

**Minutes**  
**Bar Harbor Deer Herd Control Task Force**  
**May 1, 2014**  
**Upstairs Conference Room-Municipal Building**  
**93 Cottage Street**  
**4:30 pm**

- I. Call to Order  
In attendance, Robert Kelley, Robert Jordan, Robert Burgess, Bruce Connery, Tom Schaeffer. Also in attendance, Lisa Bates from Maine IFW.
- II. Absences  
Chuck Starr, Jesse Wheeler, Shaun Farrar
- III. Approval of the Minutes  
Minutes of the April 24, 2014, 4-0, 1 abstention.
- IV. Adoption of the Agenda

Agenda adopted by 5-0 vote, with item two (timeline) to be discussed first.

Lisa Bates from Maine IFW was introduced and noted as Tom Schaeffer's substitute in the event he cannot attend a meeting.

**Timeline and important dates:**

Based on an email inquiry to Pat Gray and Dana Reed by Rob Burgess, Dana returned the following information by phone on April 30.

There is a town meeting on June 3, this is unrealistic.

To make the November ballot, ballots must be available for absentee voters by early October 2014. Therefore, ballots must go to the printer in early September 2014. The warrant committee reviews ballot measures, this would be done in early/mid August. Therefore, the town council must approve a warrant article absolutely no later than their August 5 meeting, requiring an agenda item to the town clerk by July 31. To give the town council time to ask for changes, a management plan should be presented for their July 1 meeting (to the town clerk for the agenda by June 26). Therefore, a complete draft plan needs to be finished by June 26. A public debate on all ballot measures is required, this would happen at a town council meeting in October, the task force would also have to present the plan to the warrant committee in August. Since the ballot measure is not a law, but instead provides a basis for the town council to petition the IFW commissioner is approved, there is no requirement for a public hearing other than the October meeting. Dana also notes that 3 of the 7 town council seats will turn over in June (June 10 election). Dana indicated that town involvement for providing tax rolls (property owners) or registered voters would be no issue, but could not guarantee greater involvement. He also recommended using the Maine IFW

definition of a resident, since it has no established definition in local government.

**Short-term options for more aggressive deer population reduction:**

Various points were discussed quickly. Whether a vote in November is going to be a choice between Plan A versus Plan B or a Plan versus nothing. We need to host a public information meeting, but it has to be made clear that it is to discuss a management strategy and not whether we should be developing a management strategy, that has been decided. A management strategy should have an evaluation after two years to determine if it is effective, if it has accomplished its goals, if it should be continued.

A short-term management strategy could be a special hunt with stipulations such as limited participation, liberalized bag limits, outside the normal season, and using non-standard methods such as attractants. The purpose of this short-term strategy is population reduction, which could then be maintained with a more conservative long-term plan such as the regular (special) archery season. Success of such plans is demonstrated in CT. It is important to provide local control for the town and also residents/landowners. Therefore controlled participation is important and avoiding the perception that the deer are being wasted or that the special hunt is “private game preserve.” Participants would be qualified (Maine hunting license), and there would be conditions on participation such as all deer being tagged a special check point, all animals registered, recorded for sex/age.

The proposal that emerged from these points involved using GIS mapping data for high car/deer accidents and local knowledge of high deer concentrations to establish zones within Bar Harbor. Thus effort could be focused in problem areas. Within each zone, a limited number of attractant stations could be established and designated as sites for a hunt. Attractant stations could be assigned to willing volunteer land owners within each zone on a first come first serve basis. The landowner and/or a limited number of designees could then hunt over each attractant station. Participants could be vetted by IFW. In this system, the landowners would have control over who was on their land, and only receptive landowners would be involved since participation is voluntary. Landowners closely abutting neighbors may still need written permission of neighbors if within 100 yards of structures on neighboring property. Landowners/designees could also be responsible for costs associated with attractant, stands, etc., to be determined. Log records of each attractant station should be kept, including when attractant is placed/refreshed, who was hunting and when, deer seen, deer taken, etc. Such a special hunt would be most effective in winter (late December for example) and being outside the regular hunting season would simplify enforcement issues. Attractant stations should be established in advance of the hunt to acclimate deer for best efficacy. Landowners hosting an attractant station would have to agree to possible spot checks by IFW wardens or local law enforcement. Hunting effort could be maintained to be sure that a sufficient number of deer are taken by requiring that the first deer (or more than one)

taken at each attractant station be donated to a program such as Hunters for the Hungry. Such a donation program would also provide valuable public relations and avoid the perception that deer are wasted or hoarded, particularly if donations could be kept local.

To summarize: A special hunt in the winter using strategically placed attractant stations hosted by willing landowners would provide complete local control over access to private property and participation. It would provide a short-term method for population reduction that could be re-evaluated after two years and would target efforts to problem areas through the creation of zones with a set number of attractant stations in each zone. All activities would be closely monitored and logged and all animals taken would be registered. A mandatory donation component would encourage effort and provide good public relations.

V. Old Business

None

VI. New Business

None

VII. Items for Next Agenda

Continue discussion of short-term and long-term options for management, details such as method, participants, designees, etc.

Rob B. will contact Hunters for the Hungry to investigate opportunities for partnership.

Consider zones on map.

Work towards public information meeting 5/29?

VIII. Adjournment

6:15 by unanimous consent.