

Michigan Wildlife Council

MINUTES January 27, 2020

A regular meeting of the Michigan Wildlife Council was held Monday, January 27, 2020, at the Michigan Association of Recreation Vehicles and Campgrounds (MARVAC), 2222 Association Drive in Okemos, Michigan.

Present for the Michigan Wildlife Council

Matt Pedigo
Kristin Phillips
Jeff Poet
Carol Rose
Jim Hammill
Henry Stancato
Beth Gruden
Nick Buggia

Excused Absence

Ed Roy

Call to Order

Chairman **Pedigo** called the meeting of the Michigan Wildlife Council (MWC) to order at 10:03 a.m. and introductions were made.

Approval of Agenda

Chairman **Pedigo** reviewed the agenda and called for discussion. There was no discussion. **Rose** made a motion that the agenda be approved as presented. **Buggia** seconded the motion, and the agenda was approved by unanimous vote (8-0).

Campaign Success Report

Emmie Musser, media director of GÜD Marketing, presented the paid media year-five, flight-one completion report (June 8-December 31, 2019). Musser reviewed media goals, overall investment and communications strategy. Key results were presented from all campaign tactics, including outdoor, TV, digital video streaming, digital music streaming, digital, paid and organic social, media interviews, content marketing, and experiential marketing. Significant results include:

- 235,899,075 total impressions and 4,019,918 total engagements (clicks to website, likes, shares, video views).
- \$238,536 (48%) in total value-added placements.
- The public relations efforts resulted in a \$488,012 value of earned media coverage.
- Interactive media effectively engaged target audiences – even with difficult or relatively unpopular subject matter.

- People connected with direct messaging that featured hunters and hunting during November.
- The top three cities for website visitors during this time period were the most densely populated cities of neutral and moderately approving audience members: Detroit, Grand Rapids, and Ann Arbor.

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Phillips stepped out at 11:00 a.m. to take part in a conference call. She returned an hour later as the 2019 Statewide Survey conversation was concluding.

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2019 Statewide Survey

Chelsea Maupin, GÜD Marketing research manager, provided an overview of the statewide survey, including methodology, timing, purpose, and key measures. **Maupin** reviewed results related to statewide approval of hunting, fishing, and trapping, sentiment for the benefits of hunting, fishing, and wildlife management, and overall knowledge of wildlife management and funding – including statewide results and shifts among various regions, races, ages, and genders. Strategic findings include:

- 73% of Michiganders know that hunting and fishing license fees are the largest funding source for wildlife management work.
- More than 3 in 4 residents now believe hunting and fishing contribute significantly to the Michigan economy.
- More than 2 in 3 people say the industry creates a significant number of jobs.
- Half of the state recognizes that wildlife management by humans is necessary, a significant increase from the 39% who agreed in 2015.
- Belief that hunting and fishing are an important part of Michigan's culture and heritage research are a campaign high.

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The meeting was adjourned for lunch at 12:17 p.m. and reconvened at 1:00 p.m. All council members present prior to lunch were present after lunch, except **Gruden** who had to leave for a period of time.

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Thank You Letter

Pedigo brought the meeting back to order by reading a thank you letter penned by **Roy** for **Hammill's** years of service to the MWC since the inception of the Council. (This was **Hammill's** last meeting due to term limits.) **Hammill** responded by thanking the Council for the opportunity and honor to serve with them.

Online Bulletin Boards

Maupin then shared an overview of online bulletin boards, a recommended research tactic, to be conducted during spring 2020. The goals of this research would be to test current campaign creative with statewide audiences to ensure its appealing, relatable, and clear; could also explore new creative look and feel conveying key messages for existing audiences and discuss current knowledge and opinions on issues such as chronic wasting disease and trapping.

Stakeholder Interviews

Next, **Maupin** gave an update on stakeholder interviews. These interviews will help gather input from key stakeholders amongst the council, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, and other relevant conservation groups. To date, **Hammill, Roy, Gruden, Rose, Buggia,** and **Poet** have been interviewed. **Pedigo, Stancato,** and Michigan DNR Director, **Dan Eichinger** have scheduled interviews. Future recommended interviews will be reviewed and approved by the Level 2 Subcommittee. Initial results include excitement for a statewide campaign and for sharing a message that directly addresses hunting and fishing with the general public, interest in increased engagement with the Michigan legislature and sportsmen community, and increased interest in outreach and education opportunities with youth.

Spring 2020 Campaign Updates

Musser and **Andrea Ness**, outreach and engagement director, presented an overview of what to expect for the spring 2020 campaign, including communications strategy, media tactics, media investment, regional breakout, micro-campaign examples, future content topics, app-targeted digital and experiential opportunities, “By Land and By Lake” content ideas, and recommendations for influencer and niche content strategies.

Survey Methodology Decision

Güd Marketing conferred with Mark Duda, from Responsive Management, and Emicity (another research firm) on their professional recommendations for research methodology given the goals of MWC.

Maupin summarized the recommendations received. Both companies emphasized that changes to methodology would break the trendline the Michigan Wildlife Council has been tracking and has the potential to return results that can't always be compared to previous surveys. Responses to the same question often come back different depending on the methodology – online, phone, or mail – because participants engage with each type of survey differently.

Online survey is the best option to maintain depth of current information collected; firms vary on sourcing participants. Duda recommends using a probabilistically sourced panel of respondents. The firm has indicated it can source 800 Michigan residents with regional representation from these panels. Emicity recommends using multiple panel providers to best represent the Michigan population in a timely and cost-efficient manner.

A phone survey is a possible option but would require the survey to be significantly shortened. Response rates are low. Key audiences such as young adults are especially prone to underrepresentation.

Neither research firm recommended a mail survey. Response rates are very low. Key audiences such as young adults, minorities, and those living in urban areas are significantly less likely to participate.

Pedigo reminded that there are two goals for the annual survey:

- 1) Vet public feedback.
- 2) Get public opinion to grow the campaign.

After conversation and discussion of the pros and cons of the various research styles and companies, it was decided that:

- 1) Research methodology would continue as planned, but with input from and possible adjustments recommended by Duda.
- 2) GÜD Marketing would interview stakeholders to get feedback.

Legislative Meeting

Pedigo stated that a meeting has been scheduled with Senator Bumstead for February 19. Council members and staff from GÜD will review the campaign and decisions on research with him.

Approval of December 19, 2019, Minutes

Pedigo called for discussion on the minutes of the December 19, 2019, MWC meeting. There was no discussion. **Rose** made a motion that the minutes be approved as submitted. **Stancato** seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by unanimous vote (8-0).

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer **Phillips** presented the written financial report for October 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019 (attached).

Rose made the motion to accept the financial report as presented. **Buggia** seconded the motion. The report was approved by unanimous vote (8-0).

Public Comment

Chairman **Pedigo** called for public comment; there was none.

New Business

A subcommittee of **Pedigo**, **Rose**, and **Buggia** has been formed to review the Operational Plan with **Ray Rustem**.

Adjournment

Hammill made the motion to adjourn, seconded by **Buggia**, and the motion to adjourn was approved by unanimous vote (8-0). The meeting was adjourned at 4:43 p.m.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 27, 2020, at Jay's Sporting Goods in Gaylord, Michigan.

APPROVED: Date _____

Matt Pedigo, Chairperson
Michigan Wildlife Council