



Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission Minutes

Teleconference Meeting:
Friday, May 16, 2014 – 1:00 p.m.
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Commission Room
4034 Fairview Industrial Drive S.E.
Salem, Oregon 97302

1
2 *Commission minutes are considered draft until approved by the*
3 *Commission at its next meeting.*
4
5

6 Notice of these meetings had been made by press release of statewide media
7 circulation. Those attending part or all of the meeting included:
8

Bobby Levy, Chair
Michael Finley, Vice Chair
Bob Webber, Commissioner
Holly Akenson, Commissioner
Gregory J. Wolley, Commissioner
Laura Anderson, Commissioner

Roy Elicker, Director
Debbie Colbert, Deputy Director
Teri Kucera, Executive Assistant

9 MEETING

10 On Friday, May 16, 2014, Chair Bobby Levy called the Oregon Fish and Wildlife
11 Commission (the Commission) teleconference meeting to order at 1:00 p.m., and said
12 this is an informational meeting so the Commission will not take any public testimony.
13

14 Director Elicker said Debbie Colbert, Deputy Director for Administration, will provide an
15 informational briefing with help from Economist Aaron Jenkins and Budget Manager
16 Cameron Smith. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) will embark on
17 two weeks of Town Hall meetings to gather public input from around the state.
18

19 Deputy Director Colbert discussed developing the 2015-2017 Proposed Agency Budget
20 with the External Budget Advisory Committee (EBAC) and through public input at
21 upcoming Town Hall meetings. She said staff will brief the Commission in June and will
22 request final action at the Commission's August meeting. She noted the makeup of
23 EBAC (see **2014 External Budget Advisory Committee**) and said we used a modified
24 approach that includes more teleconferencing meetings and a more-interactive format
25 with EBAC. She said there is a \$32 million budget gap in our 2015-2017 recreational
26 licenses funded programs. With input from EBAC, the Department is proposing five
27 strategies to address both costs and revenue:
28

- 29 1. Use the following efficiencies to address \$1.5 million of the gap:
30 ✓ Continue the two region structure (\$450,000).
31 ✓ Reduce/consolidate fleet and travel (\$500,000).
32 ✓ Streamline publication of hunting and fishing regulations, increase advertising
33 (\$375,000).
34 ✓ Implement technology efficiencies (\$200,000).

1 ✓ Reduce fish food costs (\$45,000).

2
3 2. Implement reductions in programs to address \$6.3 million of the gap:

4 ✓ Fish Funded Program (36 positions, \$4.4 million).

5 ✓ Administration (7 positions, \$1.5 million).

6 ✓ Region Offices (5 positions, \$380,000).

7
8 Vice Chair Finley asked how we can maintain effective fish and wildlife management and
9 cut \$500,000 in travel. Deputy Director Colbert said there is room for increased
10 efficiency. For example, traditionally each field person is often assigned a vehicle. In
11 larger offices we looked at going toward a shared vehicle. We are also looking to
12 reduce costs for liberation work by going to more fuel efficient, smaller trucks. These are
13 just a few examples of ideas. We are setting these travel reductions as targets and
14 giving our managers flexibility in how they achieve the savings since they and their staff
15 know best how to be more efficient.

16
17 3. Shift costs from license funded to alternative revenue sources to address \$13.5 of
18 the gap.

19
20 The Department spent some time with EBAC brainstorming programs that could be
21 shifted to other revenue sources. For example, EBAC discussed programs that might be
22 a good fit for General fund (GF) or a "user pay" concept. Based on this discussion,
23 Colbert described programs that are proposed for shifting onto general tax revenues and
24 alternative sources. The proposal includes shifting a portion of enforcement costs from
25 license to GF.

26
27 Vice Chair Finley said EBAC includes a number of conservation representatives. He
28 read in comments on our coastal species management plan that there is constant
29 reference to inadequate monitoring. Commenters suggest that we don't have the science
30 and the numbers to support our decisions and yet we're reducing assistant biologists.

31
32 Director Elicker said you will see as staff goes through the Coastal Multi-Species
33 Management Plan next month that despite the request for more monitoring, we have the
34 most robust salmonid monitoring program of any state in the United States.

35
36 Deputy Director Colbert said the Department's draft proposal would shift some existing
37 activities to GF. If User Pay legislation is approved in 2015, a portion of these costs
38 could shift to that revenue stream instead of GF.

39
40 Colbert described specific areas proposed for shifting to GF:

- 41 • Portions of the costs of field staff.
- 42 • Habitat and conservation strategy position.
- 43 • Water Quality Quantity Program staff.
- 44 • Avian and pinniped management work.
- 45 • Fish conservation staff.
- 46 • Shift Oregon State Police (OSP) Fish and Wildlife to GF (\$5.1 million).

1 Colbert also described proposed shifts to alternative revenues.

2
3 4. Adjust recreational licenses and tags to address \$8.5 million of the gap.

4
5 Deputy Director Colbert said that EBAC discussed adjusting and restructuring
6 recreational license fees and were briefed on the survey with Southwick Associates.
7 Staff will brief the Commission in June on the survey results. Highlights of EBAC input:

8
9 Aaron Jenkins, Economist, described the proposed fee changes (see **Proposed**
10 **Recreational License Fee Schedule (5/19/2014)**).

- 11 • Price increases phased in over the three biennia in two year increments to reduce
12 public sticker shock.
- 13 • Two year increments in adjusting the fees were supported by 55% of residents
14 and non-residents in the Southwick survey.
- 15 • Hunting license fee raised 2% in 2016 and \$1 each biennium after 2016. Angling
16 licenses and tags increase is more for 2016 with smaller increases in following
17 years to cover inflation.
- 18 • All proposed fees include the vendor fees.

19
20 Vice Chair Finley referred to the groupings in the schedule and said they were not
21 carried consistently through the categories. For the tags there appears to be no benefit
22 for the youth or seniors. Was that an oversight or did you specifically want to do that to
23 control the impact?

24
25 Jenkins said the idea is to create a youth license to cover hunting, fishing, and shell
26 fishing at \$10 for residents and non-residents; effective 2016. There will also be a
27 reduced cost for tags and stamps for youth. The combined angling tag for youth will
28 decrease to \$5.00; upland bird and waterfowl would drop to \$4.00. Jenkins said we are
29 proposing price increases on seniors as we are on all other license types.

30
31 Vice Chair Finley asked if there would be problems for enforcement by encouraging tags
32 in a family setting, to use the youth tags instead of an adult tag.

33
34 Director Elicker said he has not heard of this as an enforcement issue or concern for
35 OSP or other folks.

36
37 Jenkins described proposed new fee concepts:

- 38 • Multiyear fishing, hunting, and combination licenses at three and five year
39 increments for resident and non-resident.
- 40 • Charging \$6 annual fee for a Pioneer License (a combination license currently
41 free) allows the Department to count those licenses to get federal match funding;
42 about \$14 for each license sold (\$7 for fish; \$7 for wildlife).

43
44 Chair Levy said people told her how important it is that they have earned their Pioneer
45 License. Staff should find another way rather than on the backs of seniors. It is not
46 appropriate and we have always provided Pioneer Licenses this way - free. Most of the
47 Pioneer holders are on fixed incomes. How many Pioneer licenses do we sell per year?

1
2 Director Elicker said about 50,000 plus. We proposed the \$6 fee because the hunting
3 and fishing survey showed support for a nominal fee for the Pioneer License given the
4 \$14 in federal matching funds. He asked to keep the \$6 fee intact to allow public input at
5 Town Hall meetings and then staff would report back at the Commission's June meeting.

6
7 Chair Levy asked if the fee could be lower; perhaps \$3. Jenkins said the fee would have
8 to be no less than \$5 or \$6 dollars because the Pioneer License is a combination
9 license. We have to be \$2 over our costs to be eligible for federal funds.

10
11 Commissioner Webber said there is a Pioneer elk tag that is half price. He suggested
12 that staff look at having a Pioneer deer tag or elk tag and get that money back to those
13 people if that is an issue. As a Pioneer license holder he has no problem with paying a
14 \$6 fee and has not heard anybody who has. We could shift it off of the tags and onto the
15 licenses and it would break even.

16
17 Chair Levy said that is a better idea for people on fixed income and making minimum
18 wage.

19
20 Director Elicker said staff will look at all those options and report back to the
21 Commission. Currently, we give about 50,000 plus Pioneer Licenses each year. If we
22 charge \$6 per each that is \$300,000 additional for wildlife revenue. With the \$14 federal
23 match added in that equates to almost \$1 million in additional revenue.

24
25 Jenkins continued to discuss proposed new fee concepts:

- 26 • Ocean endorsement required to fish in the ocean; allows anglers to fish for all
27 marine finfish except for salmon and halibut which would still require a combined
28 angling tag. A \$10 annual fee when angler purchases an annual fishing license or
29 other licenses, e.g., combo or Sports Pac. For daily licenses a \$1 additional fee.
- 30 • Unique hunting and fishing opportunities. A \$5 raffle for a unique fishing
31 opportunity, e.g., taking wild steelhead on the Umpqua. Also, a Premier Hunt
32 Series Application (no preference points for this series). Application price is \$8,
33 same price as a controlled hunt application.

34
35 Commissioner Webber asked is this would be an additional number to the raffle tags we
36 do now. Jenkins said this would be a new hunt series and separate from the other
37 controlled hunt series. We see this as new revenue stream giving hunters new
38 opportunities to access controlled hunt areas they don't always get a chance to hunt.

39
40 Jenkins continued to discuss proposed new fee concepts:

- 41 • Establish a non-resident combined angling tag.
- 42 • Youth License for 12-17 years of age for hunting, fishing, and shellfish. For
43 resident and non-resident cost is \$10; Columbia and Ocean endorsement
44 included. Reduces cost of tags and stamps and simplifies ODFW regulations.
45 Maintaining the same price of \$55 for Juvenile Sports Pac and \$10.50 for Juvenile
46 turkey tags for next six years

1 5. Shift principle in deferred maintenance to operating account to address \$1.5 million
2 of the gap.
3

4 Deputy Director Colbert said the Department is proposing to shift the principle in the
5 deferred maintenance account to its fish and wildlife account to provide operating capital.
6 Under statute, the Department can only spend the interest on the deferred maintenance
7 account. The account earns only about \$11,000 annually which is insufficient to address
8 deferred maintenance. However, the principle would provide operating capital necessary
9 to cover expenses before they are reimbursed under federal and other grants and
10 contracts. To implement this strategy, the Department is proposing a legislative concept.
11

12 Commissioner Webber said if we offer three year licenses, how do we bank the money
13 and carry it forward to cover later years? Deputy Director Colbert said we are able to
14 carry over revenues from one biennium to the next. Because of federal statute our
15 license dollars stay in our fund and cannot be diverted by the Legislature to do other
16 things outside of fish and wildlife management with the Department.
17

18 Commissioner Webber said in our budgeting if a person buys a three year license, are
19 we going to kick one-third of it into the next biennium so we are not short at the end?
20 Jenkins said as monies come in for a three or five year license it would be spread out
21 over the appropriate amount of years.
22

23 Deputy Director Colbert said staff worked with the EBAC Commercial Fish Fund (CFF)
24 subgroup and developed similar strategies for balancing that fund over a six year
25 horizon:

- 26 • Fee adjustments (\$630,000).
- 27 • Shift to Other Revenue Sources (\$593,000).
- 28 • Implement Efficiencies (\$36,000).
- 29 • Program Reductions (\$372,000).
- 30

31 Deputy Director Colbert also discussed shifting costs from CFF to other revenue
32 sources:

- 33 • Shift avian and pinniped management to GF (\$298,000).
- 34 • Shift OSP CCF to GF (\$90,000).
- 35 • Shift CFF to Recreational Shellfish License Fund (\$205,000).
- 36

37 She discussed shifting costs currently covered by angler/hunter dollars onto CFF, as
38 discussed with the EBAC CFF subgroup:

- 39 ✓ In Licensing, shift portions of nine positions to CFF (\$450,000).
- 40 ✓ In Fish Division, shift portions of Deputy Administrator for Columbia & Marine
41 Fisheries and the Fish Division Operations Manager (\$205,000).
- 42

43 Jenkins gave a brief overview of the revenues in the CFF. He said revenues come from
44 licenses and permits required each year for different fisheries and from Ad Valorem, a
45 surcharge on the value of commercial landings.
46
47

1 Jenkins said staff presented 10 scenarios to EBAC CFF Subgroup. The scenarios were
2 broken into two general groups:

- 3 1. Half the scenarios focused on front loading any licenses or Ad Valorem fee
4 changes in 2016.
- 5 2. The other half looked at taking a two-year increment approach which is being
6 favored on the recreational side.

7
8 He said the subgroup focused on Front Loaded, Scenario 3, meaning that any rate
9 changes would happen in 2016 and stay the same for the next six years. The subgroup
10 made adjustments to the commercial license fees as well as to the Ad Valorem rates.
11 See Commission's handout **CFF Commercial Subgroup Proposal**.

12
13 Commissioner Wolley referred to the alternative gear research program reduction of
14 \$50,000 and said that research was an important component of the overall package
15 getting buy in by commercial interests and relocating them from the mainstem and
16 helping to fund their transition to alternative gears. What does \$50,000 actually represent
17 in research? How did staff come up with that number?

18
19 Chris Kern, Fish Division Acting Deputy Administrator for Marine and Columbia, said the
20 \$50,000 is a fairly small component of the total budget that is going into alternative gear
21 research. Staff working on that research thought it was possible to pare back on that but
22 it does not outright eliminate testing of any specific gear.

23
24 Commissioner Anderson asked for more information about reducing staff positions in the
25 Marine Program. Deputy Director Colbert said on the recreational side we propose to
26 reduce three positions in the Marine Program; on the commercial funded side two
27 positions.

28
29 Commissioner Anderson asked if those positions are in one particular program or are
30 they set out among different programs. Deputy Director Colbert said on the commercial
31 fish side both those positions are in the Marine Resources Program: one is a fishery
32 analyst position and another is an office support position; both have been vacant.

33
34 Chris Kern said the three positions to be reduced on the recreational side are a vacant
35 biologist position, a vacant EBA sampler position, and office specialist half-time position.

36
37 Commissioner Anderson asked if advances in electronics were considered as part of the
38 efficiencies during the meetings with EBAC, such as the electronic fish ticket system to
39 reduce data entry by staff. Kern said that those efficiencies have already been realized
40 in many cases. We will have some programs that will be done on paper but we're
41 pushing to move as much as possible to electronic fish tickets so long as there isn't
42 pressure on buyers who don't have access to electronic systems.

43
44 Deputy Director Colbert discussed the upcoming Town Hall Meeting schedule. Director
45 Elicker and she will present highlights of hunting, fishing, and conservation efforts and
46 gather public input on our strategies for balancing the agency budget including the fee
47 adjustments. Staff will present those public comments to the Commission in June.

1
2 Commissioner Wolley referred to the list of reductions totaling \$6.3 million and the list of
3 activities that would shift some programs off recreational dollars to the GF. If we were to
4 receive all the GF that we request would that have any impact on the reductions list, or
5 are those reductions proposed to occur no matter what? Deputy Director Colbert said
6 our proposal assumes that if we get \$11.9 million in GF, we would still be doing the \$6.3
7 million in reductions. We are proposing those as straight reductions and not asking to
8 buy those back with GF or fees.

9
10 Commissioner Akenson said this briefing gave her a very good insight into the budget
11 development process. She looks forward to hearing more about the public comments
12 from the Town Hall meetings.

13
14 Director Elicker said next month staff and the Commission will have a more in depth
15 discussion particularly on the topics that the Commission flagged for staff. Staff will also
16 bring back the public comments from the eight Town Hall meetings.

17
18 Chair Levy said it would have been more beneficial for the Commission to have had a
19 copy of what Debbie was presenting on the computer and in front of them before she did
20 her presentation.

21
22 Director Elicker said the Commission would have a copy of staff's presentation by the
23 end of the day.

24
25 Chair Levy asked if staff during the June meeting would discuss the Governor's Healthy
26 Environment and other programs in the agency's proposed budget. Director Elicker said
27 he would discuss in more depth how the Governor has set up his budget process for this
28 biennium. It is similar to last biennium with the exception of adding agency directors,
29 particularly in natural resources, to the program team.

30
31 Commissioner Webber said he planned to attend the Town Hall in Coos Bay/North Bend
32 (May 27) and would try to make the Town Hall in Roseburg (May 28).

33
34 Director Elicker invited and encouraged the Commission to attend a Town Hall meeting
35 in their local area so they could hear the public responses to these proposals today.

36
37 Chair Levy said she would be at the LaGrande Town Hall (May 20) and maybe the one
38 in Bend (May 21). Commissioner Akenson said she would be at the Town Hall meeting
39 in Bend as well.

40
41 **ADJOURN**

42 Chair Levy thanked staff and adjourned the teleconference meeting at 2:33 p.m.

