

Non-Lethal Deer Management Meeting

Date: September 7, 2016

Location: City Hall

In Attendance:

Derek Delacourt	City of Ann Arbor
Steve Schantz	City of Ann Arbor
Dave Borneman	City of Ann Arbor
Bob McGee	A2 Residents for Non-Lethal Deer Management
Loraine Fig	FAAWN
Phil Carroll	FAAWN
Sabra Sanzotta	Ann Arbor Residents for Public Safety

Meeting Purpose

The intent of the meeting was to introduce Steve Schantz and Dave Borneman to the group and discuss the process for the lethal cull, safety considerations and other program related issues and questions.

Meeting Summary

The meeting started with the introduction of Steve Schantz, Safety Manager and Dave Borneman, the Natural Area Preservation, (NAP), Manager. Steve is the staff coordinator for this year's lethal cull activities and Dave was a primary staff person involved in last year's activities. The group requested to meet both.

Steve provided an update of the lethal groups' review process and current status. It was explained that similar to the non-lethal advisory group, staff was engaging with proponents of the lethal cull regarding program direction and seeking feedback on proposed direction. The primary discussion centered on perceived safety issues from last year and suggestions for improvements for this year's activities. There was significant discussion regarding access to the parks and better systems for parks closure. The group was concerned that too many people were able to enter the parks while culling activities were taking place. Staff expanded on the protocols to indicate that the park closures were not the only safety mechanisms in place. That if there were people in the park after closure no shooting activities took place. The group expressed significant doubt regarding the safety of the activities and indicated that the closures should be less porous. They also requested staff to consider having a Police Officer included at every cull location, or to ride along with field personnel to help ensure the safest possible atmosphere. Staff indicated that it would take that request forward when a vendor was selected and in safety discussion with the AAPD. Mr. Carroll was very direct in his opinion that the shooting sites should be made public for any future cull. Staff indicated it would be a point of discussion but that safety decisions would be made by staff in coordination with the AAPD.

The use of a single vendor was discussed at length. There was strong consensus that the use of a single vendor for both lethal and non-lethal would significantly increase the chances of non-lethal being available and approved for this year. Representatives for all of the groups indicated a preference to use White Buffalo for both components of the project. There was a shared sentiment that the USDA was divisive and that moving on from them to White Buffalo would be more acceptable. This is a sentiment that was expressed repeatedly. Staff indicated that they are open to any vendor and was in the process of seeking a proposal from White Buffalo for both lethal and non-lethal activities. Staff indicated that the proposal would be available for review and comment as the process moved forward.

McGee offered volunteers to help the city verify deer damage in parks, Borneman said he would consider. The idea was tabled until the results from the browse study in process were complete and the City makes determinations on which direction to go as far as data collection. The group brought up the idea of collecting and tracking complaints and emphasized that localizing complaints would allow for deer management activities to be appropriately sited. Staff indicated that the idea had been discussed but the verification of data would be difficult. It was agreed that the discussion would continue and staff would investigate if the survey data could be mapped. McGee suggested the city either use the data used for the 2016 cull or data from the surveys.

Also, the proposed measures of success and data collection were discussed. The following changes were suggested:

- Make it clear that the proposed measures of success may take more than one year to achieve.
- Revise the Headers for objectives to more accurately reflect the program and desired outcomes.
- Should CWD be in as a measure, the baiting used in the program may actually increase the opportunity for CWD.
- Crash data needs to be verifiable and consistent.
- What would be the proposed measure of success of deer car crashes, percent decrease or total crash number.
- Include natural mortality from deer population in herd size formula.
- Mortality measure too low, could likely lead to unattainable standard depending on the number of deer sterilized.
- Limit culling sites to no more than the number used last year.
- Work to have greater effect on the most impacted areas. Concern was that deer were taken from areas not directly related to the issues.