



FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION

Minutes of the September 18, 2008 Meeting

Attending Members

Crystal Norris
Martin Bauman
Gene Gaffney
Brock Dolman
Jo Bentz

Absent Members

Al Ferris
Andrew Pozzi
Dave Cook
Jim Lynch
Jeff Holden
Ned Hill

Others

Tom Thomason, United Anglers of Casa Grande
Katie Thomason, United Anglers of Casa Grande
Victoria Johnston, Harmony Union School
Alex McVicker, Ag. Commissioner's Office
Dagny Thomas, Ag. Commissioner's Office
Jim Goodman, DFG Hunter Education
Tom Henderson, DFG Hunter Education

Chairperson Crystal Norris called the meeting to order at 7:43 p.m.

Crystal announces that there is not a quorum and the commission will not be able to approve items at this meeting.

Adoption of Minutes

Crystal asks if there are any additions or corrections to the August 2008 minutes. There were none. With no quorum, August minutes will be approved at the October meeting.

Correspondence

- A. Correspondence from California State Fish & Game Commission regarding various regulatory actions
- B. Emails from Andrew and James Swan, Snow Goose Down Productions, regarding "Endangered Species" documentary video production progress
- C. Thank You note from Jason Wells, 2007-2008 scholarship recipient

Financial Reports

In August, the Abalone Fund received \$100.00 from Central Collections, with a fiscal year fund balance of \$12,000.00.

The General Fund received \$4,951.21 from Superior Courts and \$427.62 from probation, with a fiscal year fund balance of \$44,300.00.

With no quorum, the August financial reports will be approved at the October meeting.

Crystal adds that she included fund balance summary sheets that she has been keeping for the General Fund and Abalone Fund from 2000-2008.

Old Business

The final version of the ***Guidelines Regarding Fund Balance and Grant Funding*** included in the Commissioner's packets will be submitted by the Ag Commissioner's Office as an agenda item for approval by the Board of Supervisors in October. The final version reflects the input and changes suggested by the Commission to the County Administrator's Office.

New Business

Tom Furrer, Director, United Anglers of Casa Grande High School, is requesting a grant in the amount of \$10,000.00, for *Purchase of Van to Transport Students*, first reading.

Tom Thomason, President of the Board, of the United Anglers, is in attendance on behalf of Tom Furrer. He's been with the project for the last five years, and both of his daughters have participated in the project. He introduces his daughter Katie.

Mr. Thomason states that the need for a van for the United Anglers has arisen out of the changes to new State driving laws regarding teenage drivers. In the past, the students used to support the needs of transporting themselves to sites and events by driving one another. Now that the teen driving laws have changed, only one of 21 participating students is legally qualified to drive other students to project locations and events. He says that this has put an increased burden on parents during work hours, and will make some trips impossible for the entire group when parent drivers are unavailable. The students are regularly on-site doing studies, analysis, etc., according to the tides and fish migration - which can be very spontaneous and nearly impossible to coordinate with multiple cars, students and parent drivers.

A new project being implemented this year is the Mad Fish Project, which involves using 25 years of collected fish DNA samples to create a DNA history of local fish with scientists at local labs (The Buck Institute in Novato, and the Romberg Tiburon Institute in Tiburon). This will involve the need for students to travel two to three times per week to these labs out of the County.

Much of the salmon migration study that occurs in December, on-site at the Petaluma River, can last from midnight to 1:00am in the morning, which falls far past the 11:00pm state curfew for teen drivers. During January and February the students have internships at the fish hatchery at Lake Sonoma.

The project has remained 100% funded by the students, due to their incredible annual fund-raising efforts. No funds are provided by the school district. Tom Furrer has just received the Jefferson Award from the American Institute of Public Service, "...recognizing his leadership and commitment to the Adobe Creek Restoration Project."

Crystal Norris requests that the United Anglers submit three revised price quotes for the van during the second reading of the grant request in October. She also suggests that they consider looking at used vehicles, instead of brand new ones, and to look online for potentially lower prices. She would

like the Anglers to also consider different options for van sizes and models when submitting the three bids.

Jo Bentz understands the need for the request and appreciates the information about the project. She would be more comfortable with the grant request if it were for direct program funding, trainings for the kids or even for hatchery equipment – and not for a direct vehicle purchase. She feels that buying a vehicle falls out of the guidelines set for the Commission to award grants. She thinks that it is indirectly related, but not directly related. She says she will have to think about it.

Crystal agrees that it will be challenging to fit the grant request for a vehicle purchase into the new guidelines set for awarding grants, but encourages the United Anglers to submit three revised bids at the second reading. Since there is not a quorum tonight, the absent commissioners may have additional questions at the October meeting.

This is the first reading of the grant, the grant request will be carried over and the second reading will be at the October meeting.

Victoria Johnston, Project Facilitator, Salmon Creek Falls Environmental Center, is requesting a grant in the amount of \$13,590.00, for *Vegetated Roof for the New Salmon Creek Falls Environmental Center*, first reading.

Victoria Johnston, Project Facilitator introduces herself and explains that this project has been in development since 2003. There are seven projects that are in development for the site, six of which have been completed. In 2003 the campuses were combined, and one was sold. This specific project is a \$3.5 million project, for which they have received about \$3.25 million to date.

The vegetative roof project is part of the culmination of the union of the two campuses in the Environmental Center building. The building itself is completed, and is a public use building to be rented out to organizations within Sonoma County.

Benefits of the living roof include: educational benefits to schools and the general public, ecological benefits related to zero-net runoff, natural soil filtration, re-diversion of rainwater into the wetlands, rainwater collection for dry season irrigation, and the retention of surface flow to recharge the groundwater system. This will demonstrate Best Management Practices in regard to runoff and the surrounding environment. The Environmental Center building is under review to receive a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold certification for its green design and construction.

Crystal Norris asks Victoria to submit an itemized list of the types of plants and costs to be purchased as listed in the Budget for this project. She states that due to the fiscal year budget limitations for grant requests, it is realistic that the commission may only fund part of this grant if approved; for the “Cost of Materials”, for example. Crystal says that she supports the program and the work that Salmon Creek School is doing.

Gene Gaffney feels that this program is extremely beneficial in relation to “getting the word out” through educational channels to school children and the greater community at large. He then asks Victoria how much outreach is occurring to school districts such as Roseland, regarding exposing other schools to the Environmental Center and its many programs. Victoria says that they have been doing much outreach to the Roseland School District over the past few years, but emphasizes the

need to complete the project in its entirety, before expanding upon that, so educational outreach resources can be focused entirely on teaching.

Jo Bentz asks if the building will be available for anyone to use. Victoria answers that it is an indoor public use building, with the intention that it be available for use by organizations and groups after school and on weekends and be financially self-sustaining.

Brock Dolman emphasizes that this project will help to demonstrate the connection of human development “footprints” and the relation of water quality and water quantity (storm water runoff and volume) and how we can redesign and connect the two as a working model that can educate students and the public at large. Victoria adds that this would be the first commercial living roof in Sonoma County.

This is the first reading of the grant; the grant request will be carried over and the second reading will be at the October meeting.

Jim Goodman, Department of Fish and Game – Hunter Education, discusses possible options to offer his classes to low income urban kids. (NOTE: *This was a discussion only, not a formal grant request.*)

After hearing the Commission’s comments at a prior meeting about the possibilities of reaching urban kids, Jim Goodman has been doing some research on the subject. He states that he suggested the project to the City of Santa Rosa, who supported the idea, but declined any involvement. He asks if it would be feasible to enter into a joint venture with the Fish & Game Commission to sponsor a few kids on a trial basis.

Crystal replies that she doesn’t think that based on the Fish & Wildlife Commission charter that the Commission could administer the program in relation to what they are mandated to do. She says that because it is an educational program, it does fall within the guidelines for consideration of a grant request. She says the program concept is similar to Department of Fish & Game’s (DFG) “Fishing In the City” program, but is unclear as to how it would be developed.

Jim Goodman spoke with Lt. Steve Riske of DFG regarding possibly working with the “Fishing In the City” organizers to find out how they developed their program, get suggestions about implementing a program to offer Hunter Education to disadvantaged, urban kids and find out what has worked and not worked for them in the past. This could offer the hunter education experience to kids that would not normally have the opportunity to do so.

Tom Henderson, DFG Hunter Education, mentions that one of the benefits of developing this program would be to show law enforcement and the use of firearms in a positive fashion to kids that may only have a negative association with them.

Jo Bentz asks who the firearms would be supplied by for this program. Jim replies that some firearms are provided by the instructors, and some are provided by the participants.

Tom Henderson says that the experience would reconnect kids that, due to life challenges and urbanization, have become disconnected from their ancestor’s traditions present in their cultural heritage. Their classes offer conservation education, ethics, environmental preservation and awareness, habitat preservation, and cultural traditional heritage, in addition to basic hunter safety.

Some ideas and concepts discussed were:

- Work in tandem with “Fishing In the City” and offer Hunter Education as an adjunct to one of their events on a trial basis
- Offer a two-part course, the first being general hunter safety and education, the second an outdoor class in a real hunting environment (as a sports person)
- Comprehensive education within the class regarding environment, habitat restoration & conservation, an overall awareness of the environment and the effect humans can have on it
- A “strategic alliance” of some kind with another local kid’s environmental awareness program that would enhance and expand the concepts of both programs (i.e. Boy Scouts, Salmon Creek School)
- Take the mystery out of firearms (offer another perspective on firearms other than what is seen through the media)
- Add an additional level of knowledge and understanding about firearms to urban kids: firearms as a tool, not a toy
- Beta test the program to a very small groups of kids to start – 10-25
- Potential target groups: Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, YMCA (Roseland area), 4-H, “Fishing In the City”, Steele Lane Community Center, LandPaths, Open Space, Roseland area community education groups
- “Catch” kids who are right at a crossroads in their lives regarding possible gang and crime involvement
- Reveal hunters as natural stewards of the land
- Work with county gang prevention groups
- Create a brochure to post on community center bulletin boards; see how big response is
- Post an ad in the newspaper
- Create a name for the program

Crystal asks Jim Goodman to draw up an outline of the project proposal to present to the Commission, including: target audience, goals, potential partnerships, size of classes, name of project, benefits, etc.

Reports and Comments

Commission - None

Public - None

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dagny Thomas - Secretary