

Minutes from NCPARC PRT Working Group Meeting January 24, 2008

9-12:00 AM, North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences Laboratory, Raleigh

Those attending included:

Dave Davenport
Bob Pendergrass
Jeff Beane
Keith Farmer
Ed Corey
Tanith Tyrr
Zach Orr
Kendrick Weeks
Ann Somers
Grover Barfield
Phil Bradley
Jeff Hall
Andrew Wyatt

Dave opened the meeting by approving the last meeting's minutes. Ann gave an announcement of the State of the State Wildlife in North Carolina meeting on March 28, 2008 at 1:00 PM in the 101 lecture hall of the Eberhart Building, UNCG.

There was a review by Jeff Hall of email notices sent to NCPARC membership, PRT members, and PRT voting members. Several voting members bowed out of participating. The current voting members are as follows (must be present at meetings to vote, but see the two exceptions below):

Barfield, Grover C.
Beane, Jeff
Beck, Coy
Bradley, Phil
Cooper, David
Corey, Ed
Davenport, Dave
Dorcas, Mike
Farmer, Keith
Groves, John
Herman, Dennis
LaPlante, Dave
Orr, Zach
Pendergrass, Bob
Somers, Anne
Stephan, Dave
Tyrr, Tanith

Washington, Rhonda
Woodward, Dave

Wyatt, Andrew- **NOTE: voting privilege is extended to any other NCARK member in the event of Andrew's absence**

The group discussed venues and the hardship of coastal members to make the usual Greensboro meeting place. No formal vote took place, but the next meeting will likely be held in Raleigh.

The first agenda item discussed was finding a secretary. Tanith suggested a technician or intern. Ed brought up suggesting a mentorship program like NCTWS has. Kendrick volunteered to be interim secretary.

The second agenda item consisted of the rewrite of Article 55 (Article 55A). Article 55 (http://ncga.state.nc.us/EnactedLegislation/Statutes/PDF/BySection/Chapter_14/GS_14-416.pdf) was passed into law in 1949. Changing the existing statute is easier than submitting a new bill and provides an acceptable platform for venomous reptile regulations. Wyatt gave update on the current legislative study committee. This is to study how to regulate “inherently dangerous” animal keepers. NCARK originally requested that reptiles be removed because of NCPARC’s work in drafting legislation. Tanith suggested emailing committee members. Andrew cautioned against any contact without a well-crafted and clear statement of our position and opinions. The legislative committee meeting is NOT a public forum. Ed expressed concerns about his vote being representative of a state agency and expressed that any vote from him on this issue would be his own personal and professional judgement. Dave Davenport will be attending the legislative committee meeting. His evaluation of Representative Ed Jones is that he has always been interested in all alternatives to addressing the public safety issue. However, Dave feels that state agencies should weigh in and that their opinions are going to have a significant impact on the outcome. Ann asked for a timeline and Dave stated that we need to have Article 55A completed and approved by the NCPARC steering committee by February 6. The group proceeded to review the latest version by Andrew and a few changes were made to simplify and clarify intent and authority. Andrew will finalize and send to entire voting members of the Policy, Regulation, and Trade working group for a vote before presenting to the NCPARC steering committee.

The third agenda item referred to the current proposed turtle collection laws for snapping turtles (Chelydridae) and the mud and musk turtles (Kinosternidae). The NCPARC steering committee approved a resolution (can be found at NCPARC website) in response to the proposed regulations of the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC). Ann reiterated that online comments are crucial to getting the NCPARC resolution adopted by the NCWRC. Jeff stated that there seemed to be absolutely no interest at the public hearing he attended in New Bern.

The Final agenda item was the Asian turtle trade. Dave considers all freshwater turtle conservation issues to be related to this. There would not be commercial collection of wild turtles without a demand. Kendrick suggested that with regulations against commercial collection of wild turtles, turtle farms were going to take their place. There was some discussion

of the pros and cons of such an outcome, but it was generally agreed that this was better than allowing undue pressure on wild populations.

Action Items:

Document the incidence of turtle as food trade within North Carolina. Several members volunteered to investigate their areas.

Phil will check with Health Department of their position and volunteered to keep a compilation of investigations.

Next meeting will be February 7, 2008 from 1:00-4:00 PM