

****DRAFT MINUTES ****

Alaska Professional Hunters Association
Meeting Anchorage December 4, 2009
Millennium Hotel

Board Members Present: Klutsch, Litzen, Perrins, Adams, Vrem, Entsminger, Turner, Lee, LaRose

Brian Peterson made a motion, to amend the agenda, seconded by Robert Fithian, to add the committee spatial distribution.

Virgil Umphenour made a motion to amend the agenda , seconded by Brian Peterson to add Admin error.

Agenda approved with additions.

Approval of minutes of 2008, Motion made by Brian Peterson, seconded by Bobby Fithian, Approved

Paul Johnson BGCSB Report, Monday should be the end of GUA boundary changes. A question has arisen about the proposed concession lines, should they be the same or different than GUA boundaries. Discussion followed from membership and Board members about not making the concession boundaries the same as the Guide Use Area boundaries. DNR is not happy about BGCS board making these decisions. USFW has requested that their boundaries inside BGCS boundaries change the three GUA. Rohrer said this was done on Kodiak but it took ten years. This is on the agenda for public comment at the BGCSB meeting Dec. 7-9, 2009. People have said they are not ready to draw concession lines inside GUA boundaries. There are three issues: 1. GUA law and the intent of the law; 2. How many proposed concessions in a GUA; 3. Concessions lines within a GUA. A number of comments were received that did not support the USF&W proposal and for the regulations to be held the same as current: an operator can have as many land use authorizations as possible within three Guide-Outfitter Use Area's, and that the proposed concession lines and the GOUA lines stay just as they are.

Approximate numbers of permits to guides statewide on public lands as currently exist or within the proposed DNR Concession program were brought forward by Loren Karro and Robert Fithian: [does not include private lands, or BLM]

244 business opportunities out of 151 state concessions DNR

116 USFW

37 NPS

45 FS

442 total not counting and private or BLM permits.

Rohrer brought forward that in 2008 there were 284 contracting guides, and in 2009, 310 contracting guides.

President's Report

Every board member has worked hard including the Executive Director, Bobby and Barb Fithian, under paid. NRHPF needs more participation. We are hard pressed on making income.

Executive Director Report

The APHA Board works hard and it is the best board he has worked with. Need to support the NRHPF. Rural Advisory Committee meetings in Bristol Bay without Joe Klutsch in attendance would lose guiding opportunity on Federal lands. APHA involvement at the Federal Subsistence Board is important. APHA met with Pat Pourchot, of the Dept. Interior. There has been a large increase in the amount of written correspondence handled daily by the APHA office. Board Of Game, insurance, ADFG [more community harvest, habitat manipulation, lack of support from some regional staff, meeting with commissioners Dec. 7.]

Kelly Vrem gave a pull for people to recruit new members

No treasurers report due to late arrival of data and LaRose computer problem. It will be on the website when complete.

Committee Reports [state oversight]

BOG meetings to address the 2nd degree of kindred. Address whether it should come from the resident pool or non-resident pool as it is different across the state.

ADFG is looking into and asking for a 3-year cycle. Brian Peterson made motion 2nd by Wayne Kubat to go to a 3-year cycle, a friendly amendment was offered to changing the regulatory year to a calendar year. With much discussion the motion passed. Suggestions were made to write a letter to ADFG & to BOG with APHA's position.

Notice that DNR meetings are occurring across the state for guide concessions. Much discussion occurred but no motion was made to make sure APHA would have a presence at all of the DNR meetings across the state regarding the concessions on state land. It is important to dispel the myths about not good for residents, cost, etc.

More discussion occurred on the possibility to increase resident hunting licenses, for example - \$5 fee per harvest tags, \$100 fee for those who are lucky to draw a permit. Pat Carter suggested tag fees for harvest tickets should not be done on an election year. He agreed with Sue that it should not come from APHA. Sue suggested we lobby Alaska Outdoor Council to be the lead. Pat also stated that government is run by the most people who show up.

Litzen suggested APHA ask ADFG & Wildlife Protection to support the DNR concessions. Pat Valkenburg is a liaison to BGCS board for ADFG.

Lunch Break

Federal Oversight

Joe Klutsch read from a letter of APHA talking points for DNR lands.

Litzen brought out the need to brain storm on points to get across at the DNR meetings coming up to dispel the perception by residents that the new proposals to create guide concessions is bad for them.

Motion made by Brian Peterson 2nd by Thor Stacey

APHA does not support amending the existing GUA's at this time with the exception of the small amendments necessary to address fourth guide area concerns.

Review of the Federal subsistence program that was requested by AFN. The review comments are to be in by Dec. 16. Joe Klutsch read from a letter of APHA talking points that were taken to a meeting with Pat Pourchot, the lead for the Secretary of Interior office. Both Joe Klutsch and Bobby Fithian met with Pat as APHA was invited. Pat is gathering comments from organizations across the state.

Southeast Report

Issues of concern related to the Tongass were discussed in detail on Thursday which was asked to be the report. Dale Adams, Bert Stromquist, Jim Boyce, Brad Dennison, Gary and Wayne Gray were present from SE. Dale, Brad, Jim and Bobby contributed to the following discussion. Issues included APHA's objections to the Needs Assessments being conducted within Stikine LeConte, Misty Fiords and Juneau districts, as well as the new Forest Service policy mandating a one-third holdback of allocation every time a permit is transferred. This is not in the best interest of the industry. APHA has taken issue with counsel and has had some success on the Needs Assessments but not on the hold back. A special meeting was called by APHA which occurred in late October in Juneau and included representation from all of the Tongass Ranger Districts, the Forest Supervisor and Recreational Permitting staff and seventeen guides which was a good step forward in developing better communication between the industry and the Forest Service. These meetings will continue to be conducted annually. The meeting brought forward information that showed that the goals of the Brown Bear Management Plan for attrition in guided effort have been being accomplished.

No resolution has been made on the one-third hold-back or issues regarding transfer of permits. APHA will continue to work on these concerns with a diplomatic approach and if we fail to be granted fair consideration we may have to legally challenge the new policy.

Ethics

The topic of scoring animals was brought up again. Last year a vote was made to change who can score the animals for the animal awards yearly for the APHA awards. An entry could not be scored by the guide or family member or business associate who contracted the hunt.

Motion made by Virgil Umphenour and Seconded by Kelly Vrem to readdress the issue. Long discussions continued until the group resolved the issue by not changing the ethic change of last year. No vote taken as Brian Peterson noted the discussion created the vote. Secretary noted that Murphy's Law won over taking a vote.

Membership Report & Publications

Bobby read the following membership information which was provided by Barb:

MEMBERSHIP TOTALS

AS OF 12/05	AS OF 12/06	AS OF 12/07	AS OF 12/08	AS OF 12/09	DIFFERENCE
ASSIST = 22	ASSIST = 22	ASSIST = 52	ASSIT = 38	ASSIST = 25	-13
BUS= 7	BUS = 7	BUS = 7	BUS = 4	BUS = 4	SAME

HON = -----	HON = 31	HON =	HON = 38	HON = 48	+10
LIFE = 193	LIFE = 195	LIFE = 199	LIFE = 207	LIFE = 207	SAME
PROF = 115	PROF = 138	PROF = 135	PROF = 140	PROF = 128	-12
SUST = 209	SUST = 421	SUST = 577	SUST = 612	SUST = 585	-27
					Totals: 994

NRHPF MEMBERS: 391

165 New for 2008

226 New for 2009 as of 12/2

Life Member numbers: equal new life members to balance those deleted
Sustaining numbers reflect initial NRHPF members from 2006-2007 expirations

Funding

NRHPF was discussed at great length by most of the 50 plus members in the room. Steve Perrins brought up the subject of requiring the professional membership mandatory participate in the program. Dale Adams was not present at a prior meeting where a vote was taken to wait. He was extremely upset that the board did not vote for mandatory. Over one hour of discussion commenced with the membership present. Discussion went the full gamut. How easy to implement, does not cost the guides anything, how clients are not concerned and enjoy the participation, why needed, and the benefits to the continuation of the guiding industry. Many members have no idea how important to have an executive director who goes to so many meetings across the state that affects the organization. This is critical for the future of guided hunting.

Bobby explained that many members are currently involved with the program (226 new NRHPF members this year to date) and how easy it is to make the program work. If an APHA professional-membership average ten clients per year the revenue base from the NRHPF program alone would generate over 200K per year for APHA. Current Grant in Aids from conservation partners is not working. Shikar gave 30K this year and Dallas 10K.

As the discussion continued, Aaron Bloomquist brought up the paralyzed vets he takes black bear hunting for \$1000. He felt they should not have to pay. Kelly suggested they get a free membership.

A friendly amendment was offered to give them a free membership, both the motion maker and second concurred. Bobby added another friendly amendment seconded by Brian Peterson to allow APHA members who sign up this current year to pledge to participate with the NRHPF, then APHA will have a list of names of members who qualify for the SCI insurance. All concurred

The vote was taken and all the membership present voted in favor. No one opposed.

Magazine Report

Bobby gave the following report which was prepared by Barb:

Magazine was down to two issues (Convention & Spring) in 2009 reflecting the financial status of APHA. The upcoming Convention Issue will include content scheduled for the 2009 Summer/Fall issue and will possibly be a larger magazine than last years.

Advertising was slightly down during 2009 which shows a reflection of our current economy. Current Convention issue is normal and at this time there is still limited space available for ads requiring no design-deadline for receipt by the Editor is 12/10/09.

Sigler Printing has been good to work with and magazine publishing proceeds seamlessly. The magazine is still transferred to the printer via web uploads. The magazine is picking up more color and overall is visually better.

Elections

Three terms were up: Sue Entsminger, Kelly Vrem, Dale Adams

Four people were nominated, Sue Entsminger, Kelly Vrem, Dale Adams, Henry Tiffany
Motion by Gus Lamoureux 2nd by Brian Peterson to CLOSE NOMINATIONS. Passed

Vote taken, Sue Entsminger, Kelly Vrem, Dale Adams won.

New Business

Administrative error, related to guide service providers being held to nearly impossible standards. Tremendous discussion occurred with Virgil giving a passionate testimony on how different issues are handled. Sometimes blatant violations are less penalties than an administrative error. This is just wrong. Again after lengthy discussion, the conclusion was to have APHA meet with the commissioner of Public Safety. APHA will set up a committee to draft a Legislative Resolution to fix this problem. Gus Lamoureux suggested APHA set up a Legal Defense Fund for Administrative error problems.

Spatial distribution committee was set up to meet the next day to put forth their findings to DNR.

Motion made by Wayne Kubat 2nd by Brian Peterson for APHA to look into a draft bill to put BGSC statutes back into regulations. A committee was set up to work on this

Adjourned