

**PENNSYLVANIA BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP**  
**Interim Executive Board Meeting**  
**23 January 2001**  
**Rachel Carson State Office Building, Harrisburg, PA**

**Members or alternates present:** Jacqui Bonomo, Jim Brett, Joan Clippinger, Michelle Cohen, Tom Ford, Randy Gray, Paulette Johnson, Tom Kerr, K.C. Kim, Blaine Puller, Ron Ramsey, Ann Rhoads, Sue Thompson, Richard Whiteford, Wilbur Wolf, Jr. **Excused:** Tom Buzby, Tom Pauley.

The meeting was called to order by Interim Executive Director, Sue Thompson. Minutes of the previous meeting held on November 30, 2000 were approved.

Blaine Puller reported that the Seasons and Bag Limits meeting on Sunday, January 21, was attended by an overflow crowd and that the majority of those who presented testimony spoke in support of new deer management initiatives.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Sue Thompson reported that the PBP letter to the Pennsylvania Game Commission supporting scientifically based deer management was faxed to the commission on Monday. Sue gave a presentation on PBP to the PA Biological Survey Steering Committee in January and has received invitations to update the Game Commission as well as a joint meeting of the CNRAC, Game Commissioners, and Fish and Boat Commissioners on the progress of the Partnership in February. Advertisements have appeared in two Pittsburgh papers completing the process of incorporation of the Pennsylvania Biodiversity Partnership as a not-for-profit corporation.

Joan Clippinger and Sue Thompson attended a Biodiversity Symposium held in Washington DC by the Environmental Law Institute. Twenty-three states were represented, along with several federal agencies and funding organizations. Sue and Joan received information on programs in many other states, the most impressive of which was Massachusetts which has an Assistant Secretary for Biodiversity.

**BYLAWS**

Tom Kerr reported that several issues came up during the nomination process: (1) The bylaws as now written specify a 15-21 member executive board including the *ex-officio* members. The nominating committee recommended that the *ex-officio* members be excluded from the count in order to allow for more flexibility. (2) It was suggested that DEP be added to the list of agencies represented on the board. Both recommendations were approved. It was noted that there is no mechanism for assuring that the Pennsylvania Biological Survey will always be represented.

**BUDGET**

A revised budget for the initial \$20,000 grant from the Wild Resources Conservation Fund which is being administered through PABS was presented. The major change was to allocate a total of \$5,000 to hire a clerical assistant. Sue Thompson will look into whether we can legally contract with such a person or whether we need to pay a salary and benefits. A revised budget for the new \$25,000 grant from WRCF was presented, the budget had to be pared down from the original \$30,000 request. The second grant is being administered through the Wildlands Conservancy. Both revised budgets were approved.

The Heinz grant is being administered through Wildlands Conservancy. An account has been established for which any two of the following persons will be able to sign checks: Tom Kerr, Sue Thompson, Randy Gray, Larry Schweiger.

**TASK FORCE REPORTS**

**Education Task Force:** Joan Clippinger reported that the emphasis at present is on completion of the Pennsylvania supplement to the World Wildlife Fund's Windows on the Wild middle school biodiversity curriculum.

**Funding Task Force:** Tom Ford reported that the task force recommends using the Pennsylvania state government policy on reimbursement for travel expense incurred by paid staff of the PBP. The recommendation was approved with the observation that this means there are separate policies for reimbursement for staff and volunteers.

**Bioinformatics Task Force:** Sue Thompson reported that a PBP listserv hosted by the University of Pittsburgh Bradford Campus should be up soon.

**Policy Task Force:** Sue Thompson presented a draft letter to Secretary John Oliver containing comments on DCNR's biodiversity program. Changes requested included: (1) adding a paragraph on the need for regular, long term evaluation of the program; (2) adjusting wording to make it clear that in addition to an elevated state biodiversity coordinator, there should also be staff dedicated to biodiversity concerns in each bureau. Sue will revise the letter accordingly and send it as soon as possible as we are already a week late in responding to this request for input; copies will be sent to Jim Grace and Roger Fickes in addition to those already listed.

**Public Relations Task Force:** Dick Whiteford asked for, and received, confirmation that our official acronym is PBP. The task force has turned their draft brochure on PBP over to the graphics department at DCNR for design work, and are waiting for a response. They are anxious for a logo design so letterhead can be ordered. The board requested that a press release be prepared on the formation of the PBP and, after approval by the board, be sent to major papers throughout the state.

Joan Clippinger reported that she is putting together a packet of biodiversity related publications from the state for new board members. She would welcome any additional suggestions for items to include.

**Science Task Force:** Michelle Cohen presented a definition of *biodiversity conservation* for consideration: ***sustain and enhance the variety of native species throughout Pennsylvania, their genetic makeup, and the natural communities in which they occur.*** It was suggested that the words "activities that" be inserted at the beginning of the definition. The inclusion of the word native was questioned as it does not occur in the definition of biodiversity that the three agencies have approved and it was pointed out that it might cause problems for the Fish and Boat Commission which stocks fish in waterways where they are not native. It was decided to send the definition back to the task force for reconsideration with an explanation of the concerns.

The task force also expressed a need for the organization to define more clearly the expectations for the task forces.

**Stewardship Task Force:** Blaine Puller reported that the task force discussed two topics: 1) the need to evaluate the statewide impact of invasive species and develop a policy recommendation; 2) an RFP for a project to compile best management practices documents, analyze them and identify gaps.

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING**

Sue Thompson presented an outline of the roles of various components of the PBP in the strategic planning process. She recommended creation of an 11-member strategic planning team as outlined on the draft work plan which was distributed at the meeting. The board recommended that representatives of DEP, PGC, and PFBC be invited to join the team in order to have all natural resource agencies involved in the process from the beginning.

A concern was expressed that the 3-year timetable for preparation of the strategic plan will take us beyond the tenure of the current administration. We should be sure we have strong interim products to assure buy-in as we move along. We should also be looking for ways to begin cultivating the next administration as early as possible. Another concern regarding the strategic

plan preparation that was expressed was that we avoid getting too bogged down in collecting detailed data, but rather get on with formulating major strategic directions. It was agreed that we need to proceed with both on parallel tracks.

The first meeting of the Strategic Planning team was set for February 9, 2001 at 11 am, at the Rachel Carson Building, room to be announced.

### **ELECTION OF BOARD MEMBERS**

Tom Kerr reporting for the nominating committee which consisted of T. Kerr, K.C. Kim, J. Clippinger, and M. Cohen, presented a slate of board members and officers. K.C. Kim stated that he was "not comfortable" with the process as he had no information about some of the nominees. He further felt that the nominating committee should be formalized by the board. The slate presented by the committee was approved unanimously.

Officers and membership on the new board are as follows:

**Chairman:** Randolph Gray

**Vice chairman:** Thomas Pauley

**Treasurer:** Thomas Kerr

**Recording Secretary:** Ann Rhoads

**At-large member:** John Oliver (alternate Joan Clippinger)

**One-year term:**

Clifford Jones

Ke Chung Kim

Brad Nelson

Blaine Puller

Richard Whiteford

**Two-year term:**

William Adams

Paulette Johnson

Andrew McElwaine

Thomas Pauley

Ann Rhoads

Joseph Sullivan

**Three-year term:**

Thomas Buzby

Cynthia Dunn

Randolph Gray

Thomas Kerr

Peter Pinchot

Larry Schweiger

**Ex-officio:**

James Brett - Governor's Sportsmen's Advisor

Peter Colangelo - PAFBC

John Oliver - DCNR

Vernon Ross - PGC

DEP to be added

Dates for board meetings were established for 2001, all meetings will be held 1-3 PM at the Rachel Carson Building.

Thursday March 29

Thursday June 28

Thursday September 27

Thursday November 29

Respectively submitted,  
Ann Rhoads