

## Minutes of the October 18, 2007, Meeting

### Attending Members

Crystal Norris  
Pierre Gadd Jr.  
Jo Bentz  
Martin Bauman  
Gene Gaffney  
Al Ferris  
Andrew Pozzi  
Brock Dolman  
Ned Hill  
Dave Cook

### Absent Members

Jim Lynch  
Jeff Holden

### Others

Melania Mahoney, Wildlife Fawn Rescue  
Marjorie Davis, Wildlife Fawn Rescue  
Joe Saitta, Wildlife Fawn Rescue  
Jim Goodman, Dept Fish & Game HE  
Andrew Swan, Snow Goose Productions  
James Swan, Snow Goose Productions  
PJ Lang, Wildlife Rescue  
Doris Duncan, Wildlife Rescue  
Chris Ceccarelli, Wildlife Rescue  
Alex McVicker, Ag. Commissioner's Office  
Dagny Thomas, Ag. Commissioner's Office

Chairperson Crystal Norris called the meeting to order at 7:34pm.

### **Adoption of Minutes**

Crystal asks for a motion to accept the August minutes due to there not being a quorum last month. A motion to accept the August minutes was made by Gene Gaffney, with a second by Andy Pozzi. Motion carried.

Crystal asks if there are any additions or corrections to the September minutes; there were none. A motion to accept the September minutes was made by Al Ferris, with a second by Pierre Gadd. Motion carried.

### **Correspondence**

A. Proposed regulatory action letters from the State of California Fish & Game Commission:

- *Importation, Transportation, and Possession of Live Restricted Animals*
- *Sections 353 and 475, Title 14, California Code of Regulations – Regarding methods authorized for taking big game, non-game birds and non-game animals*

## **Financial Reports**

Crystal asks if there are any questions about the August financial reports; there are none. A motion to accept the August 2007 financial reports is made by Pierre Gadd, with a second by Gene Gaffney. Motion carried.

In September the Abalone Fund received \$20.00 from Central Collections and \$75.00 from Probation, with a fund balance of \$7,598.59. The General Fund received \$5,030.94 from Superior Court revenues, and \$327.23 from Probation, with a fund balance of \$175,225.08. A motion to accept the September 2007 financial reports is made by Andy Pozzi, with a second by Al Ferris. Motion carried.

## **Old Business**

Crystal states that the Salmon Creek Watershed Council will not be present tonight to give a grant report.

**Final Reading of The Fish and Game Warden video documentary, Snow Goose Down Productions** - James Swan, Ph.D., of Snow Goose Down Productions, LLC, is requesting a grant for \$30,000 for "Endangered Species: The Fish and Game Warden" video documentary (56 min video).

James Swan passes out an updated budget proposal to the commissioners and outlines some of the recent financial commitments made by The Northern California Council Federation of Fly fishers, the Foundation for North American Wild Sheep and additional other county Fish & Game Commissions.

Crystal asks James if he's raised nearly \$20,000 to date and he confirms this. She then asks if there are any further questions or comments about this grant request, there are none.

A motion to accept the grant request for the amended amount of \$2,500.00 for "Endangered Species: The Fish and Game Warden" video documentary is made by Andy Pozzi. A second is made by Gene Gaffney. Motion carried for Grant #119 to Snow Goose Down Productions.

**Second Reading of New Fawn Enclosure, Wildlife Fawn Rescue** - Melania Mahoney, Director of Wildlife Fawn Rescue is requesting a wildlife grant for \$801.97 for the reimbursement of construction materials for a new fawn enclosure.

Crystal asks if there are any further questions or comments about this grant request; there are none.

A motion to accept the grant request in full for \$801.97 for New Fawn Enclosure is made by Gene Gaffney. A second is made by Pierre Gadd. Motion carried for Grant #120 to Wildlife Fawn Rescue.

**Second Reading of Public Education Display Aquaria, Bodega Marine Laboratory** - Karl Menard, Public Display Coordinator of the Bodega Marine Laboratory, is requesting a grant for \$9,000 for Bodega Marine Laboratory Public Education Display Aquaria.

Crystal reviews the content of the Bodega Marine Lab presentation from September.

Pierre feels it's a shame to lose the aquaria since so much time and nearly \$40,000 has been spent to refurbish them. He is concerned about what will happen to the tanks next year, if the commission approves the grant for \$9,000 this year. He suggests awarding the grant in the amount of \$4,000-\$5,000.

Andy Pozzi also questions the continuation of the Aquaria project next year. If this year's expenses are met and used up, where will the funds come from next year? Andy would like more answers and suggests \$4,500 as an award amount. He thinks that the commission should put a stipulation on the use of the funds if the grant was awarded. He feels that Karl should not be asking for the funds until the tanks are ready to be maintained.

Crystal points out that the original annual operating cost for the aquaria was \$25,000 and that Karl has managed to reduce the annual operating budget of the project radically to \$12,000 - \$15,000. She includes the fact that Karl is also looking elsewhere besides the commission for grant funding.

Jo Bentz outlines some of the ways that the money would be spent: cleaning the tanks, taking care of the specimens, training accredited volunteers to assist with upkeep. She also states that some of the funding will be coming directly from researchers working on the project – which is a good sign regarding the integrity of the project.

Gene Gaffney wrote Karl an email suggesting he ask the Sonoma County Community Foundation for grant funding for the project. Gene has similar concerns to those of Pierre and Andy regarding the upkeep of the tanks after the first year grant is exhausted.

Crystal states that due to the fact that neither Karl Menard, nor a representative of the Bodega Marine Laboratory is present, the commission chooses to table making a decision on the grant request until the next meeting in November.

## **New Business**

**First Reading of Outdoor Classroom, Sonoma County Wildlife Rescue** – Doris Duncan, Executive Director, is requesting a grant in the amount of \$5,933.54 for an Outdoor Classroom for SCWR's Educational Outreach Program.

Doris Duncan introduces herself, Chris (SCWR's new Animal Care Assistant), and Peter Lang with Safari West (who has committed to assisting with the Outdoor Classroom project).

Doris explains that the reason they need a new outdoor classroom space is due to their indoor space being taken up by rescued animals coming in and for training their volunteers. They have many groups coming in for education: senior citizens, Cub Scouts, public & private schools, home schooled children, other wildlife centers and other animal agencies. She states that there will be a wide range of age groups visiting the facility.

She explains that the grant funds will be used to renovate the old cow barn structure, buy art supplies and equipment for the classroom. The teaching focus will be natural wildlife habitats, conservation and open space. There will be a science lab area, summer camps and organic gardening activities. Doris met with Cree Morgan and Andrew Smith, Agricultural Biologists with the Ag Commissioner's Office and garnered their assistance with the organic gardening project.

Doris goes over the specific item costs of the project and says that all of the construction tools and labor are going to be donated, they are just asking for building materials and initial classroom supply setup.

Andy Pozzi then asks about the concrete, windows and other line item costs listed on the grant. Peter Lang answers that these materials will be used for weatherproofing and sealing the structure. Andy wants to know about the type of heater that they are using and why it's needed. Peter answers that the structure will be "natural" with wood chip floors and a heater will be necessary during the colder months. Andy suggests using a propane (instead of electric) heater to save on operational costs. Andy offers to look into getting a propane tank/heater donated and possible discounts on concrete.

A PowerPoint presentation is shown which portrays the variance of different groups that will be using the classroom: seniors, disadvantaged children, school children - along with a comprehensive overview of the structure, the current renovations that have been made, and a digitally enhanced photo of what the classroom would look like when the project is complete.

Ned Hill wants to know if the Fish & Wildlife Commission is the only entity that is being asked for money. Doris states that she's asked their membership for much of the donated time, labor, and classroom equipment. Ned points out that the commission has awarded a large amount of grant money to Wildlife Rescue over the years and asks about the possibility of public acknowledgement for the cumulative size of the grants. Doris replies that SCWR would be happy to put a plaque out in their facility recognizing the commission. Al Ferris states that he would prefer that the commission not be publicly recognized.

Pierre Gadd likes the fact that they are using an existing structure and is impressed that they have been able to obtain so much of the construction labor and project resources through donations and volunteerism. He wants to know if they have the necessary permitting. Doris replies that all the necessary permits have been obtained.

Jo Bentz asks if they have gardening supplies at the center. Doris says not at this time, but they will be included in the supply purchase. Jo then asks what "habitat enrichment" means in

the project description of the grant. Doris replies that it provides enrichment for the rescued animals in their enclosures; it offers a series of gradually more complex environmental enclosures for the animals to rehabilitate in and for the visitors to observe.

Brock Dolman offers Wildlife Rescue his assistance with their children's organic gardening program through his classes at the Occidental Arts & Ecology Center.

## **Reports and Comments**

### **Commission**

Gene Gaffney speaks about the vernal ponds now filling with water on Occidental Road. Jo Bentz says that she has sent an email to Ted Linfield, a Flatlands Biologist, inquiring about the site. Ted confirmed that it was a Burk's Gull replant site. She also mentions that Gene Cooley, a Fish & Game Botanist, was at the site laying soil and seeding it. Gene asks the commission if it, as a whole, has any influence over the collections of debts to the Abalone Fund. Crystal says that there is nothing the commission can do.

Ned Hill says that he had an opportunity to attend an event hosted by Dick Cuneo honoring the Acting Director of the State Department of Fish and Game. Ned got to meet a wide variety of people involved in Fish and Game and discussed the shortage of wardens with many of them. Grape harvest ended last week for him and duck season opens soon.

Brock Dolman passed out an educational brochure on watershed education - published and printed by the Occidental Arts and Ecology Center. He just returned from New Mexico and mentioned how dry it was. He won't be attending next month's meeting.

Andy Pozzi suggests that the board consider making all grant requests \$2,500.00. He feels that the grant requests are getting out of control, especially Wildlife Rescue. He wonders if they will continue to use the commission as their primary source of funding. Crystal says that since 1996 Fawn Rescue has received \$5,700.00 in grant awards; Bird Rescue has received \$14,000.00 in grant awards; and Wildlife Rescue has received \$19,900.00 in grant awards (not including the current grant proposal).

Martin Bauman will not be attending next month's meeting as he will be in Kenya. He is going with an ethno botanist to research medicinal plants and water levels that nomadic peoples are accessing and how the water sources are being affected by global warming. Last month he was in Costa Rica to observe nesting turtles with his family.

Pierre Gadd visited the East Coast and didn't see much wildlife at all. He did see migrating whales from his cruise ship and was impressed that the ship steered clear of their migration pattern. He mentions the proliferation of invasive plants & animals to existing ecosystems.

Al Ferris visited Oroville to go fishing. He also saw an eagle that agitated a flock of pigeons.

Jo Bentz asks what Mute Swans are and is told they are the "classic" swan - the name comes from their call. She then asks if any swans ever go to the lagoon. The commission says that some trumpeter swans have been seen, but they aren't common in this area.

Dave Cook spoke with Liam Davis from Fish & Game and was told that 800 acres of preserve land on the Santa Rosa plain has endowments for long term management. He went scuba diving in Southern California with 70 foot visibility.

### **Public**

Marjorie Davis and Melania Mahoney, from Fawn Rescue, thank the commission for their consideration and approval of their grant.

Jim Goodman, of CDFG, announces his upcoming Hunter Education class on October 29<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup>, and November 1<sup>st</sup>.

Dagny Thomas, from the Ag Commissioner's Office, announces that the department has hired a new Wildlife Specialist (formerly the Hunter/Trapper) named Jim Connors. Pierre Gadd elaborates on the scope of Jim's duties and Crystal mentions the nuances of the new position.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dagny Thomas

Secretary