

EDUCATION, PLANNING AND OUTREACH MEETING MINUTES
4000 WEST BROAD STREET
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA
DECEMBER 12, 2006, 7:30 am

Present: Sherry Crumley, Madam Chair, C. Marshall Davison, Jimmy Hazel; **Director:** J. Carlton Courter, III; **Senior Staff:** Gary Martel, David Whitehurst, Colonel Mike Bise; Ray Davis, Virgil Kopf and Bob Duncan. **Absent:** Ward Burton.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the August 21, 2006 meeting have been made available to the Committee members and posted on the Agency's web site. **Mr. Hazel moved, second by Mr. Davison, passed unanimously in a show of hands vote, to approve the minutes as written. Ayes: Sherry Crumley, Jimmy Hazel, C. Marshal Davison.**

Game Warden Recruitment and Retention: The staff gave a brief presentation on the Recruitment and Retention of Game Wardens. Eighteen new Game Wardens have been hired. **Issues discussed were:** competitive starting salary; attrition (retirement, increased job market in other localities or agencies, increased workload); recruitment (minority recruitment and application requirements); increasing attendance in the Academy. **Recommendations:** (1) work with General Assembly to obtain general funds and a name change from Game Warden to Conservation Police Officer to become more competitive externally and to obtain possible public safety funding. The staff recommended the Board support a name change for the Game Wardens in the future. The Board requests the director ask for this to be a 5 minute agenda item at a meeting of the legislatures Sportsman's Caucus during General Assembly. (2) improve working conditions; (3) develop and implement a recruiting process that attracts qualified individuals who truly desire to be Game Wardens; (4) stabilize the Division; (5) establish internship programs to assist with administrative duties and bring non-certified recruits on board after the conditional offer of employment has been made. The non-certified recruit can assist with administrative duties to give them a real world experience (kill permits; trout stocking; responding to minor wildlife nuisance complaints, etc.); (6) evaluating work load to ensure the appropriate number of Game Wardens are assigned to locality. **Works in progress:** (1) pilot of 3 projects to improve working environment; (2) development and implementation of pilot to utilize internships, volunteers and part-time employees to assume some of the administrative burdens; (3) completed screening and made a six month temporary assignment for a Game Warden Recruiter; (4) increased partnerships for the Academy/law enforcement training and communications center; (5) extensive recruitment for 2007. Update to be provided at the next committee meeting.

Families Afield Initiative: Virginia has been viewed as not being a hunter friendly state because of certain restrictions. The Board has been approached by the Congressional Sportsman's Foundation and the National Wild Turkey Foundation to look at changing this perception. The Board presented a DVD on a program initiative called Families Afield. This initiative promotes an apprentice program that allows the easing of certain hunting licensing requirements. Virginia has been proactive in hunter education but the

Hunter Education Program has also been seen an impediment for people ages 12-16 desiring to hunt. An online course for hunter education is being prepared to include Virginia-specific information to make it easier to complete this requirement before purchasing a hunting license. Upon completion of the course, a proctored test can be scheduled with a volunteer. The Board requests a meeting between the staff and Tammy Sapp of the Wildlife Turkey Federation., who is heading the Families Afield Initiative. The National Shooting Sports Foundation and/or the Sportsman's Alliance are to be invited. The meeting will be to discuss this initiative. Ms. Crumley will serve as facilitator of this meeting.

“Outdoor Report”: Staff briefed the Committee on the electronic format of the “Outdoor Report”. Included in this format are current events in localities, a feature article for each edition, Agency accomplishments and a law enforcement and safety message pertinent to the season. This is a bi-weekly electronic report that will be available the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays in the month. On-line subscription service is available. Staff will provide an update at the next meeting.

Change to the Governance Manual: At a previous Board Meeting, the Staff was asked to make following changes in Governance Manual, Section I, Structure and Function of the Board. Item 2 - change the period for new-member orientation from 45 days to 90 days. The Committee stated the changes have accurately been reflected.

Governance Manual Compliance Calendar: At the request of the Board, Staff was asked to draft a calendar setting forth actions required; target dates; responsible party and the page numbers for reference. The Committee requested the Directors performance evaluation be added to the list. His performance evaluation will be conducted in October 2007. The staff will update the Governance Manual to reflect legislative changes.

Orientation Manual: The manual is complete and will be presented at the December Board Meeting.

Legislative Proposals will be presented during the December Meeting. The proposals are not included in the Governors Package and we have been given approval to obtain sponsors for these proposal.

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned by the Chairman at 8:55 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth B. Drewery
Board Secretary