

Wisconsin Conservation Congress

Legislative Committee

Meeting Minutes



ORDER OF BUSINESS	09/19/2015	9:30 AM	Portage County Public Library
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I. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

A. CALL TO ORDER

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY	Scott Gunderson at 9:35
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B. ROLL CALL

ATTENDEES	Michael Hamm, Kevin Schanning, Richard Krawze Sr., Lowell Suring, Alan Suchla, Frank Reith, Harold Drake, Matthew Schleis, Tashina Peplinski, Kathleen Tober, Scott Gunderson, Thomas Daluga Jr.
EXCUSED	Paul Shaurette, Ed Choinski, Chuck Boley, William Howe, David Breunig
UNEXCUSED	Brook Waalen, John Jones, Melissa Smith
GUESTS	George Meyer, Lee Fahrney, Christopher Underwood

C. AGENDA APPROVAL/REPAIR

DISCUSSION	Alan Suchla – Motion to approve Harold Drake – second Call to Vote – Motion Carries
ACTION	

D. REVIEW COMMITTEE MISSION STATEMENT

DISCUSSION	Scott Gunderson reviewed the mission statement of the committee: The mission of the Legislative Committee of the Conservation Congress is to advise the DNR and the NRB of the official positions of the Congress on legislative issues and to testify to such at legislative hearings and meetings as needed; to review resolutions and legislation in order to advise and recommend positions to the members and leadership of the congress; at to work with the department of natural resources in the development and implementation of wildlife, habitat and conservation legislation and administrative rules.
ACTION	

E. PUBLIC COMMENTS

DISCUSSION	<p>George Meyer (WWF) – provided opinion on third resolution to agenda, DNR is critical to continuation of pastimes. Important to have constraints on the types of people running an agency with experience in the subject of the actions of the agency. Suggested that two of the top three leaders of the agency should have a background in natural resources or conservation, the third can hold appropriate organizational background. Intent is not to remove gubernatorial appointment authority.</p> <p>Lee Fahrney (WCC) – committee is important to the WCC, need to increase relationship with the legislature and more in tune with appropriate representatives. Suggested delegates introducing themselves to their representatives. Advised of ensuring that position of issues is in line with WCC official position if available or expressed as personal. Executive Council will be referred to as the District Leadership Council</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. There is discussion to include legislative committee member to the Executive Council. Survey of delegates had a 25% response rate and suggested increased activity at the legislative level. ii. Discussed with Kurt Theide regarding employment at the DNR, there would be no terminated
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- employees as a result of any changes; all positions that were removed were vacant.
1. Frank Reith – Departure of DNR employees leaving to go to a different state position loss.
 - a. Scott Gunderson – Retort that employees departure occurs throughout state agencies and isn't to be considered a termination.
 2. Michael Hamm – Recognized management positions are being filled pulling from field staff and these positions have not been replaced. It may have been more appropriate to evaluate the amount of supervision required of field positions.
- iii. Reported 21 hunting dogs kills from wolves, requested to be informed of any dog fatalities that were incurred by wolves for additional review.
1. Frank Reith– Inquired on how much compensation of the loss of hunting dogs was being incurred.
 - a. Dick Krawze – had met with Rep Reid Ribble regarding wolf legislation. There appears to be bi-partisan support but there is concern from adjacent states
 - b. Scott Gunderson – expressed support the use of this committee to develop support or addressing of an issue such as management of Wolf Population
 - c. Dick Krawze – expressed concern with hunters choosing to not participate in WI hunting season but rather pursuing game outside of the state. Express concern regarding the public opinion on the support of DNR scientists and population dynamics
 2. Frank Reith – provided experience with the interaction of wolf population with campers
 3. Tashina Peplinski – It will take a significant event in order for action to be made regarding this issue

Scott Gunderson – EC feels this is an important committee and has been directed to escalate the amount of activity of the committee. Committee may require more meetings than once a year and has been tasked with an increase in participation and action. Directed delegates to increase connection with representatives and continue in identifying the issues that are present within the State. Only state within the United States that has an organization akin to the WCC, engaging the public in natural resource issues. Need to increase involvement and influence in legislature in terms of natural resource related issues.

- i. Alan Suchla – Suggested delegates to increase exposure with the public and representatives. Public is seeking a means of conveying opinion and concerns related to natural resource related issues.
- ii. Kathleen Tober – Agreed that there is a need for increased exposure of the WCC within organizations and the community. There should be more publication of who the representatives are within the community.
- iii. Kevn Schanning – Agreed within the importance of this committee and advised that the committee needs to utilize appropriate studies and research related to the topics. Provided example of opinions related to wolf impact upon wildlife populations that conflict with completed studies that are available.
- iv. Kathleen Tober – Concurred with the necessity of the increased need for education with the public.
- v. Lowell Suring – Agree with increased involvement with representatives but requested direction and support in how to engage these individuals.
- vi. Tashina Peplinski – Expressed concern regarding the lack of support or resources to assist in knowing what to do and how to engage the public.
- vii. Scott Gunderson – Need to look at the science related to issues but also be cognizant of the social issues with the topic in order to balance the management of issues.
- viii. Kevin Schanning – Social science can also be utilized in the analysis of issues for consideration in the management of issues.
- ix. Scott Gunderson – Not all topics related to natural resources are able to be vested and reviewed by the WCC when taken by the legislature. Legislature is elected to represent the state as a whole and will take appropriate action, as they see necessary, to address the issue promptly. Suggested the utilization of this committee to provide support to the legislature.
- x. Dick Krawze – Calls his legislature on a weekly basis regarding issues of concerns and this has assisted in his engagement on issues.
- xi. Michael Hamm – EC and District Leadership should provide a larger reflection of the official opinion of the WCC on various issues and provide this on the website
 1. Lee Fahrney – Should be something on the website regarding the official positions but there needs to be increased authority to the EC to be responsive to the fluid nature of the political environment.

ACTION

II. INFORMATION & ACTION ITEMS

A. CITIZEN RESOLUTIONS

DISCUSSION	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Conservation Patron License fee for senior citizens (010215)<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Author was unable to be present at time but expressed importance of this issue to Chairman.b. Scott Gunderson – author expressed importance of participationc. Lowell Suring – Motion to advance, Harold Drake – Second<ol style="list-style-type: none">i. Inquired on what the official age of a Senior Citizen, appears to be intent is to line up this license with the senior small gamed. Harold Drake – If this was advanced then consideration would need to be taken to identify revenue loss as incurred.e. Lowell Suring – need to know the financial gain / loss from this resolution may have increased purchasing of this license.<ol style="list-style-type: none">i. Tim Gary - Anticipated financial loss would be \$285,000 based upon existing number of patrol owners and based upon a \$45 reduction; this may be subject to population shifts.f. Tashina Peplinski – Increased engagement of the younger generation is being pursued and this would allow for increased engagement of the older generationsg. Alan Suchla – In the review of the loss of hunters during the discussion of decreasing the minimum hunting age. The main loss was incurred with high school and college aged hunters.h. Kathleen Tober – There is an increase in the discussion of the loss of mentors for younger hunters and this resolution may serve as a means to increase the number of mentors available. Senior CP holders may be able to provide additional time in mentoring hunters.i. Thomas Daluga – Continues to purchase the CP license despite not utilizing all the available hunting / fishingj. Michael Hamm – expressed opposition as senior citizens may be able to use the license more due to increased time available, additionally there may be some individuals who are transferring the benefits to other family members.k. Kevin Schanning – expressed opposition with the provision of the specific value without knowledge of the specific impact, what value is most appropriate needs to be identified.l. Lowell Suring – Difficult to advance without the knowledge of what increase or continued sales would be incurred.m. Scott Gunderson – the committee is able to modify the resolution so long as there is no deviation from the original intentn. Michael Hamm – Subsequent resolution addresses this same issue with limited cost implied and may be more appropriateo. Tashina Peplinski – Per the analysis of the financial loss, this would impact nearly 6,000 current CP holders. Would this address the concern of a minority of holders or the group as a whole? There are some individuals who chose to purchase this license to support natural resource versus on a value basis. If there is a cost issue then the individuals would purchase the licenses that they actually utilize.p. Kevin Schanning – Since two resolutions of a similar nature passed this is a relevant subject to action and expressed interest in creating a motion that addresses the concerns presented.q. Call to vote – motion falls to advance2. Create a senior citizen patron license (680215)<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Tashina Peplinski – Motion to rejectb. Kathleen Tober – Second motionc. No discussiond. Call to vote – Motion carries4. Motion to draft new resolution – Senior Citizens Conservation Patrons<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Kevin Schanning – Motion to submit new resolution and advanceb. Kathleen Tober – Secondc. Be it resolved that the Wisconsin Conservation Congress, the Department of Natural Resources, the State Legislature and the State of Wisconsin Governor's office work together to explore the creation of a senior citizens conservation patrons license.d. Call to vote – Motion Carries5. Increase scientific, professional natural resource management in the DNR (130215)<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Michael Hamm – Motion to Advanceb. Harold Drake – Secondc. Tashina Peplinski – During the annual convention it was expressed that the Natural Resource Board to increase connection with natural resourcesd. Harold Drake – This resolution appears to be in line with the appointment of the DNR secretary by the Natural Resource Board as opposed to being a political appointee
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- e. Michael Hamm – Two of three managers with the appropriate amount of experience provides a good balance to the issues
 - f. Scott Gunderson – Managers are just that, managers. It is necessary to ensure that the support staff and people who you work with have the appropriate knowledge and experience. Good manager works with people, utilize common sense and gets things done. This resolution attempts to address the appointment of leadership with politics.
 - g. Dick Krawze – Under the current political environment this may take time on a political cause that would fail to advance
 - h. Frank Reith – at the convention the DNR Secretary failed to provide assessment of natural resource related issues. Experience of the current secretary was self-expressed as being a person who is able to get things done.
 - i. Thomas Daluga – The current motion is to advance to the spring hearings and this resolution would provide opinion of the state in the terms of this issue.
 - j. Michael Hamm – There no mention within the resolution that addresses the appointment of the position by a governor and this would ensure that individuals are appointment with experience.
 - k. Scott Gunderson – There was past support of a DNR secretary with experience with hunting and fishing.
 - l. Call to Vote – Motion Advances.
6. Initiate the selling of gift certificates for DNR licenses, fees, permits (270315)
- a. Author is present – able to purchase gift certificate for many other purpose and this would ensure that the money provided is utilized for this specific purpose. Adjacent states utilize the use of gift certificates for license purchases.
 - b. Kevin Schanning – Motion to advance
 - c. Tashina Peplinski – Second
 - d. Scott Gunderson – great resolution and there is a continuous change, the ALICE system may be able support this request. Don't intend this to be a burden to the DNR but want to support the provision of licenses to others.
 - e. Tim Gary – Department had completed this in the past 1991 – 2005 but was discontinued due to low public usage and administrative costs. Vendors present for other venues would be opposed to this since with would be in conflict of this. This practice may have impact on banking / privacy related issues and thereby incurred cost. It wouldn't be easy but it would be a possibility.
 - f. Michael Hamm – inquired on how this worked with provision of funds in adjacent states.
 - g. Scott Gunderson – Experience is that the purchase is of a voucher with the appropriate funds related to a license. There would be an increase in transactions and subsequently a possible loss of revenue by vendor partners
 - h. Tashina Peplinski – Inquired if vendors allow the use of a gift card for the purchasing of a license. Administrative costs of gift cards can exceed the benefits to the program, suggested that the license be allowed to be purchased on behalf of someone else
 - i. Tim Gary – State Law prohibits the purchase of a license for someone else.
 - i. Harold Drake – in review of the resolution it would appear to be relatively simple since many retailers utilize gift card.
 - j. Motion called for vote – Motion carries
7. License fee increase (640315)
- a. Thomas Daluga – Motion to advance
 - b. Frank Reith – Second
 - c. Kevin Schanning – Do all license fees go towards the DNR budget?
 - i. Tim Gary – Fees are directed into the fish and wildlife account
 - d. Tashina Peplinski – There is support so long as there is appropriate segregation of funds for use within the DNR.
 - e. Scott Gunderson – Last increase in fee was a partial increase, criteria for evaluation are whether the increase is necessary and if it would be supported. This would require support within the current legislature
 - f. Kevin Schanning – This would provide an example of the WCC collaborating with the Legislature on a topic
 - g. Harold Drake – This specific resolution was largely supported within the county it was passed. It should be forwarded for assessment by the state.
 - h. Scott Gunderson – The resolution as written would not address this issue since it is required for legislative action as opposed to DNR action.
 - i. Michael Hamm – The body of this resolution is supportive of earmarking funds for specific purposes and this may not be obtained.
 - j. Matthew Schleis – supportive to the review of an increase in fee but the department cannot

	<p>rely solely upon the support of consumptive users, non-consumptive users yield benefit to the common good and should also have responsibility in the management of the resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> k. Kathleen Tober – Is supportive to the increase in fees but has concerns regarding the provision of grants to organizations that sequester land and assets with removal from the public l. Frank Reith – Farm use tax increase had impact upon farm land and had rolling impact m. Kevin Schanning – Motion to make a friendly amendment: include the legislature within the resolution. “Be it resolved that the Conservation Congress at the annual meeting held on April 13, 2015 recommends that the Conservation Congress work with the Natural Resource Board and the legislature to explore increasing license fees.” n. Harold Drake – Second to motion o. Tashina Peplinski – the resolution review of jobs being lost doesn’t fully comply with aforementioned review that positions weren’t being terminated but rather left unfilled. p. Thomas Daluga – It may be more appropriate to draft a new question without the conflicting information. q. Michael Hamm – Suggested the occlusion of the second paragraph of the resolution to remove r. Kevin Schanning – requests amendment of his amendment to include the occlusion of the second paragraph based upon the concerns of inclusion of inaccurate information. s. Harold Drake – seconds the amendment of the resolution. t. Call to Vote – Motion to amend carries u. Call to Vote – Motion to advance as amended carries <p>8. Registration of non-motorized watercraft (670215)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Tashina Peplinski – Motion to advance b. Alan Suchla – Second c. Tashina Peplinski – Discussion at the spring hearing yielded a close vote. There were concerns regarding the logistics of enforcement d. Scott Gunderson – Most of the discussion related to this is in terms of canoes and kayaks, an increasing sport. Expressed opinion that this was drafted fairly well to address the issue of concern. e. Kevin Schanning – similar resolution failed to advance within Bayfield County two years ago. Expressed concern regarding the validity of some of the content of the resolution, spreading of invasive species. If the intent of the funds is to be earmarked for invasive species than there should be language indicating such. f. Frank Reith – Would the current transition at 18’ of increased motorized boat fees due to size be present with this intended registration? g. Scott Gunderson – overall intent of the resolution is the lack of funding for invasive species action and currently these recreational vehicle yield no revenue, even though they are users of the resource. These vehicles may be a source of invasive species transmission. h. Kathleen Tober – More people are utilizing canoes and kayaks due to increase in access to waterbodies and it is indicated that they utilize more waterbodies and as such transition to multiple bodies of water. i. Tashina Peplinski – Expressed that the author of the resolution would be knowledgeable regarding the science of transmission. This would be appropriate to obtain additional public input. j. Harold Drake – A similar resolution was discussed in the past with concerns regarding the groups with multiple vehicles. The general feeling was that these are consumptive users and should provide support to this issue. k. Alan Suchla – There are areas where motorized vehicles are restricted but these vehicles are allowed to be present on the lake and tie up the boat landings from other users. l. Tashina Peplinski – Reviewed prior concerns regarding the fair collection of fees from all users. m. Kathleen Tober – Suggested that families with multiple vehicles may be subject to a reduced fee n. Call to Vote – Motion Carries
ACTION	
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

B. WCC QUESTION #29 (DELIST THE WINNEBAGO SYSTEM WATERS AS FEDERAL WATERS) FROM

**2015 SPRING HEARINGS REFERRED BACK TO
COMMITTEE AT ANNUAL CONVENTION (ADDED
09/01/15)**

DISCUSSION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Matthew O'Brien – If an individual is operating on federal waterways and being compensated for such they are required to obtain a Captains License. There is little that the DNR is able to in regards to this in terms of available action as well as receipt of funds from the Federal government for enforcement. 2. Scott Gunderson – unclear what action is being requested or available for this item. There is impact to the state due to possible loss of funding from federal sources. 3. Frank Reith – Motion to table this item 4. Dick Krawze – Second 5. Call to Vote – Motion carries
ACTION	
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

**C. RULE SIMPLIFICATION COMMITTEE SUGGESTION—
STATEWIDE BAN ON DEER BAITING AND FEEDING**

DISCUSSION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Scott Gunderson – This has been a continued point of concern and discussion item. When CWD was identified a statewide ban was set in place in response to this. Subsequent changes to the restriction reduced the volume to two gallons. 2. Michael Hamm – The current process to restrict baiting in response to a positive CWD deer allows the banning but with no available options to react to the lack of further CWD positive deer within the county despite any period of time that had surpassed. Concerns regarding the restriction of baiting may prevent individuals with limited resources the inability to engage in baited wildlife viewing, recreationally. 3. Dick Krawze – Baiting and feeding has been in increasing topic for discussion. Food plots should not be included within the topic as there is limited differentiation for an adjacent farmer. The increase in feeding may be having an impact upon the bear population since they are able to go into hibernation with increased weight and higher survivability and increased rearing capacity. 4. Michael Hamm – believes that it would be appropriate to have the ability of a country from being removed from a DWD baiting ban. 5. Scott Gunderson – the removal of DWD baiting ban is one issue. The other issue that resides with this issue is also the violation of the baiting laws. If baiting remains legal then there needs to be a sufficient fine to ensure that individuals comply with the appropriate regulations. 6. Dick Krawze – In his current hunting group he has restrained from baiting for the past 14 year but will continue to utilize a food plot. As a result of this their harvest rate has decreased over time as the deer are seeking out bait in adjacent areas. 7. Kevin Schanning – In his exposure within Bayfield County the general opinion is that sportsmen don't support the use of bait for hunting but may do so in order to be successful. 8. Scott Gunderson – Pressure is present, if your neighbor is baiting than it is difficult to not bait as it will have impact upon your harvest success. 9. Alan Suchla – Farmer that placed their land within the CRP program recognized that there was less deer presence on their land and as such have removed themselves from this program in order to return deer to their land. 10. Tashina Peplinski – This topic is complicated, concerns regarding the natural depositions of food sources being considered baiting. 11. Kathleen Tober – The practice of using salt blocks for agricultural purposes may be considered baiting as well as the use of a bird feeder. 12. Frank Reith – Increased fines for poaching had a benefit to the reduction in poaching, a similar increase would yield the same benefit. 13. Alan Suchla – Common smart hunting practices would not be considered baiting. 14. Michael Hamm – This had been reviewed in the prior spring hearing 15. Tim Gary – There is the introduction of a bill that removes the baiting restrictions if a period of time from the positive DWD test is passed. 16. Michael Hamm – Reviewed the actual question posed by the spring hearing, statewide during the fall season. 18. Dick Krawze – motion to advance the result of the 2015 Spring Hearing question 79 – Change deer baiting and feeding laws to the District Leadership Council in support of this resolution. 19. Kevin Schanning – second the motion to advance.
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	20. Motion carries
ACTION	
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

D. DEPARTMENT INFORMATION ITEMS AND UPDATES

DISCUSSION	<p>1. 2015 legislative session update <u>Biennial Budget - Enacted</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stewardship: reduced to \$33.25M/year, from \$50M/year • North of 64 approvals • Kettle Moraine Fish Hatchery • Capacity grants zeroed out • Park fees changes • \$2M/year for roads to state lands • \$1M/year Closed Acreage Fees to local governments – One time only • Good neighbor authority • Increase timber harvest levels on northern state foresters from 67 – 75% • Urban bow hunting loophole closure for those enacted before 2013 Act 71 • Deletes Class B bear license • Law enforcement computer funding approved • Car killed deer • Fish and Wildlife Account - Require the report to include recommendations for program reductions and hunting and fishing approval fee increases necessary to bring the ongoing revenue and expenditure level into balance. Require the Department to submit the report to the Joint Committee on Finance by January 1, 2017. <p><u>Enacted</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turkey donation program – Same as deer <p><u>Introduced & Heard</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surgeon and bear licenses for disabled veterans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ passed WCC overwhelmingly during the DNR's 2013 spring hearings ○ allow the transfer of a valid fish and game permit from a successful permit holder to a disabled resident for a "first time" or "one time" harvest opportunity ○ allow a person who is issued a Class A bear license to transfer that license to a resident who was awarded a Purple Heart or to a person who is serving on active duty in the U.S. armed forces • Disability determinations by physicians assistants and nurse practitioners • Buoy liability exemption • Water skiing without mirrors • Group deer hunting restrictions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ensure that deer marked with a designated youth tag were in fact harvested by youth by prohibiting members of a group deer hunt from using a designated youth tag issued to another member of the party. <p><u>Introduced & Not Heard</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Codifying unclassified misdemeanors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Risks minimum sentencing for fish and large game species violations • Unattended decoys <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2011 spring hearing the Conservation Congress adopted a resolution ○ allow private property owners to leave unattended decoys in a body of water as long as it is self-contained, has no public access, and is entirely surrounded by their own property • Outdoor heritage education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ affirms our children's outdoor heritage, the benefits it provides, and promotes specific activities including share a hunting or fishing experience with a family member, friend, or mentor • Blaze pink <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ allow hunters to wear "blaze pink" as well as blaze orange when hunting deer with
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	<p>firearms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeding deer provides that, after any positive test for CWD or BT has been confirmed, the rule prohibiting feeding deer may not be in effect for longer than 36 months in the county where the tested animal was located or longer than 24 months in neighboring counties. • Wild animal possession <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ private possession, sale, and propagation of exotic animals including lions, tigers, polar bears, brown bears, gorillas, chimpanzees, alligators, and crocodiles is prohibited. People who currently possess these species can keep them until the animals die, but they will not be allowed to acquire additional dangerous exotic animals. Certain zoos, veterinarians, and other reasonable institutions are also exempt from this prohibition. <p><u>Circulated</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentored hunting reform <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminates the age restriction on mentored hunting and eliminates the restriction on mentors hunting with their own firearm simultaneously • Eliminate back tags <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Eliminates the requirement that DNR issue a back tag with any of these licenses and the requirement that the licensee attach a back tag to any garment while hunting.
ACTION	
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

III. MEMBERS MATTERS

DISCUSSION	<p>Tashina Peplinski – WCC bylaws provides review of what the official standing of the Congress for use.</p> <p>Dick Krawze – There is increasing difficulty in having delegates attend the annual convention. Concern for the future of delegate of the WCC, something that everyone needs to think about.</p> <p>Kevin Schanning – expressed concern regarding the legislation regarding leaving unattended decoys on waterbodies. Missing reason that youth don't hunt to be considered is the lack of places to hunt, the loss of public lands will have impact in this pursuit of hunting access. If this committee wants to have larger impact within the scope of the mission statement it may be appropriate to have additional exposure with the legislature.</p> <p>Scott Gunderson – There is a large amount of public land but individuals may not be aware, there needs to be an increase in ensuring access and knowledge of these resources. Intends to increase frequency of meetings. Expressed appreciation of member's participation.</p> <p>Alan Suchla – glad to see the change in direction of this committee, the number of resolutions allows for better discussion and analysis of the issues.</p>
ACTION	

IV. ADJOURNMENT

MEETING ADJOURNED	2:35 PM
SUBMITTED BY	Matthew L. Schleis
DATE	09/19/2015