

Disability Advisory Council Meeting
Navarino Nature Center
August 9, 2013

Members present: Jim Rutledge, John Mitchell, John Martinson, Kirsten Engel, John Kocourek, and Tom Zimmer

Members absent: Steve Johnson, Werner Burkat, and Joe Greene.

Others in attendance: Barry Gilbeck, Tyler Strelow, and Julie Amakobe

The meeting was called to order at 10:45 by Chair Tom Zimmer.

The Council had a moment of silence for Dale Petkovset, a long-time DAC member who recently passed away. Dale will be sadly missed by the DAC.

First agenda item was to approve/amend agenda. Jim Rutledge had an agenda amendment. Jim wanted to add the topic of a mini expo involving recreational groups that assist persons with spinal cord injuries. Joyce Casey, Recreational Therapist, with the spinal cord injury unit of the Milwaukee VA would like a mini expo involving PVA, Adaptive Sportsman, Challenge the Outdoors, North American Squirrel Association (NASA), etc. This item was to be added to the agenda for 11:00.

Chairman Zimmer had a topic regarding a severely disabled person that he wanted to be added to the agenda for 11:15.

Jim R. made a motion to approve the agenda with the amendments. John Mitchell seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Next on the agenda was the review of the last meeting's minutes. The last meeting was attended via a Conference Call on April 12, 2013.

Tom mentioned that he wanted Julie to write up some minutes from a conference call held on June 10, 2013, to show that the DAC took the initiative to address some important issues. It was not an official DAC meeting, nor was there a quorum. The minutes from this call will be an attachment to these minutes.

Tom had the following corrections:

John Mitchell, not John Martinson had wanted to hold off on the election of officers.

The spelling of the President of the Wisconsin Bow hunters Association is Brust and not Bess.

Tom clarified between term and term limits from the minutes on page 2. He wants to further discuss this issue at the next meeting and added to the agenda.

Jim approved the minutes with the corrections. John Martinson seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Julie announced that the new Accessibility Coordinator is Anthonette Gilpatrick. Anthonette is not new to accessibility nor is she new to the DAC. She worked with the DAC for several years during her tenure with the DNR. Tom indicated that Kirsten Engel is now on the Council. The Council now needs an alternate, so we may want to advertise the open vacancy. Tom asked Julie to contact Jenny Addis to see if she would like to join the Council. John Mitchell indicated that DNR should put out a notice on the DNR's "Open the Outdoors", and to Independent Living Centers, Adaptive Sportsman, NASA, etc., of the opening. There was discussion on what type of person, disabled versus able bodied, should be represented on the Council. Julie indicated that the Charter specified that at least one person on the Council be disabled. For now, the Council's representation/make-up will remain what it is.

The next agenda item was the election of officers. Tom made a suggestion that the Council wait until January of next year since we are in August already. It was decided that since there will be at least one more DAC meeting this year, that the Council proceed with the elections.

The nominations were as follows:

John Martinson was nominated for Vice Chair by Tom Zimmer and John Mitchell seconded via e-mail. A third and final request for Vice Chair was made. Jim moved to close the nominations and John Mitchell closed the nominations. John Martinson will be the Vice Chair. Jim Rutledge nominated Tom Zimmer for Chair and John Martinson seconded the motion. Kirsten nominated Jim Rutledge and John Mitchell seconded the nomination. Jim Rutledge declined. A third and final request for Chair was made. Jim Rutledge closed the nominations and John Martinson seconded the motion. Tom Zimmer will be the Chair. Congratulations to Tom and John!

Next on the agenda was the Deer Trustee Report. Tom indicated that there were four Action Teams created for this Committee. Originally there were to be seven meetings, but ended up with nine meetings in total. Tom went over some background regarding the April 27-August 26 meetings. There will be 35 locations for public hearings to get input from its customers. These will take place the last two weeks in October. On December 10th and 11th, the results and review of the public comments will go to the NRB and then ultimately rule adoption will occur. Kirsten wanted to know how these deer implementation proposals related to the disabled community.

Tom responded that on Page 4, #11 "Resolve cross-bow season issue" is one of the proposals that could impact the disabled hunter. In the document it states that crossbows shall have a separate license from the archery license, but would have the same hunting season period. The Bowhunters Association does not like having the same hunting season. It was also noted that Class A, B, and C permit holders should have the opportunity to use crossbows in the regular archery season should the crossbow season be shortened or eliminated. There was lots of discussion on this topic. Tom worked with Legislators, NRB, and Safari Club to ensure the disabled would still have the crossbow opportunities. DNR has control over the time periods and the Legislature has control over the type of weapon. In addition, Tom discussed the October antlerless hunt in the CWD zone.

Julie asked that if the crossbow season were the same as the youth hunt season, if this would shorten the actual disabled hunt time period. DAC does not want to discuss this now. The DAC will revisit this topic when we have a full council. John K. wanted more information regarding the gun deer disabled hunt which is the first Saturday in October for 9 days. The youth hunt is the first weekend in October for gun deer hunting.

Jim Rutledge told the Council that Joyce Casey of PVA has concerns about veterans coming back from Afghanistan and Iraq and wanting to hunt. They are in need of adaptive equipment. Ms. Casey would like the non-profits, for example, Challenge the Outdoors, NASA, Adaptive Sportsman, etc., to get together and have a mini expo and exhibit what they have to offer. John Mitchell said that DNR should be represented at the expo too. Kirsten indicated that this expo could also include vendors who offer opportunities other than hunting and fishing. Some examples are Gander Mountain, shooting range vendors, adaptive cycle and hand cycle vendors, adaptive kayak vendors and other opportunity vendors such as those associated with camping, etc. or anything related to the outdoors. There would need to be a suitable location that could handle this volume of vendors. The VA has an accessible bus to transport people. Jim will take the initiative and will call Steve Johnson, Jeff Pagels, etc. to get their input regarding the non-profits they represent.

Tom was contacted by an Assisted Living Center questioning what hunting opportunities existed for a severely disabled person who could only move his eyes. More information was needed before any action could be taken. Tom is waiting to get feedback from the Center.

Tom talked about a gentleman who likes to camp in state Parks. He indicated that the bench was not long enough for him to get dressed. If the bench was longer, he would not have to sit so close to the edge of the bench in order to touch the shower buttons. Jim said the bench should be wider, too. It was suggested that there be two buttons, one further away and one on the side. Julie and Anthonette will follow up with the capital development and engineering sections within their Bureau.

Kirsten wants the Council to address/look over plans and specifications for DNR accessibility projects. Devil's Lake has an accessible trail that is not accessible anymore because they put up rocks to keep away kids and bikers, etc. Anthonette and Julie are to select some of the more complex accessibility projects for the DAC to review.

Next Barry Gilbeck went over the Permit Application for hunting and/or trolling authorizations. This application covers all DNR disabled permits. Any suggestions on the form should be funneled through Tom Zimmer. Chris Thielman was given the go ahead to use this application. The wording can still be tweaked a bit if needed.

The next item on the agenda was the DAC awards. Tom wants to include Dale Petkovsek as one of the reward recipients. Tom wants to give out the awards at the next DAC meeting, possibly to be held in Minocqua. This could be an overnight (2 day) meeting with the first part of the meeting on Thursday afternoon with presentations on Friday morning at an outdoor setting. It was suggested that the DAC give the awards at night and then tour the NHAL during the morning. Kirsten suggested a Thursday afternoon meeting, Friday morning tour and a combined lunch award ceremony. (This location for the next meeting was since changed to Steven's Point Campus). The write-ups/nominations for the awards are due to Julie by August 31, 2013.

Tentative dates for the next meeting are October 17th and 18th in Minocqua.

The next agenda item was the Members' Updates:

Jim Rutledge - Jim said the Wisconsin State Trap Shoot moved to Rome Township by Wisconsin Rapids. They have accessibility issues that need to be brought up to ADA standards. Jim also noted that Yellowstone Lake State Park moved the opening of its shooting range, including the construction updates, to September 1, 2013. The PVA trap shoot in Green Bay had eighty-five in attendance, including fifteen youth participants.

John Mitchell – John let the Council know that the Adaptive Sportsmen will have a bow hunt in Baraboo during the first weekend in October. Adaptive Sportsmen also held an event (shooting activity/picnic) at the Schultz Shooting Center in Muskego on August 3rd featuring trap, archery, rifle and pistol ranges during which seventy-eight people attended. The ages of the attendees ranged from seven to ninety three. The HQ100 Sip and puff machine that holds and shoots a gun was available.

John Martinson – John told the Council about the Outdoor Adventures for the Physically Challenged (A Wisconsin/Wyoming non-profit). Go to its website www.outdooradventurespc.org, apply for the hunt, and then wait. The organization pays for everything. This hunt/adventure is located in Newcastle, Wyoming. This organization owns the land on which they hunt. One can hunt for antelope, mule deer, turkey and whitetail. John also mentioned that the Montello Rod and Gun Club sponsored a sporting clay shoot on August 3rd. Challenge the Outdoors was a big contributor to this event.

Kirsten – None.

Tom – None.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:05.