

Ontario Federation of Anglers & Hunters
Zone F
Annual General Meeting
Perth Legion and Zoom
Meeting Minutes
April 11, 2024, at 6:00 pm

Call to Order:

Kerry called the meeting to Order at 6:00 pm.

Conservation Pledge:

The Conservation Pledge was recited by all those present.

Introductions by members present.

Members present introduced themselves for attendance.

Chair's Report:

Kerry Coleman delivered the chairs report, covering some of the highlights of Zone activities of the past couple of months.

Kerry mentioned the Zone's web page and we are always looking for new content in terms of stories, pictures, or accomplishments. If anyone has any questions or concerns regarding hunting, fishing, access, or Zone activities don't hesitate to contact a zone executive.

We are also looking to reach out to more clubs in the new year to hear about concerns and activities.

He also mentioned, we are always looking for volunteers to help with the zone activities and projects.

Kerry mentioned the OFAH is going through a reorganization. One thing that has changed temporarily is funding conservation projects. A club or individuals can still apply for funding to the zone. We will still review the project. When we are satisfied the project qualifies for funding, we will forward your request to head office for final approval. Head office will issue the cheques for approved projects. We always encourage clubs to submit requests for conservation projects. Conservation was a primary reason the OFAH was formed in 1938 and still a big reason why we exist today.

Acceptance Vote:

Acceptance of the Chairs Report was moved by Bob Emery, 2nd by Merrill Elliot.
CARRIED.

Secretary/Treasurer's Reports:

Minutes of General Meeting: October 12, 2023.

The minutes of the Zone General Meeting of October 12, 2023, was presented.
There were no questions or business arising from the minutes.

Acceptance of the minutes was moved by Ed Giffin, 2nd by Brandon Ross.
CARRIED.

Financial Report:

Ben reported the zone continues to be in a good financial position. Outstanding commitments relate to the payment for the AGM meeting and our storage locker. Ben also provided a brief update on the financial implications of the reorganization. Namely all expenditures will be controlled by head office and all accounts will have to be returned to Head Office to consolidate in a general fund.

There was several questions and discussions on this issue. Consensus was members were concerned about this action. They did not like the removal of local interest and input into project funding decisions and did not like the fact our sound financial management will be lost to Head Office activities.

Acceptance of the Financial Report was moved by Melissa Dakers, 2nd by Jim Tye. CARRIED.

Correspondence

There was no Zone correspondence to present.

Informal Supper Break:

There was an informal Supper Break for an informal pizza break.

Advisory Committee Reports: (all committee reports are posted on the Zone Website)

Agriculture Liaison Committee - Kerry Coleman.

CWD:

Kerry noted they had a meeting on October 23rd, covered many topics one of them being CWD. Kerry outlined the different variants of CWD, (scrappies, Mad Cow, BSE, etc.), It is present in Alberta, Saskatchewan, western Manitoba, it was present in Quebec in one instance. MNR is monitoring southwestern Ontario and other units. They require the head of an animal to test for the disease. It is very resistant to any combat efforts. It takes time to test, but health officials are recommending not eating an infected deer.

Wildlife Agricultural Conflict Group:

This group discusses several issues such as livestock predation losses. Avian Influenza and some research being conducted to deal with this issue. The ministry is urging hunters to exercise caution and protection efforts when cleaning birds. They also discussed Wild Pigs; it is now illegal to have Wild pigs in your possession. MNR has a special group that responds to capture entire sounders. This is a significant concern in Western Canada and southern United States.

Big Game – Ben Storey

Moose:

The Committee met on April 3, 2024; it was well attended by MNR officials. Various presentations were made.

Aerial Survey: Only 4 units were flown in the past winter 25, 29, 31, 32, due to winter conditions. They are looking at other ways of gathering data on the moose herd, which does not rely on winter ariel surveys. Modeling of data, hunter surveys, possibly other technology.

Harvest Planning: The updates to the regulations will be coming out soon. The only changes in harvest quotes were made in the 4 units that were flown in the winter.

Point Creep: Based on data reviewed there is slight decrease in the number of points required to draw a tag. Now there are very variations within WMU's, most tags can be drawn with 5-9 points. See page 72 of the of the Hunting Summary for break down of the number of points required.

There was some discussion on the issue of points, the number of points in some zones will preclude members from hunting given some levels, will only allow a hunter 1 to 2 tags in a lifetime.

Hunter Reporting:

MNRF representatives presented on the Hunter Reporting results. Most surveys are resulting in return rates of 88-96%. There is a new notice where the province has paused the suspension of hunting privileges for not providing a hunter report. The fine still stays at \$25 per year.

MNRF stated the reason for the change is not to dissuade hunters from purchasing a license.

There is a survey to see what changes should be made and to improve the reporting efforts.

Moose Research Project:

A presentation was provided on a important moose research project being conducted. As widespread moose population declines continue across their range. Biologists want to find out why there is such chronic low recruitment rates. This has been an on-going concern since the 2018 quota review and followed up with the moose science meeting in February 2020. The developed a 3-stage project to determine the reasons and provide solutions.

Black Bear

Resident Black Bear hunters have increased steadily since 2016. There has also been concerns over the allocation of Bear Management areas and tags available to/and within the Tourist Industry.

The ministry is looking to review the harvest management system, to review population estimates, evaluate habitat productivity and ensure a sustainable harvest.

CWD

Ontario continues to monitor and test for CWD, through check stations voluntary reporting and meat processing and taxidermy locations.

Last year 554 samples were taken, and no deductions were made. Testing locations were in Southwest near Sarnia, Central Algoma region and Northwest Ontario.

Risk model looks at:

Neighbouring Outbreaks

Game Farms

Deer Density

Prior Sampling efforts.

Future Licensing System

The current licensing system (Sovereign Sportsman Solutions) contract is up for renewal in 2027. MNRF are looking for improvements and/or changes to the system before a new contract is issued.

Main change is the provision of a mobile application for Digital Game Tags. This would allow users to hold their game tag on their phone utilizing an app, it would also allow users to virtually tag their animal and report the harvest while in the field. This is increasingly common in other jurisdictions in Canada and the states.

Feed Ontario

OFAH is looking at a partnership between OFAH and Feed Ontario a group looking to increase availability of food stuffs to the population. They are looking to lobby the government and foodbanks to allow the donation of wild game. Small game Advisory Committee has already looked at it.

Firearms – Ed Giffin

Federal Firearms Confiscation

Ed reported that since 2020, the liberal government has spent 42 million on the firearm confiscation program but have not confiscated a single firearm. This is double the initial estimate of the program. The government opened an invitation to firms who wanted to take part in the collection and destruction of the seized firearms but there has been no response.

Amnesty Extension:

The amnesty for those firearms that were prohibited by the Orders in Council had an amnesty that was extended to October 2023 and has now been extended again until October 2024.

The impacts of the failed gun legislation will have negligible impact on crime rates as most criminal firearms are smuggled into Canada from the United States. Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba, have stated they will not cooperate with the confiscation. It is estimated the gun ban will cost over 2 billion to implement.

Fisheries - Merrill Elliott.

Reported on a Next Gen ambassador's research paper on how Indigenous knowledge is reflected in fisheries research and management.

FAC is involved in American Eel conservation.

Transport Canada is looking at Mandatory Life Jacket for all.

Transport Canada to look at Navigable Water's act is up for 5-year review.

FMZ has not met recently. Merrial is looking to step back from the Fisheries Advisory Council, looking for volunteers to continue.

Indigenous Relations Committee:

Ed reported that this not been active for some time. There is no new information outside of the creation of the White Duck Provincial Park. There was previous information regarding compensation. The AIP back in 2012 determined 300 million as settlement amount. Some recent court settlements with respect to Land claims have well exceeded this amount. Most settlements are now reaching into the billion-dollar mark and expanding their rights in terms of water rights. The Algonquin band reviewed their membership list eliminating a number of previously eligible families, casting doubt on the whole process, that started back in 2016. As well Quebec Algonquin are now saying they should be involved in the process. Crown has stated it is up to the Algonquin to determine who should be involved. The whole process is now up in the air.

Land Use/ Trails/ Access - Bob Emery.

Bob presented a report from the committee that met on April 9th.

Temiskaming Shores Development:

There are concerns about a development being proposed within the unorganized area. There are a lot of concerns if this development is on Crown Land or private land.

Previously closed Provincial Parks:

ANTRA, wants to open previously closed Provincial parks in Northern Ontario due to the surge in demand for access Provincial Parks and outdoor spaces post Covid. They are also advocating for keeping accessible older logging roads open for access to public lands.

Right to Healthy Environment:

Kerry reported that there is a discussion paper at the provincial level on the Right to a Healthy Environment under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, this stems from a Swiss Court case where citizens filed a case against their government for not doing enough to protect a healthy environment and won. This could have further ramifications as similar cases are lodged against other governments by environmental groups.

Ontario Minister can have review powers over Conservation Authorities:

With drive to create more housing there is now a new regulation being introduced that will allow the Minister of Housing to override any regulations imposed by Conservation Authorities. Particularly the fill and dredge regulations that are used to protect wetlands.

Small Game - Kerry Coleman.

Changes in gauges allowed for Turkeys:

Currently the regulations limit the allowable gauges for Turkeys to 12- and 20-gauge shotguns. There have been some questions with regards to supporting expanding the gauges allowed. It is under further discussion.

Draft Wetland Framework for Canada:

There are no safeguards in place for wetlands now they have been all been removed by the latest conservative government. The Conservation Authorities have been taken out of the process. MNR doesn't have a review at all. This will have a significant impact on development and negative impacts on wetlands and environments.

Sporting Dogs - Kerry Coleman.

Train and Trial Areas:

The Ontario government recently passed new legislation to allow the construction of new Train and Trial areas and to allow the transfer of existing licenses to new owners. A 90-day period for new applications will be opened sometime in early 2024.

Big Game Blood Trackers:

The current regulations only allow tracking wounded big game animals with a trained dog on a leash during legal shooting hours. Blood Game Trackers are working with the Sporting Dog Committee to adjust the wording to allow tracking after dark. The adjusted wording was presented to the Big Game Advisory Committee and approved by the OFAH Board of Directors on September 7, 2023. Wording will be reviewed by OFAH staff and then presented to MNRF for consideration.

Conservation Authority Lands:

There are consultations underway to adjust the regulations of Conservation Authorities to allow the use of their lands to train dogs off leash with some authorities.

Eastern Ontario Deer Advisory – Bruce Hutchinson.

Bruce provided a report on the meeting held last week. He provided a copy of the details on the various WMU's numbers within the zone. This is the result of the hunter reporting efforts. Issues of concerns were, land clearing in zone 65 for agricultural, CWD, snowfall results and good fawn crop is expected. The preliminary doe allocations were discussed. Ministry is reluctant to split zones that are large and hard to manage.

Mazinaw/ Lanark LLC: Jan Kammerscaard

Kerry stated after many years of sitting on this committee Hans Van Rosen has decided to step down and Jan has agreed to be the Zone's representative on this committee. He reported they haven't met yet. They review the latest logging licenses and review any new roads or management issues. Each company needs a forestry management plan and issue an annual work schedule.

A motion to accept all the committee reports was moved by:
Bob Emery, 2nd by Bruce Hutchinson. CARRIED.

Club Reports:

Osgoode Fish and Game Club:

They reported they have a meeting coming up next week at Osgoode Legion and a Kids fishing derby in July. They did not have an ice fishing derby this year because of ice conditions.

Lanark and District Fish and Game Club: Jim Tye

Bottle Lake Road Access:

There is some movement on this now, hopefully will be able to see some progress on this file.

Paddy Lake Dam Replacement:

Looking to replace the stop logs at the Paddy Lake Dam that has been deteriorated. Looking to get MRNF to replace the logs.

Perth and Renfrew Gun Shows:

Jim mentioned the club had a booth at both the Perth and Renfrew Gun Shows. These were well attended.

DU Brandon

Dinner:

Brandon informed the group that the largest DU dinner event in all of Canada is going to occur in June

Ball tournament in August:

Looking at having a fundraising Ball tournament in August.

Wood duck Nesting Box Building

Looking to do a 2-day event of building with kids and then placing them on public wetlands.

Youth Hunt:

Also looking to do a Youth hunt this fall.

New Business

Looking for Volunteers for Walleye Count:

This idea came up at a previous executive meeting, if volunteers wanted to participate in a Walleye Count this spring to let Jeff Cote (MNR) know and he could provide directions to some observation's sites.

Old Business.

There was no old business raised.

Request for Funding

These requests came through the zone executive and then funnelled to Head Office for consideration. Only 3 received funding.

RFF 24-02: Eastern Ontario Youth Hunt: \$1,000

RFF 24-03: Grenville Fish and Game: \$2,500

RFF 24-04: Lower Trent Conservation: \$8,158.14

This was a for a study of a Brook Trout monitoring project and restoration work. It did not receive the full amount requested.

The request from Carleton University for Bass sanctuary locations was not approved. As well the Mississippi Conservation Authority request for a creek clean up was also rejected.

There was some discussion on the new submission rules and qualifications of projects. Kerry said people should contact us if they have any questions or require assistance for requesting funding.

Other Business:

The Door Prizes were then distributed via random tickets draw.

Upcoming meetings in 2024.

Kerry mentioned the following proposed meeting schedule:

- Thursday June 6th, 2024, at 6 pm.
- Thursday September 19th, 2024, at 6:00 pm
- Thursday December 12th, 2024, at 6:00 pm.

Adjournment

A motion for adjournment was raised by Merrill Elliott at 9:35 pm.

Ben Storey, Secretary

Date

Kerry Coleman Chair

Attendance:

Present: Kerry Coleman, Bob Emery, Merrill Elliot, Ben Storey, Ed Giffin, Jim Tye, John Palmer, Steven F. Base, James Lariviere, Jason Quinn. James Hay, Wayne Davidson, Art Ferguson, James Riva, Blake Rankin, Steve Rankin, Melissa Dakers, Warren Backler, Brandon Ross, Bruce Hutchings, Wayne Stephenson

On-Line: Dan VanExan,