

Shelburne Working Group on Human-Wildlife Interactions Meeting Minutes – September 23, 2020

Present: Don Rendall, Jon Cocina, Lisa Vear, Jim White, Lena Ashooh

Facilitator: Don Rendall

Notes: Jim White

1. Motion to approve agenda and minutes approved.
2. Public comment: no public comments. Lena introduced herself.
3. Discussion of policy draft

Don asks if the current draft format is generally OK with people. There was general acceptance of it although Jon commented that this was the structure we agreed to with the Natural Resources Committee (NRC). We should get them to assist with the final shaping of the policy before it goes to the Select Board.

Lisa said her questions are more about nitty gritty specifics and making them as clear as possible. Example, the word “animals” is used with and without reference to humans. Should be clear. Recommends that “animals” includes humans unless otherwise stated. She suggested that definitions should be moved to the beginning of the document. Suggested the purpose of the policy language be kept general, indicating one proposed edit that should be deleted. Pointed out that poison policy only applies to the town, but hopefully will be inspirational to residents. We don’t want to be telling them what to do, however.

Jim referenced employee training, that we should include resources at the state level for this, as well as for Vermont rehabilitators. He also wondered who the current Shelburne animal control officer accounts to exactly? He also raised the question of a role for the Natural Resources Committee, so that official town parties that have a “natural” interest in a policy like this are staying tuned into how it plays out in the real world. This offers a checks and balances, given that the town manager may not have an personal interest in the policy, and the Select Board is going to only be able to give it occasional attention. Even better would be to have a NRC member assigned as a policy “champion.” Jon said he would keep document comments available for the NRC to ponder.

There was other discussion of very specific details in the text.

At the end, it was agreed that it is time to have the NRC bring fresh eyes to the draft and suggest that their policy writer polish it. Those present wanted to continue to have input in the final edition, however, given the the time and energy investment we have in it.

Jon agreed to take on the final editing of the policy text. Jim agreed to do some research into details for listing under the resource section.