

**TOWN OF HARVARD
DEER MANAGEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES
ZOOM MEETING 6:30pm – 7:30pm
Thursday AUGUST 5, 2021**

DMS Bob Douglas, Joe Pulido, Paul Willard, Tom Cotton.
Also attended: Dan Tracey; Jennifer Sundeen
Dr. Martin Feehan, Massachusetts State Deer Biologist.

Bob called the meeting to order.
Discussing “pre-game” discussion of tonight’s ConCom meeting.

Joe discussed large properties for consideration. Prospect and Sprague.
Use should not necessarily be excluded from deer management. There were significant votes to conduct the hunt. Many towns have deer hunting on their properties. Prospect does have other access than by the playing field. Prospect Hill also could possibly be accessed through Transfer station. If the soccer field is not an acceptable access, there are alternatives.

Bob: After soccer season is over, that area is very quiet. The field could be an access in November and December.

Bob to Marin: Wasn’t there a close population hunt in Ithaca/ Cornell?

Marty: Hunting takes place on college campuses and has for years.

Hunting takes place in shared spaces. After a few years, no one notices it. There is then a reduction in controversy. We see that at Blue Hills in Massachusetts too. It is very clear across the country that these suburban hunts are very safe. They don’t have as much exposure as people think might happen. Hunters naturally avoid conflict, they don’t want to be where the people are, as the deer will not be in those areas.

Bob stated there has been no conflict in another Deer Management municipal program in its 10-year history. No conflict with archery hunters. Dog attacks/incidents with hikers, yes. BMX bike riders with hikers yes. Deer archery hunt, no issues.

Tom: Propose list of 10 parcels, we should ask the commission to open up as many as possible.

Bob: Many thanks to the scouts, we have 10-solid parcels to recommend. The deer stands we find in the forests show that these lands have been hunted before.

Paul: A lot of this I think is the desire of some members of the ConCom to not to be associated with the killing of deer. They want to have it both ways, they want to get rid of the deer but you don’t want kill them. I think it’s all about that. The idea of ConCom is “not supposed to be killing deer.” But we have been through the process, we voted, the town has voted, but the perception and feeling is still there in many people.

Bob: The opponents to the hunt said “we need a town meeting vote – majority rules” and we had a dramatic town meeting with a record turn-out. Many people at than meeting told me they came to preserve hunting and open up conservation land to deer management. These are properties that have been vetted by our scouts and a vote of this subcommittee.

Joe: 100% in agreement with that. We hope the Commission considers our advice and then vote accordingly.

Martin: Expansion of properties gives a better chance to have an effect on the whole landscape. More land is more access to deer. Increases hunting pressure, may move deer over to another property – activity in the woods shifts home ranges and moves other deer around the landscape and may move them on to other hunted properties.

Vote to approve minutes;

Meetings are recorded and available on Harvard Cable TV.

April 15 and June 10. Motion by Tom to approve, second by Paul. Passed unanimously.

Bob and Joe, we will need to further follow up on hunter distribution, and present to ConCom at a future date. Joe, season is approaching. Sooner the better.

24:24 Asked for input from attendees;|

Jennifer Sundeen: Just curious and wanted to see where you were are right now.

Stu Sklar: No reply heard.

Dan Tracey: "I'm all set thanks Bob"

Tom: Motion to adjourn – second by Paul. Unanimous.

Meeting adjourned.