

**Carlisle Deer Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**April 15, 2020**  
Zoom Meeting 7:00 PM

Committee members present: Jonathan DeKock (Chair), Dejan (Dan) Bojanic, Todd Thorsen, John Keating, Alex Parra, Barney Arnold  
Community members: George Michalik, Stephen Keele, Jeannie Geneczko, Kay Hurley, Don Allen

Chair Jonathan DeKock opened the meeting at 7:09 PM.

**Agenda Item 1: Approval of meeting minutes**

Minutes of the February 19, 2020 meeting were approved (4-0-2); Abstentions: Todd Thorsen, Alex Parra

**Agenda Item 2: Succession planning for 2020 Deer Agent**

(Jonathan DeKock)

- We need to decide who will serve as the Deer Agent for the 2020 Fall bow hunt.
- Dejan Bojanic will continue until June. He is happy to continue as an official or unofficial member of the community for an additional year (2020 hunt season).
- Carlisle citizen and hunter George Michalik has volunteered to serve as Deer Agent, with Stephen Keele as deputy.
- If we want seven members on the committee, we will need to find an additional member.
- John Keating volunteered to stay on the committee for an additional year.
- Todd Thorsen volunteered to be the Board of Health representative for an additional year.
- Barney Arnold volunteered to be the BoS representative for an additional year.
- Dejan Bojanic or Stephen Keele could be seventh voting member; Dejan to discuss with Stephen offline.
- Per our schedule, the BoS will approve the 2020 regulations at their June 2 meeting. We can make an official recommendation regarding succession and the composition of the committee after our May meeting.

**Agenda Item 3: Report on Board of Selectmen feedback for setting direction for Fall 2020 bow hunt**

(Jonathan DeKock)

- Members of the Deer Committee had a meeting with the BoS six weeks ago and gave a 15 minute presentation.

(Barney Arnold)

- Key issues raised by the BoS:
  - 1. The BoS had a concern about expanding the hunt. They did not understand that doubling hunters did not equal doubling the number of stands.
  - 2. The BoS was concerned about the cost of the hunt to the Town of Carlisle, especially given the low number of deer taken in 2019.
  - 3. There was some discussion with the BoS about the rotation of parcels and giving some lands a break from hunting.

(Dejan Bojanic)

- The central issue is that the program has been very modest to date, which limits its efficiency. With a reduced time frame and a limited amount of parcels in the past hunts, there is room for improvement in increasing the number of hunters, parcels and the length of the hunt.

(Alex Parra)

- If we have another year with a low hunt yield, is there a sense that the BoS will close the program?

(Barney Arnold)

- The BoS had a discussion about metrics, particularly in relation to the health of the forests. If we could demonstrate measurable changes in the understory over time, the BoS would likely be more supportive of future hunts.

(John Keating)

- We tend to convey to the BoS that an established program like Dover tend to run itself.

(Jonathan DeKock)

- Big takeaways from the BoS meeting:

- 1. The BoS did not show interest in expanding the hunt, but showed some interest in swapping parcels.
- 2. Financial - The Deer Committee needs to live within its own means. This translates to increased help by Board members to support the activities and needs of the Deer Agent.
- 3. There was not much feedback on changing the Deer Agent. We as a committee should go forward with our own ideas.
- 4. The Deer Committee needs to work on hunt metrics. Working with the Land Stewardship committee or equivalent to establish metrics may be useful.

(George Michalik)

- Surveying Great Meadows is a possibility to get a comparative parcel for vegetation/browsing, as it has been hunted for many decades.

(Jonathan DeKock)

- We would need committee members trained to identify browsing of vegetation by deer.

#### Agenda Item 4: **Discuss proposed changes to parcels, number of hunters, and season length**

(Jonathan DeKock)

- For the addition of parcels to the hunt, like the Hart Swanson land, what kind of work is needed?

(John Keating)

- The parcels for the 2020 hunt need to be written into the 2020 regs.

(Dejan Bojanic)

- Reviewing the timeline spreadsheet that was created to help organize the 2020 hunt, we need:
  - Property walkthrough
  - Conservation restriction
  - Map defining huntable land and offsets
  - Hunters that will be hunting on the parcel
  - Parking locations and number of cars allowed at a given parking spot
- New parcels would be the Hart Swanson Property, Hart Swanson South (which would be accessed via Hanover Rd) and an expansion of Conant to include DPW land.
- Changes in number of hunters per parcel if we add 16 hunters to the program in 2020, bringing the total to 34
  - Conant (2 to 5), Benfield (2 to 3), Davis (6 to 9), Greenough (stay at 4), Hart Swanson

- (new,4), Hart Swanson South (new,2), Town Forest (4 to 7)
  - Based on hunt able acreage (310-320 acres in total), we can fit 26 hunters on the properties at a time. Some huntable parcels will need to be shared by hunters.
- (Jonathan DeKock)
- Key metrics we need to focus on when finalizing parcels: Forest management and number of hours spent in stands.
    - Sudbury requires a log to be kept by hunters each time they go out documenting the number of deer they saw, but hounding hunters and putting additional restrictions on them in the Town hunt may be over-restrictive.
  - Will work with Dejan Bojanic to see if we can increase hunt acreage by getting approval from abutters to hunt within 500 feet of their properties (but still on town land)
    - The hunter assigned to a parcel with landowner permission to hunt within 500 feet will still need to have written permission from landowner.
  - We could consider adding additional hunters to Greenough if additional parking could be located. Piggery road may be a possibility.
  - We need to create a map for the Hart Swanson parcels
    - Dejan Bojanic will do this if map files can be obtained from the Trails committee, with overlays from Mass Wildlife to identify setbacks.
  - Do we want a time-sharing mechanism for parcels?
    - Dejan Bojanic suggested Signup Genius, which would be a good tool to monitor hunting efficiency. Parking will still be a challenge in parcels like Davis, but first come/first serve should work fine between the hunters.
  - For the 2020 hunt, the committee supports a full season (October-December) as well as a sharing tool like Sign up Genius. Jonathan will update regulations to reflect.
  - We, as a committee, are not too far off our timeline in organizing the 2020 hunt.
    - We need to finalize 2020 hunt regulations and maps in the May 20 meeting.
    - We can start obtaining Conservation Restriction letters for the hunt parcels.
    - We need to have 2020 hunt regulations in place before a public input session, which could be held by Zoom, with members of the public at large submitting their questions via chat. The input session would need to be held between the May 20 Deer Committee meeting and the June 2 BoS meeting.
    - It would be good to have an additional meeting with the BoS prior to finalizing regs. Barney Arnold to see if BoS is amenable to this suggestion.

#### Agenda Item 5: **Public input**

(Jeannie Geneczko)

- Is there going to be a public meeting in addition to the BoS meeting in June?
- Is having a fee for the hunt a liability for the Town?
- Concern over Mary Hopkins time for this year spend on Deer Committee activities. Suggestion made to the Deer Committee to not use Mary for the rest of the year.
- Town of Dover. Deer hunt there was based on a concern for Lyme disease. As such, doesn't believe that Dover should be a role model for the Carlisle program.
- Greenough. Very little damage to understory there suggests that browsing is not a problem.

(Kay Hurley)

- No evidence has been provided on damage to understory by deer.
- Kay is conducting her own understory study for Davis and Towle.

- Believes that hunt should not be OKed by the BoS until the problem is defined.

(Don Allen)

- Can bow hunting address the problem of deer overpopulation? Dr. Allen Rutberg suggests that it will not work for suburban deer populations. Don will provide more date in a website that will be available soon.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted: Todd Thorsen