



Rochester Hills

Minutes - Draft

Deer Management Advisory Committee

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*Bruce Austin, Monique Balaban, Allen Decker, Jim Kubicina,
Thomas McDonald, Joseph Podvin, Benjamin Denno*
Council Members: Dale A. Hetrick, Adam Kochenderfer
Youth Representative: Joshua Morgan

Wednesday, September 16, 2015

7:00 PM

1000 Rochester Hills Drive

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Kubicina called the Deer Management Advisory Committee meeting to order at 7:07 p.m., Michigan Time.

ROLL CALL

Present 4 - Allen Decker, Monique Balaban, Jim Kubicina and Thomas McDonald

Absent 3 - Joseph Podvin, Bruce Austin and Benjamin Denno

Others Present:

Mike Hartner, Director of Parks and Forestry
Lance DeVoe, Park Ranger II
Adam Kochenderfer, City Council Representative

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2015-0364 Regular Meeting - July 9, 2014

Attachments: [07-09-14 DMAC Draft Minutes.pdf](#)
[Resolution-mtg minutes 7-9-14.pdf](#)

A motion was made by McDonald, seconded by Balaban, that this matter be Approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye 4 - Decker, Balaban, Kubicina and McDonald

Absent 3 - Podvin, Austin and Denno

Resolved, that the Deer Management Advisory Committee hereby approves the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of July 9, 2014 as presented.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

2015-0365 Review of 2014 Deer Crash Data and Aerial Survey Results

Attachments: [Aerial Deer Survey Results 2015.pdf](#)
[Deer Count Survey Areas.pdf](#)
[2014 Deer Crash Location Map RH.pdf](#)
[Oakland County Statistics Report.pdf](#)

Lance DeVoe, Park Ranger II, reviewed the aerial survey results and the 2014 Deer Crash Data. He noted that the deer survey was down considerably from the year before, where the large number was most likely from the severity of that winter and the depth of the snow. He noted that even though it was higher than most years, it was a drop of 59 deer counted from 2014. He commented that if this coming year is as mild as what is being forecast, the deer count should be reduced even lower. He stated that this indicates that last year's count of 303 deer was an anomaly.

Mike Hartner, Director of Parks and Forestry, noted that the aerial survey has been included in the proposed budget for 2016.

Chairperson Kubicina suggested the Committee consider a motion to express continued support for the survey.

Member McDonald moved, and **Member Decker** supported, to continue the Committee's recommendation for the aerial survey for next year. The Committee unanimously approved the motion.

Member McDonald questioned whether there might be a reduction in the cost of the survey.

Mr. Hartner responded that the cost is based on acreage and flying time.

He moved on to present the crash data from the Traffic Improvement Association (TIA). He noted that crash details are summarized from police reports, and highlight time of day, conditions, and more. He commented that it does seem to stay pretty consistent from year to year with more occurring in the first couple of hours of daylight and again at twilight in October and November, during the deer rut.

Mr. DeVoe stated that more than fifty percent of the car-deer accidents happen in October and November.

Council Member Kochenderfer questioned whether the location map is different than previous years.

Mr. DeVoe responded that they vary somewhat; however, Tienken, Adams, Walton and Avon always lead the way in more crashes. He noted that he uses the crash map to determine where the signs would be more effective. He commented that last year they were placed in the areas of M-59 and South Boulevard; and this year they will be moved to the area around Hamlin and Livernois.

Mr. Hartner added that they are moved after two weeks to another location, covering eight locations during the placement time from October 15 to November 15.

Member Balaban questioned whether more signs could be used.

Mr. Hartner pointed out that in addition, the Oakland County Sheriff's sign is used at no cost to the City. The four signs rented are the large industrial versions.

Chairperson Kubicina questioned whether there had been any discussion on extending the time the signs were placed.

Mr. Hartner responded that not only would it cost more, he did not know if it would result in additional benefit. he pointed out that the goal is to increase general driver awareness.

Mr. DeVoe added that if a sign is in place too long at one location, it becomes "white noise" and is ignored.

Member Balaban stated that the time should be extended. She added that reflective posts or flashing signs be considered. She questioned whether permanent signs could be utilized.

Mr. DeVoe noted that the County, and not the City, controls signage on major roads.

Mr. Hartner mentioned that the permanent signs are in the range of \$15,000 apiece. He commented that the changeable signs have more influence on drivers. He noted that there is not enough empirical evidence to support the expenditure for a permanent sign.

Extensive discussion ensued regarding what the City could and could not do on a County-owned roadway. It was mentioned that the Oakland County Road Commission was approached regarding the reflective signage and they responded that after consideration, they would not allow it.

Member Balaban suggested that State Representative Webber be contacted and asked to sponsor legislation to allow cities more control of speed limits in their jurisdictions. She noted that he is currently sponsoring House Bill 4067 which would give control back to municipalities for gravel road speeds.

Mr. Hartner stated that legislation such as this would change the entire state structure of the roads and was unlikely to receive any support.

Member Balaban questioned why the County would not consider signage in Rochester Hills.

Mr. DeVoe responded that the governing body is a County agency and would

not single out Rochester Hills. Any proposal would have to be implemented county-wide for uniformity.

Discussion ensued regarding the number of accidents reported.

Mr. DeVoe noted that the statistics only include those those accidents that result in a police report. He commented that the DNR estimates that the reported kill and non-reported kill rates are about equal statewide. He stated that there is no reason for a motorist to report an accident unless he or she wishes to keep the deer and needs a permit from the Sheriff, or needs the report for their collision insurance.

Ms. Balaban questioned how calls to pick up deer from the roadways are included.

Mr. DeVoe noted that these numbers are not included.

A motion was made by McDonald, seconded by Decker, that this matter be Approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye 4 - Decker, Balaban, Kubicina and McDonald

Absent 3 - Podvin, Austin and Denno

Resolved, that the Deer Management Advisory Committee (DMAC) hereby supports the continuation of the annual aerial survey for 2016.

2015-0366 Discuss continuation of usage of four (4) changeable message boards at eight (8) locations in the fall of 2015.

Attachments: [Deer Sign Locations 9-15.pdf](#)

Chairperson Kubicina directed discussion to the changeable message boards. He requested the Committee consider a motion continuing support for their placement.

Member Balaban requested the Committee consider recommending placement from October 1 to the end of November.

Mr. Hartner responded that funds are allocated for 2015 and in the proposed budget for 2016. Any additions would be for 2017.

Council Member Kochenderfer stated that while Council does not have a problem spending the funding, it will need to see data to support that a longer time will have an effect on crashes.

Mr. Hartner stated that it would be difficult to point to empirical data.

Member McDonald stated that the Committee's recommendation should be consistent with what it has done in the past and he would see no reason vary from this.

Member Decker suggested that the churches with electronic signs be

canvassed to inquire if they could assist in displaying messages.

Mr. Hartner noted that the message was displayed on signs on I-75, increasing coverage outside of Rochester Hills.

Mr. DeVoe commented that it is his opinion that by doing more, it would actually be detrimental. He stated that the signs would lose their effectiveness.

Chairperson Kubicina stated that while it is a valid idea, he does not feel the board will support a motion to increase the time.

Mr. DeVoe stated that he would review crash data into December and break it out to dates and times to determine how significant these crashes are during that month. He noted that there is a second increase in deer movement around the third week of December.

Mr. Hartner suggested that the Sheriff's Department could allow their sign cart to be placed out in December at no cost to the City. He added that he favors the idea of asking the churches to display messages.

Mr. DeVoe noted he would come up with a plan to move the Sheriff's cart in December.

A motion was made by Decker, seconded by McDonald, that this matter be Approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye 4 - Decker, Balaban, Kubicina and McDonald

Absent 3 - Podvin, Austin and Denno

Resolved, that the Deer Management Advisory Committee (DMAC) hereby recommends the continued use of the four (4) changeable message boards at eight (8) locations in the fall of 2015.

2015-0367 Discuss the continuation of using Oakland County for an annual aerial survey.

Discussed previously. See Legislative File 2015-0365.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Member McDonald questioned when the Committee will present its findings to Council.

Mr. Hartner noted that the presentation is set for the meeting of October 12, 2015.

NEXT MEETING DATE

- To Be Determined.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Chairperson Kubicina adjourned the meeting at 8:03 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Mary Jo Pachla.

Minutes were approved as presented/amended at the _____ [year] Regular [Committee] Meeting.

Jim Kubicina, Chairperson