

MINUTES

Wildlife Alert Reward Association Meeting Farris Bryant Building Tallahassee, Florida December 16, 2016

Members Present

Ms. Jenny Brock (Chairman), Mr. Edward “Buddy” Boyd, Ms. Diana Flynt, Mr. Braxton Jones, Mr. Michael Kennedy, Mr. John Shaw, and Mr. Neal White

Members Not Present

Mr. Bruce Essen, Mr. Al Hammond, Mr. David Jones, and Mr. Rex Wimberly

Others Present

Major Gregg Eason, Captain Avery Tubbs, and Ms. Sara Burke

Opening Remarks

- Meeting called to order, attendance taken, and quorum was met and agenda accepted.
- Ms. Flynt motioned to accept the minutes, Mr. Kennedy seconded. Motion passed.

Financial Reports

- Ms. Brock referenced the financial report provided by the new accountant and noted that it has increased approximately \$10,000 since the last meeting. The WA checking account has steadily increased by \$15,000 to \$25,000 each year. And the three CDs are still in good standing, totaling just over \$54,000.
- Mr. White motioned to accept the financial reports, Ms. Flynt seconded. Motion Passed.

Law Enforcement Report

- Captain Tubbs discussed the 2-year comparison of calls vs. requests vs. rewards. Of the 1,238 calls received this year the dispositions of those were: Arrests – 48, Warnings – 78, Unfounded – 340, Investigations – 355, Gone on arrival – 60, Other Agency – 87, Duplicate Calls – 54, Information Only – 200, and No Report – 16. Only a small percentage of these are valid for rewards and out of that number less than half request rewards.
- Sara mentioned that calls are increasing very slowly compared to the number of calls received by dispatch each year. Dispatch received 87,477 calls in 2015; WA calls were only 1.6% of those total calls – many of which were for injured or deceased animals.
- There were 20 Wildlife Alert cases made during June, July, and August of 2016. Once such case was for the poaching of sea turtle eggs. Investigator Sierra received two separate complaints regarding an individual who was taking eggs from the turtle while she is actively laying them. For 5 days he along with Officers Stone and Church surveilled the beach. On the 5th day they were successful in apprehending the subject actively taking sea turtle eggs. The violator had 107 sea turtle eggs. The subject was arrested and transported to the Palm Beach county jail. FWC Sea Turtle Biologist Megan Koperski reburied 92 eggs; 15 were retained as evidence. Both callers received a \$350 reward.
- Captain Tubbs gave the legislation update. The statute involving Wildlife Alert is scheduled for the 2018 legislative session. This will establish a law that affords judges the authority to impose additional fines

to be paid directly to Wildlife Alert upon final judgement. This may or may not be specific to violations identified by WA as being eligible for rewards.

IANRC

- IANRC – is now the International Wildlife Crimestoppers (IWC)
- Ideas Gained:
 - **Reward Level Changes:** Major Eason suggested that the reward levels are too low. Other states in the IWC have rewards that are double WA’s limits. Ms. Flynt would like to increase the rewards. Mr. Boyd mentioned that WA should not fund criminals for turning in their associates. Mr. Boyd suggested to research rewards level in areas that are critical, such as sea turtle egg poaching. Ms. Brock would like to research the fines structures in the courts vs. the reward levels WA pays out. Captain Tubbs stated that the approximate fines were \$500 for a 2nd degree misdemeanor and \$1,000 for a 1st degree misdemeanor.
 - **Program Name:** Wildlife Alert should represent what it does and identify it as a reward program. Mr. Boyd is not interested in changing that name that has been around for over 30 years. He does not think a name change will be useful because WA covers so many types of violations. Ms. Flynt agrees that there might not be a name that encompasses all aspects of what WA does. Major Eason suggested that a name change may not be necessary as long it is advertised properly in the marketing avenues.
 - **Wildlife Alert Trailer:** Texas has a professionally done “Wall of Shame” trailer. Major Eason suggested that Wildlife Alert obtain a similar type of trailer for use by FWC officers at outreach events. Mr. Boyd is interested in obtaining a trailer(s) but wants to make sure there are personnel to man the trailer. Major Eason clarified that FWC personnel will represent WA during outreach events. Mr. Boyd wants to verify that FWC officer will present WA properly. Major Eason mentioned that there is a lot of interest in the trailer in the NE region. The trailer that is available to the NE region now is a hand made one that is checked out weekly by the officers.
 - **Three Trailer Proposals:**
 - **Trailer #1:** Local vendors: 20 foot brand new trailer, exterior graphics trailer wrap, and internal exhibits – Total cost \$30,000.
 - **Trailer #2:** Advantage Trailer: 20 foot brand new trailer, electrical package, wall posts, countertops, exterior graphics trailer wrap, no internal wall, lights, or exhibits – Total cost \$11,411
 - **Trailer #3:** Featherlite Trailers: 20 foot brand new trailer, electrical package, interior wall to divide trailer, turf lined plywood walls, linoleum floor, exterior graphics wrap, no internal exhibits – Total cost \$33,467.
 - It was suggested to look at a trailer on auction and then outfit as WA sees necessary. Mr. Boyd suggested that costs be identified that were more reasonable. With Florida being so large, if the price per trailer were reduced, then WA can purchase three trailers that could be used throughout the state.
 - Mr. Boyd motioned to find and estimate for a prototype of a trailer using only local (Florida) businesses. John Shaw 2nd the motion. Motion passed.

Marketing

- Captain Tubbs mentioned that there are 20 million residents of Florida and even more tourists visiting each year.
- Mr. Boyd suggested looking into the cost of interactive kiosks at FL Welcome Centers. Both for FWC and WA.
- Mr. Kennedy suggested piggybacking with the FWC trailer and the events that they attend. Also, he suggested WA attend the Bass Pro Shop's hunting events.
- It was suggested that WA bumper stickers should be sent out with hunting, fishing, and captive wildlife licenses. Also, possibly to be handed out at the tax collector's office.
- Mr. Boyd suggested that WA develop an App. Major Eason and Captain Tubbs explained that FWC is in the process of creating an App with a section for WA. The cost for creation of an App can range anywhere from \$30,000 to \$100,000.
- Captain Tubbs suggested that WA hire a marketing firm to create approaches that will increase awareness of WA and explore options that WA might not think of.
- Ms. Burke discussed the marketing firms that provided proposals to WA:
 - Moore Communications
 - Integrated communications firm that uses branding, public relations and advertising to promote client interests
 - Approach – research target areas of communication and increase the brand message across various media outlets
 - Purpose – increase awareness of the program
 - Total Fee – \$41,850 with the option to break the plan into sections
 - Taproot Agency
 - Ad firm / public relations / web studio that specializes in behavior change to inspire target audiences to take action with client initiatives
 - Approach – conduct target audience research and tailor a marketing plan based on study results
 - Purpose – influence the public to take action by not only making a call, but donating, becoming a member, buying a product, etc.
 - Total Fee – \$31,200 with on-call consulting options and with the option to break the plan into sections
- Ms. Flynt felt that WA needs professional marketing help since WA is not progressing with new ideas and expanded target bases. Ms. Flynt asked if other states are using marketing firms and how it works for them. Captain Tubbs explained that WA would be the first to utilize a marketing firm.
- Ms. Burke discussed the different phases of each plan and the breakdown of fees garnered.
- Ms. Flynt, Mr. White and Mr. B. Jones both wished to proceed with the marketing group Moore Communications. Ms. Flynt motioned to contact Moore Communications Group for the Research and Analysis phase for \$2,325.00. Mr. Shaw 2nd the motion. All members present voted aye; motion passed.
- Mr. Boyd motioned to table the Message House phase until the Research and Analysis phase was complete. Mr. Shaw 2nd the motion. Motion passed.

Schedule Next Meeting

- The next meeting will be Friday March 3, 2017, in Silver Springs, Florida.

Adjournment

- Ms. Flynt motioned to adjourn, Mr. Boyd seconded. Meeting adjourned.

Action Items

- Ms. Burke will research the reward amounts vs. the fines structures in statute.
- Ms. Burke will provide estimates for a WA trailer.