

**Summary of the Fur Advisory Council Meeting
March 7, 2016
New Iberia, Louisiana**

Council Present

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

LDWF Presence

Tanya Sturman
Edmond Mouton
Buddy Baker
Amity Bass
Catherine Norman
Mike Dupuis
Jeb Linscombe
Jennifer Hogue

Council Absent

Others Present
Johnny Price

Ryan motioned to approve the minutes from the September meeting. Charlie seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Fur Queen

Julian Devillier is the 58th Fur and Wildlife Festival Queen. She came with her fur coat, crown, and sash to thank the Council for their support and to thank the Council members and Department staff who took the time to educate her about the fur industry and history in Louisiana. Julian will promote the fur industry by traveling throughout the state and sharing the knowledge she has gained from industry professionals. She is a descendent of trappers and values it as a part of her family history. She showed the fur coat that the Council provided.

Edmond introduced Amity Bass. Buddy asked that the Council members introduce themselves to her. Each council member introduced himself and said where he is from and what aspect of the industry that he represents.

RFP for International Marketing

Edmond said that the proposals for the RFP are due in Baton Rouge tomorrow, March 8. Jan Kellet will review each proposal to make sure that they meet the minimum qualifications, and then she will release them to the review committee. Tony, Ryan, and Judge will serve on the committee. Frank and Archie volunteered to stand by as alternates.

RFP for Washington Education

Edmond said that the two councils have entered into a joint contract with Glenn Delaney for a couple of decades now, and it would be wise to start the RFP process well before the current contract expires to avoid an interruption of service. Tony asked what the contract was about. Edmond responded that Mr. Delaney educated the delegates in D.C. and kept the Department informed on pertinent potential legislation. Ryan asked what he does specifically for the fur council. Ryan saw more references to the alligator industry in Glenn Delaney's last quarterly report. Edmond said that Delaney stays abreast of potential legislation. He gave an example of

trapping legislation that had to do with leg hold traps. Delaney alerted the Department to this issue. He also educates new delegates so that they support Louisiana wildlife issues. He assisted with the feral swine issue, which affects furbearer habitat. Buddy said that Glenn Delaney works proactively to keep negative legislation from ever being introduced. He meets with the Louisiana legislation and immediately introduces himself to new staff and new delegates. When the issue of trapping on refuges came up, Delaney met with the senators and explained our position. He also tracks any issues that attack sustainable use, such as the polar bear issue. Any sustainable use legislation that gains traction could lead to stronger regulations on the trapping industry.

Ryan asked if the fur council decided to drop some of the funding, if the alligator council would pick up the difference. Buddy suggested that fur council chairman could have a conversation with the alligator council chairman about the division of the contract cost.

Tony motioned to move forward with the RFP for Washington D.C. education. Judge seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Cameron Fur Festival Update- Jennifer

Jennifer said that she was glad Julian Devillier was able to come and show her coat. She mentioned that another coat was given to Ms. Cameron. She also showed a third coat to the Council. This year the Council had four coats made from Louisiana fur for less than what they generally pay for two premade coats that may not contain verified Louisiana furs.

Trappers Workshops

Tony talked about the northern workshop that was held at Cypress Black Bayou. The average age went up to about 25 to 35. There were more adults than children. Steve, John, and Tony taught at the workshop. There was another teacher from the trappers association as well. An enforcement agent also participated. Ryan spoke about the southern workshop at Palmetto State Park. They had 34 students and the average age was about 45. Almost everyone there was of the age to buy a trapping license. There were three trappers from the trappers association who taught. Ryan has received at least a dozen calls from participants wanting to attend another workshop at a more advance level. They were very interested in learning to stretch and prepare hides. Frank thanked Ryan and Tony for taking the lead on the project.

Trapping Kits

Tony asked if the Council would supply the trapping kits for the children's workshop in April. Tony and Ryan discussed what they would need. They figured \$500 would get them a trap, a tail stripper, and lure for each child.

China Fur Fair

Tony talked about the Beijing Fur Fair. He said that he had made some incredible connections in southern China. He toured a large fur workshop and tannery in Chongfu. The waste water reclaim system was very advanced. The Chinese are working on cleaning up their operations. He also met with the Chongfu Fur Council. The Chairman of the Council was very insistent that any business done within the Congfu network would require full and proper paperwork. There have been many arrests in the past couple of years for smuggling and corruption. There is also a 40% tax on furs that come in. The overall added costs with shipping and inspections are approaching 80%.

Buddy asked if the travel was beneficial to the Council and the fur industry and if we were on the right track with a new contract. Tanya mentioned that in the past there has consistently been business being done at the fair with the contractor on the phone with dealers in Louisiana making deals. Tanya said that she thought the general scope of service for the new contract good but suggested that we take some direction from the proposer on where we market internationally. Michael Consiglio focused on China but the new proposers may have other ideas. They have different experiences with international marketing and travel a broader area than Michael has traveled in recent years. Tony concurred and said that he would like to see Louisiana break out of China into a broader world market.

Tanya described the three story fur mall and said that women of all ages, including teenagers, and even men wear fur in China. The demand for fur is huge and as the market turns around there should be a place for wild fur as many of the Chinese ranchers are going out of business due to the feed and housing costs.

Budget

Edmond went over the 2014-2015 budgets and compared it to what we are dealing with in 2015-2016. The Rockefeller Trust Funds have been fully obligated. The Education and Marketing Fund has been expended. Next fiscal year, starting in July 2016, the total council budgets will be \$193,638. The Education and Marketing Fund is generated by licenses. There was some discussion on the balance of the Education and Marketing Fund, and Edmond said that he would find out the fund balance and email the Council members later in the week.

Ryan said that he would like to request \$500 for trapping supply kits.

Tony motioned to spend \$500 on trapping supply kits. Ryan seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

NAFA

Edmond said that there is a travel freeze. Tony said that he didn't want to pursue the NAFA trip at this time. Tony said that in the future he would like to see some members of the council attend an auction and get a good working knowledge on where our raw furs end up. It would be a short trip to see how the fur is graded out and put onto the auction floor. Ryan said that it would be very educational to see the graders working. Ryan said that this is a great time to teach people how to stretch and flesh. If someone makes a mistake on a pelt right now, it is not a huge loss. If they learn now, they can learn to how to make their fur more valuable.

Ethics Board

Tanya provided the required paperwork for each council member and told them that it is due in May.

Other Business

Tony showed a bear shaped license plate that he got from the Northwest Territory. He said that it would look great if we had one in the shape of an alligator for Louisiana.

Ryan showed some bags made by a company in New Orleans called Tchoup. He provided the furs and alligator skin and they created a laptop case and purses. In the future we might consider doing this rather than coats for the Queens. Accessories would cost less and it could all be done in state. Judge said that he liked this because they are made in Louisiana from Louisiana furs and skins.

Tanya will call and set up a meeting after the RFP review committee meets.

John motioned to adjourn. Tony seconded. Motion carried unanimously.