per year is \$3,500 and the foundation is requesting \$1,000 in their grant request.

Andy thanked Mark for attending and explained that there is no money left in the FY 05-06 grant budget. Therefore the commission cannot approve this grant at this time, so there will be no vote tonight. There is a possibility of available money for the April meeting. The Agricultural Office will notify you if the Board approved the money transfer.

New Business

First Reading Abalone Enforcement Program – Brandon Bredo and Michael Chiesa of Sonoma County Regional Parks is requesting a grant for \$14,149.30 for an Abalone Enforcement Program.

Michael explained how the Sonoma County Regional Parks Rangers are involved with Department of Fish and Game Wardens, California State Park Rangers, and Sonoma County Sheriff's Deputies in Abalone Enforcement. He maintains the database for all involved. This grant would provide tools to Park Rangers that will effectively gather abalone fishing intelligence for the shared database. Casio Pocket PCs with magnetic card swipes would be bought and used in the field of abalone fishing. The magnetic card swipes will allow the ranger to obtain information from the driver's license of the abalone fisher with one quick swipe ID information is downloaded.

Andy asked if this database was useful during last year's season? Michael answered it is hard to analyze because of the 50 percent in staff reductions. There are four rangers patrolling the Sonoma County's north coast and four rangers in Bodega Bay.

Pierre inquired what if you, Michael, leave the department what will happen to the knowledge that you have regarding the program? Michael explained the goal of the system is to have it up and running and train all involved with the knowledge.

Jim Lynch supports the priority of abalone enforcement. He also asked if the grant could be broken up into two grants for funding purposes? Because the grant budget for the Abalone fund is only \$5,000. Michael stated the season is April through June. Steve Riske added that last year Michael had found that most divers had their abalone report cards full by the end of April. Andy does not think it would be a problem to go to the Board to request a money transfer from the Abalone net reserve to the FY 05-06 budget.

Andy Pozzi thanked Michael for attending and stated this would be considered the first reading of this grant.

Reports and Comments

Board

Jim introduced Ned Hill as the recent appointee by the Board as of March 14, 2006.

Ned stated he has worked with Pierre and Jim in the past and looks forward to serving on the commission. He added that he is a grape grower in the county as well as a hunter and fisherman.

Public

Doris Duncan reported back to the commission in regard to equipment purchased with last year's approved grant request. She states that the equipment is used on a daily basis and Sonoma County Wildlife Rescue thanks the commission. Jim asked Doris if she would coordinate with Crystal to get on an agenda to give the commission a presentation. Doris stated she would like to do that.

Don Lullock stated after reading parts of the *Volunteers with a Vision: The Funding of Our Future* from Mendocino County Fish and Game Commission that the commissioners ought to read the preface. He also asked if grant recipients are required to report back to the commission? Jim Lynch stated our enforcement/follow-up does not have a dedicated person. The commission requires that each recipient report back to the commission within a year of their grant approval.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Deanna McAulay, Secretary