

**Summary of the Fur Advisory Council Meeting  
June 1, 2016  
New Iberia, Louisiana**

**Council Present**

Tony Howard  
Steve Hughes  
James Gallaspy  
Charles Pettefer, Jr.  
Judge Edwards  
Ryan Schaefer  
Archie Domangue

**LDWF Presence**

Tanya Sturman  
Edmond Mouton  
Buddy Baker  
Amity Bass  
Catherine Norman  
Jennifer Hogue

**Others Present**

**Council Absent**

Frank Ellender  
John Linzay

Judge motioned to approve the minutes from the March meeting. Steve seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**RFP Update and Corresponding Contract**

Edmond reviewed the RFP process and walked the Council through the timeline. The review committee meeting took place on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. There were two proposals, one from Canchilla and another from Splendor. They are both Canadian companies, and both proposals were well received. There was a general consensus that the Canchilla proposal was more in line with what we were looking for as it had more details and specifics. The price that was submitted was a little over \$364,000. There were several phone conferences to discuss the tasks and price, because the Council budget would not support the full price. We eventually contacted the proposer and asked if he could cut the budget without cutting tasks. The proposer took 10.38% off of the original price. The final price is \$107,000 for the first year, \$107,000 for the second year, and \$109,000 for the third year. The contract was drafted, and each council member has a copy of the scope of service that is included in the contract.

**Education Contract Budget Consideration**

Edmond said that the budget for the FAC was decreased overall, including the budget from the Rockefeller Trust Fund. The budget would still not be able to support the Canchilla contract without cutting somewhere else. The committee suggested that the Council cut the trapping education contract. The work would not go away, but it would be transferred to Tanya.

Buddy mentioned that the education work would continue and that Tanya along with Department staff would pick up some outreach activities.

Jimmy motioned to accept the contract as put forth by the committee. Archie seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Archie motioned to terminate the Mudplodder contract. Charlie seconded. Motion carried with no nays. Jimmy Gallaspy did not vote.

### **FAC Budget Increase Request**

Edmond said that the budget for 2016-2017 has already been determined. The Department will be working on the 2017-2018 budget soon. Tony asked about the process of requesting the spending authority increase. Edmond said that the council could make a motion, and then the chairman should send a letter or email to Edmond requesting that the budget authority be restored to \$120,000 from the Rockefeller Trust Fund and \$100,000 from the Education and Marketing Fund. Edmond would then move the request up the line so that the administration can consider the request when the budget for the 2017-2018 fiscal year is determined.

Jimmy motioned to request that the Department restore the historical expenditure allowance to the Council of \$120,000 from the Rockefeller Trust Fund and \$100,000 from the Education and Marketing Fund. Archie seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Bobcat Hunting**

Tony said that the experimental season was still in place and that anyone who holds a big game hunting license can hunt a bobcat. Tony would like to see a tag be put on the bobcat like a deer. Ethical hunters would then be inclined to limit their season take to one bobcat. Jimmy said that people are killing multiple cats from their deer stands and that they are just leaving them to rot. Edmond said that the experimental bobcat hunt was initially allowed only during the hunting season. Edmond said that the perception is that bobcats are hurting the populations of other species. The Department did a survey for six years. The surveys show that trappers were taking 500-800 bobcats per year. Big game hunters were taking 10,000 bobcats. The Department felt like the big game hunters were another user group that had a right to the resource. The Commission later wanted to increase the allotment to two bobcats per year, and Edmond argued against that and they did not increase it. Edmond said that the Council can speak to a commissioner about it and see if they can get support to implement tagging, but he doubts that it would gain traction. Buddy said that he is concerned that tagging the bobcats would add a burden of work to Department staff and that it would be ineffective. Buddy suggested that if the trappers push to limit the take of hunters, then the hunters may question why the trappers are not limited. Buddy gave some examples of public opinion arguments that may come up if the Council pursues this. Jimmy said that he was catching 12 to 15 cats per year on one lease and now he rarely sees one cat a year. Jimmy doesn't think that the population is what the Department thinks it is. Tony said that a tag would give the Department information on how many bobcats were shot legally. Jennifer mentioned that the bobcat is included in the big game survey. The numbers have gone down to 3,500 this past year. Jimmy suggested that the take be limited to the hunting season. Edmond said that others will argue that it is the landowner's prerogative.

Tony and Judge also made the argument that by adding a tag it indicates the bobcat has value. A hunter would not kill a duck and leave it to rot. Judge asked if there is any other game animal out there that does not have a season or a limit. Buddy agreed that animals should not be shot during breeding season, because we don't want to orphan the young. Buddy asked if the real goal of the council was to shift who gets access to the resource. Judge doesn't like the idea of tagging, but he would like to see the Department require hunters to bring the animal in. Buddy said that if the goal is to decrease the take, it would be better to put a season on the bobcat rather than put a limit on it. Jimmy agreed that there should be a season.

## **Financial Disclosures**

Judge said that we all have to file the tier 2.1 form. There is very little to report. He has no qualms about filing, but in 2013 his form did not make it into the system. He did the form online and he thought it was filed. He later got a nasty letter from the ethics board and a \$1,500 bill in the mail. He appealed it. They reduced his fine to \$500. If he ever fails to file again, he will have to pay the remaining \$1,000 from the 2013 fine plus the new fine. Judge sent a certified letter with his 2015 report and they never got it. Judge suggests that the Department check with the board of ethics to see if any of their council or commission members have not filed about 30 days before the forms are due. Edmond said that Tanya reminds the Council early on and sends frequent reminders. This year she checked the website to see who had filed and who hadn't.

## **Joint Education Program**

Tony said that there was a huge discussion at the Trappers Convention. The vote was too close to call. Tony will follow up and poll them with a written vote. Steve said that there is a fear that LDWF would make trapping classes mandatory. Judge said that hunter education and boater safety courses were not mandatory when he was a child either. Making it mandatory would not necessarily be a bad thing. Buddy asked that Tony convey to the association members that they should separate their views on mandatory trapper education from their views on how to fund these workshops. Buddy said that LDWF could have a trapper education class without the Trappers Association. If LDWF wanted to have mandatory education, they would have done that already. He proposes that we partner now to continue the workshops that they have been doing. Buddy doesn't personally support trapper education. Hunter and boater education was necessary for safety reasons. He predicts that if trapper education is ever needed that the Association will ask for her long before the Department does. He wants to assist the Association in coming up with a budget to provide the materials for the current workshops. Food could be provided from the FAC budget with prior approval and justification.

## **Online Trapper Education**

Tanya explained that after searching for online classroom resources, she spoke with AFWA about a national trapping course that they have online. She asked if they could host a Louisiana Level 1 classroom on their website. They agreed and offered to host the website at no cost initially. They also agreed to clone the national course so that she can edit and adapt it to the needs of Louisiana. Buddy and Edmond believe that this should be put on hold until the Association comes to an agreement about the joint trapping education.

## **Other Business**

Jimmy asked about the lawsuit blocking furs from export. Buddy didn't think that the lawsuit has much standing, because CITES doesn't have standing to get involved in the ethics of trapping- just in determining if international sales are harming the population of a species.

Tanya mentioned that each council member had a report from the Cameron Fur Queen. She is taking the message that fur is a renewable resource to every event that she attends.

**Jimmy motioned to adjourn. Charlie seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**