

**Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism
Commission Meeting Minutes
Thursday, April 21 2016
Great Plains Nature Center
6232 E 29th St. N, Wichita, Kansas**

Approved Subject to
6/23/16 Commission
Approval

The April 21, 2016 meeting of the Kansas Wildlife, Parks and Tourism Commission was called to order by Chairman Gerald Lauber at 1:00 p.m. at the Great Plains Nature Center, Wichita. Chairman Lauber and Commissioners Emerick Cross, Tom Dill, Gary Hayzlett, Roger Marshall, Aaron Rider and Harrison Williams were present.

II. INTRODUCTION OF COMMISSIONERS, STAFF AND GUESTS

The Commissioners and Department staff introduced themselves (Attendance roster - Exhibit A).

III. ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS TO AGENDA ITEMS

Sheila – Under General Discussion, delete item No.
4, Law Enforcement Program Update; Kevin Jones is unable to be here today.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE March 24 2016 MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Gary Hazlett moved to approve the minutes as corrected, Commissioner Harrison Williams second. *Approved.* (Minutes – Exhibit B).

V. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Chairman Lauber presented Sheila her 25-year certificate and congratulated her on her service.

Rick Dykstra, Milford – I've lived in Kansas 35 years, coming from California. Talk about two things, tourism and wildlife (read article – Exhibit C) “On behalf of the owner of Acorns Resort, Mike Harris, let me say thank you for allowing me to update you on what we are doing at Milford Lake. The first resort in Kansas has been up and running for the past 10 years, let me say that this resort and the new additions could not have taken place without great partnerships, which included the State of Kansas, to include Wildlife, Parks and Tourism, Corps of Engineers, Geary County and the City of Junction City. What started as two small cabins has now grown to 20 cabins that can sleep from two to 12 per cabin and nine lodge rooms that can sleep four per room. Visitors from throughout Kansas and the United States are discovering what great outdoors we have. RVers have also discovered that our 61 sites put them in the middle Of the lake and the middle of many recreational choices.

At the end of March 2016, we opened the Milford Lake Conference Center. This is the first and only conference center in Kansas to be located at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers lake. The center can hold 275 persons for social and theater style events or 200 for dinners, wedding, reunions, or many other events. The center features great views of the lake and woods. The center features one main hall which can subdivide to three break-out rooms and one executive board room for 14. You'll find all of the modern amenities, to include a state of the art sound system, built in DLP projectors with screens and Wi-Fi. After a few hours indoors, you can step out to the large main deck and be surrounded by the lake and woods. Opening in June 2016 is the new Cove Bar and Grill. Located next to the conference center, the Cove has a very large paved outdoor patio area which allows you to sit and eat, while overlooking the lake. In fact, boaters will be able to pull up in a slip and get something to eat. If you want to stay indoors, the views of the lake are stunning. Windows cover the entire area facing the lake. We are very excited. Recreational fishing is one of America's most popular and universal outdoor recreational activities. Trend studies assessing anglers' fishing motivations conducted by Responsive Management found that, overall, fishing to be with friends and family and for relaxation are increasing. Fishing, for most participants, is primarily a social activity and secondarily a recreational activity. Promotion strategies that focus on the importance of family and friends and naturalistic aspects of fishing or on the relaxation fishing provides will succeed while programs that focus solely on resource issues such as bigger fish, more fish, or structural issues will be less likely to succeed. It appears to me, that with the new Walleye Initiative, some lakes are going to try to serve a subset of the recreational angler. The recreational anglers enjoy being with family or friends while fishing. In fact, many enjoy the solitude of just being outdoors. But with the new Walleye Initiative, it appears to me that we are now trying to serve a sub-set of the average angler - The Trophy Angler. In the future at Milford Lake you just won't go fishing with friends and family, you will go "Trophy Fishing." To most anglers, including myself, it's not about the size of filets or the size of the fish, it's about time spent outdoors. As many of you know, Milford Lake has had the opportunity in the past to host some of the most prestigious fishing tournaments in the United States. These events bring many new anglers and dollars to the State of Kansas. They also return to the lake over 98 percent of the fish back to the lake. These tournament anglers have come back to Milford with others to enjoy our fishing. For someone to say or think that we would be able to recruit a national walleye event with a two fish limit at 21 inches has never recruited a national fishing event. Fifteen-inch walleye lakes will become the trend for those seeking to catch a few for the dinner table. According to Michelle Stimatze, Marketing Director at the Junction City/Geary County CVB, the CVB is very concerned about the impact this new proposal will have on the area. They do not think this will have a positive economic impact and will drive away the recreational walleye angler. They also think it will stop regional and national walleye events from coming to Milford Lake. We do not need to be what bass is to Florida. We do not need to be what walleye is the Lake Oahe or Devils Lake. We just need to be Kansas where people enjoy getting outdoors and fishing, hiking, hunting, biking, etc. So what should be done? Should we be looking at the water clarity of Milford Lake along with the lack of vegetative cover for small fingerling walleye, essentially giving them a hard chance of survival in a lake patrolled by wipers, bass, crappie and white bass. I would ask the commission to consider other alternatives than raising the length limit and decreasing the creel on walleye at Milford Lake. I've heard the thought on this new proposal that it will hurt for the first five to seven years, but then you'll come to Milford Lake to catch two walleye over 21 inches. In 10 years will you have to raise it to 25 inches because all the 21-inchers are being

kept? As I said earlier, I would ask that the focus be on time spent outdoors with family and friends and not on how big the filet will be. If action must be taken, please think about the average angler. Possibly two walleye in the 15- to 18-inch range and two walleye over 21 inches. In closing, I would like to extend an invitation to the KDWPT Commission to hold a commission meeting at the Milford Lake Conference Center, we know you'll have a great experience. Also, if any of you would like to spend a day of fishing at Milford Lake, please contact me. Just remember, it is called fishing, not catching. Chairman Lauber – The fishing part of this will come up later in fishing regulations.

Susan Powell, Atlanta – In February I wrote the Commission members a letter, here to give general opinion and outlook of what I see is going on. Most of my comments are in the form of a question, so if someone can answer today or down the road, I would appreciate it. Appreciated responses I received from the letters. Here to talk about problem outfitter and guides, both in-state and out-of-state. Used to be a license for outfitters and somewhere down the road it was done away with, which was a big mistake; I don't know why but maybe some of you do. At that time a person couldn't obtain an outfitter license if they had convictions for wildlife violations; I want to know how this can be reinstated? I don't understand why these people who are doing things unlawfully should be taking in hundreds of thousands of dollars using someone else's property to hunt Kansas wildlife and not be held accountable for breaking the laws. The rangers have too much area to cover and spread too thin, which lowers the chance of apprehension. When you get involved with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife it takes so long to bring anything to finality; to file charges and prosecution to happen. This gives the outfitter more time to guide and collect money to pay fines; nothing changes in their operation in the interim. Does Kansas not have authority to suspend hunting activities in interim? Whenever someone is prosecuted or fined, what prevents them from letting another family member or friend from assuming the business, hiring more unethical lawbreakers for guides and continue business. Is there a level of violation of wildlife law that removes the ability of state and local officials to prosecute? Another problem created by out-of-state guides and hunters is the money/money issue which hinders residents from hunting and trapping endeavors. Chairman Lauber – Appreciate your comments and heard them from others. Question on guides and outfitters, at one point tried to regulate or at least register; told too intrusive on economic development; legislature watered down what we could do and we decided not to license anyone. There should have been minimum standards and we were not able to do that. Contact your local legislator. From time of violation to conviction is because of court system. We don't prosecute, the County attorney does and we don't get any court costs or fees, only forfeiture of equipment. Try to do because the right thing to do, but they can seek continuances and we can't stop that. More land is leased by in-state leases than out-of-state and we feel bad that people have no place to go, just don't know how to fix that. Can't buy property for public hunting because perception by many that the state shouldn't own land. We do walk-in hunting, but hard to compete with private sector interests. Have heard this disappointment from constituents, but not all outfitters are bad. If you want some level of registration start with your elected officials. We can't afford to hire more officers, but can contact your local sheriff for assistance. Chris Tymeson – Ten years ago legislature revoked our rights to regulate guides, so that is the right place to start. Prosecution happens at local level not at state level. Chairman Lauber – Appreciate you coming to visit with us.

VI. DEPARTMENT REPORT

A. Secretary's Remarks

1. Agency and State Fiscal Status – Robin Jennison, Secretary, presented this update to the Commission. I have three handouts (Exhibit D). At the last meeting Commissioner Dill asked about the cabin program and I indicated Hillsdale was top on our list for cabins and talked about Wildscape and how we paid off that note and weren't going to have Wildscape borrow money anymore. They were going to get donations up front and there is a law where people got a tax credit for donating to nonprofit organizations. That is what we had hoped to use and they had found donors in the Johnson County area and we thought we could pull that off. However, in the Senate there is a proposed bill, SB 500 which was introduced to do away with that program, which would be problematic. Visited with Secretary of Commerce about Hillsdale and he was upbeat with Parks using that, feel this is coming from legislators and we will keep an eye on that. Start with wildlife part of agency, doesn't get any general funds or economic development funds. One thing of interest, April is a big month because of deer permits, to date for nonresidents brought in \$7 million so will exceed \$10 million so we are on track. We have not hurt number of folks wanting to come to Kansas with the increase in fees. Don't think parks will get much SGF money, only get a little over \$1 million and a little road money. Get EDIF, and before tourism came in we got \$5 million a year and now still only get about \$5 million and have absorbed tourism into the agency. If you go back to 2011, January was the first month this administration took over and the monthly revenues in park fee fund (PFF) was \$196,000 and have increased significantly, and total for that year was about \$5.2 million; already at \$4.7 million so far this year. Expect this year to get where we have \$5 million balance in PFF. In Cabin Fee Fund, at bottom, important part is Wildscape payments, were paying \$457,000 a year when they had the note, they got 75 percent of revenue; now we give them 10 percent and I think we are on track, down a little, but gross revenue is static. Actually, running a little ahead of what I projected. Think we are not going to get any more general tax support from legislature and what follows that up, Consensus Revenue Estimators met and have handout of what they presented to legislature (Exhibit E), does not touch the agency. End up with bit of history for this meeting; last week was the 30th anniversary of Governor's One-Shot Turkey Hunt and I visited with those from other states. The event was praised for class act. History of turkeys in Kansas: from spring of 1963, a decision was made by Commission in 1961 to capture and release wild turkeys; farmers and other folks had been releasing pen raised turkeys. Our program was based on programs started in Texas and Oklahoma. About 400 wild turkeys were released. Grown into a tremendous opportunity and turkey hunters are increasing. Chairman Lauber – Explain briefly what SB 500 is? Jennison – If someone donates to nonprofit can get a tax credit and Wildscape is nonprofit and cabin programs qualify for that tax credit. Charlie Black, Wildscape – Had that in 2009 and 2010. Jennison – Didn't explain the program or how important it was. New secretary of Commerce is avid rural tourism advocate.

2. 2016 Legislature – Chris Tymeson, chief legal counsel, presented this update to the Commission. Updated March 28, 2016 (handout from website – Exhibit F). Not much has changed from last report in March. Cover highlights, second year of two-year cycle, legislators come back Wednesday and hope to be out in 5-7 days, maybe more. Thank partners that helped us out with the legislature this year. SB 97 allowing contact with certain regulated animals, bill passed in 2004/2005 dealing with lions, tigers, bears, cheetahs, mountain lions and those types of

animals, and this was an attempt to allow contact with animals below certain weight limit, passed out of committee, but did not pass on last day of session, but still conferenceable item. SB 190, four or five bills dealing with this; bill would allow a person to operate sailboat after completing an instructor lead class, dealt with providing an exemption for persons in class to sail without boater education; still possible for movement during conference committee. SB 249, not on department website but deals with state agencies in general, and not allowing acquisition of any real estate from state/private partnerships, like Wildscape; and requirement of all leases of five years or more would have to have approval from state finance council and we have 1,000 ag service contracts and 1,000 WIHA contracts. There were a couple of bills that dealt with threatened and endangered species and they didn't move; one would have delisted a species statutorily and one would have exempted certain activities on stream maintenance and we did an MOU with Sedgwick County and cautioned the legislature on delisting species by statute. SB 278 designated Cowley County the official stone bridge capital of the state. SB 280 is in conference committee tax bill and provisions on Bed and Breakfasts. SB 384 was another Threatened and Endangered Species Act bill that we opposed; we came together in subcommittee and met with proponents and whittled it down to the department publishing recovery plans on the website and developed within four years of listing of a species or no mitigation and took exemptions from current regulations and put in statute with one exception, which the department still opposes; that bill was added to HB 2547 and sit in conference committee. SB 425 would have authorized county commissioners to regulate conservation easements in their county; approximately 20 opponents and 3 proponents and bill died. HB 2293 also dealt with dangerous regulations animals and went in opposite direction and would have tightened restrictions and added wolves and primates to the list. HB 2341 deals with prioritizing options for disposal of seized wildlife; seized wildlife is evidence until person comes to trial or enters plea agreement, this would prioritize them even more than they are now from bill that passed a couple of years ago. HB 2479 started as noxious weed council and department was a member of that; would declare noxious weeds by statute instead of regulation and current rendition would allow counties to go into wildlife areas and treat them after notice to our department and we oppose that. We currently spend \$250,000 to \$300,000 a year controlling noxious weeds on properties we manage. There were two bills, HB 2510 and 2511 that dealt with state water plan fund and fees and both of them would have resulted in diversion, taking license dollars and using it inappropriately; did not get a hearing, would have cost department \$20 million in federal aid, PR/DJ monies. HB 2457 names bison herd at Mined Land WA after former representative from southeast Kansas, Bob Grant, passed House 120 to 2 and were referred to Senate Natural Resources and they added language from endangered species bill and sitting in conference. House Concurrent Resolution 5008 deals with right of the public to hunt, fish and trap; passed both houses by 2/3 majority, unanimous in Senate 36 to 0 and in House 117 to 7; it will go to ballot in November where it has to be ratified by simple majority of voting public. Chairman Lauber – Which bill had to do with evidence? Tymeson – HB 2341; had hearing in Senate late in the year and did not get passed out of committee; passed House last year. Chairman Lauber – That is also the bill known as antler bill? Tymeson – Correct. Chairman Lauber – What is a clouded leopard? Tymeson – Not biologist, but small leopard of about 40-50 pounds. SB 97 would have exempted contact with cheetahs and clouded leopards and other species under 40 pounds. Chairman Lauber – Mark Twain saying, “A man that carries a cat home by the tail learns a lesson he can learn in no other way”.

B. General Discussion

1. Tourism Update – Linda Craghead, assistant secretary, presented this update to the Commission (PowerPoint – Exhibit G). Look at today’s media and look at revenue forecasts, share what tourism does and what agency does are all part of tourism industry, an \$8.9 billion revenue. Key indicator is hoteliers; they collect tax, transient guest tax and have seen \$10.8 million revenue back to local areas, \$42.6 million generated and returned back to grow local communities. In sales tax, we don’t get any state general fund (SGF); hoteliers alone collected \$40.92 million, an increase of \$8.1 million. In jobs, 62,188 at last count, 34.8 million people. Hotel revenue grew from \$641 million in 2011 to \$841 million this last year. Increase of 800,000 room nights. Kansas is great state to visit, hike, hunt and leisurely recreate. Over last several years parks have made tremendous progress due to hard working individuals and marketing. Think about high definition and play station, dining out, breakroom, roaming has different meaning in parks than online. A new campaign is starting, “Lets Camp America,” to get people out to parks outside of regular season, starting May 7. The live link tells you five things to see and do, blog from locals. Seeing growth in marketing, work hard to promote fishing opportunities, actually doing sweepstakes for anyone who buys a fishing license to sign up for lifetime fishing license. Drive people to buy more, capture more email addresses because digital is best way to contact people so we can do eblasts. Have to capture email addresses, do it in the parks already, but not done the same for hunting and fishing licenses so we can communicate on regular basis. Saw new turkey videos before on Outdoor Channel and got good feedback and got license purchases because of it. Now concentrating on fishing, (*watched fishing video*). That is Keith Sexson and his two grandsons at Douglas State Fishing Lake. Crossing over to leisure tourist to get them introduced to baiting hook, etc. Blessed to have participant on Ellen show, Macey Hensley, Cottonwood Falls, and she knows everything there is to know about presidents and their wives and she is only five years old. Has been on Ellen show at least seven times and is due to be back in a couple of weeks; doing commercials with her and we had to get permission from Ellen Show for her to do the commercials; one at Eisenhower Museum and one at Exploration Place. Also, developed video for Macey to send to Ellen; she got Abe Lincoln costume from Ellen. People have done a good job, staff is small but focused. Trying to cross-leverage marketing and capitalize on that. New Powder Hook partner and leveraging with outside money. May 7 and September 12 are Lets Camp America dates. Also, looking for a vendor to be marina operator at Cheney.

Break

2. Park Regulations – Linda Lanterman, Parks Division director, presented this update to the Commission (Exhibit H). Presenting possibility of adding another permit to state parks. This change would allow park visitors to purchase an unconventional vehicle (UV) permit for additional recreational opportunities. We are recommending that we establish a \$50 annual permit for (UV) to be utilized on state park roadways with a posted speed limit of 30 mph or less from sun-up to sun-down. This is something new, researched with other states and Nebraska is getting ready to do it. New Hampshire has it already. Not going with ATVs, but less powerful vehicles, UTVs will be allowed. Chairman Lauber – I was at Perry last summer and a person had a vehicle and park ranger was explaining why they couldn’t do that, but someone went by with handicap cart; don’t see big problem, but be aware of possible abuse, to back it up. Don’t see a

problem. Michael Pearce – Do vehicles already have to be licensed for public roads? Lanterman – Already permitted if licensed, these are not for vehicles not licensed. (read description of vehicles in Dept of Revenue guidelines).

Michelle Ratzlaff, citizen of Kansas – Here to ask you to protect beautiful state parks, before you allow all ATVs, take moment to consider financial cost and more enforcement. They steal sounds of nature and quiet from people at parks, additional monitoring for driving under influence, harms landscape and wildlife. In commission statement, says driving force goals and objectives are promoting wildlife resources, prohibit these vehicles. Been in over 20 state parks over the years, hunt, fish, camp and hike and bring people with me to these parks.

Joe Bernoble (*did not sign in*), Friends of Crawford State Park and homeowners of Crawford, which is the one park where you can own property on the lake. Moved there two years ago and have enjoyed living there. Friends Group has history of providing things for state park and about two years ago were interested in using golf carts; talked to two legislators and investigated that. We enjoy natural resources and quiet environment and propose nothing to detract from that natural beauty. Call it a golf cart policy, convenient, better use, more economical, environmentally conscientious and quiet because electric. Use on roads only, not off road and asked our lake to be pilot for that program to see how much it took to control that. In 2011, Fort Scott legalized use of golf carts in their city and asked how many permits they had sold, also they charge \$50 annually; don't have to reinvent the wheel and I brought a copy of that ordinance today. Last year they had 34 permits sold, from three the first year and have sold 27 this year so far. Asked if they had any issues and they said zero issues. Sometimes during festivals have people who are not licensed using one. All questions are answered in this ordinance. Not interested in you adopting a policy that we have to live with 24 hours a day.

Goble is a good park manager and Alan Stark, who we worked with on this. Commissioner Dill – Are they all electric? Bernoble – No, gas or electric. Commissioner Marshall – Is there a noise threshold? Lanterman – Significantly less than Harley motorcycle. Commissioner Williams – Have you done comparison on gas versus electric? Lanterman – Don't feel like big disparity, maybe upkeep of batteries. Michael Pearce - \$50 a year, what is it for regular vehicle?

Lanterman - \$25. Pearce – When does it go to vote? Tymeson – October. Pearce – Have you looked at electricity bills and this will affect those? How many vehicle permits do you sell?

Lanterman – About 70,000 at DMV, 100,000 total; lighter on our roads; already allowing with disability permits and staff uses them. Commissioner Rider – Not sure if much difference between gas-powered golf cart or car or truck in dealing with noise issue. Lanterman – Right, NH is \$100 and NE looking at \$50; both using UTV and golf carts. We chose not to do ATVs.

3. Fishing Regulations – Doug Nygren, Fisheries Division director, presented this update to the Commission (Exhibit I). First discussion for fishing changes to take place next year. Reference document is length and creel limits that are different than regulations used to accomplish certain goals and strategies. First 20 or so in italics deal with walleye initiative and changes in walleye, saugeye and sauger that would help us provide those diverse opportunities by metropolitan areas to give people options for different types of walleye fishing based upon a drive of less than 90 miles. Issues that are going to be most controversial would be the ones affecting Kanopolis Reservoir which would be changing from a 15-inch to an 18-inch limit; and Milford would be changed to a 21-inch length limit and a 2/day creel. The rest are small impoundments and don't expect a lot of push back or concerns on those. Commissioner Rider – What is Milford at right now? Nygren – It is 18-inch, 5/day. Chairman Lauber – Does this

include Glen Elder? Nygren – We have removed Glen Elder after review of biology and computer models. Chairman Lauber – I was aware 24-inch being withdrawn, not aware everything withdrawn there. Biggest issue will be Milford, had a fair amount of opinion and opposition in non-agenda comments. Letters and emails universally against it. Got both sides on Milford. Nygren – Optimize ... large quality females, got eggs from surrounding lakes, because not enough from brood stock. In addition, looked at field information. Creel surveys done for a long time. Make note, measure and record. At Milford, 60 percent who caught walleye harvested it, some kept only one, 15 percent kept two; very few keeping three or more walleye. Only harvest 72,000 a year; not going out a lot. Will result in same harvest if do slot length limit; high exploitation walleye won't make it through the slot, so minimum length limits are best options. Chairman Lauber – In reality if walleye average a pound each; when put two-fish limit doesn't provide biological benefit only psychological. Nygren – Calculated at Milford and will protect about 15 percent more fish, and 15 percent more would have to be released if 5/day over 2/day, but may distribute harvest more. Chairman Lauber – Not about the money, have certain amount of expense and harvested well beyond their capacity, could double size. Nygren – More pounds. El Dorado had 21-inch length limit for a long time, Craig, what are numbers? Craig Johnson – Don't have those numbers with me. Chairman Lauber – Could increase pounds of harvest and don't think it will take more than five to seven years; walleye don't live any longer than that. Nygren – Milford's population is down right now, big part is improving stocking program and stocking at larger sizes and at bigger numbers. Excited about meeting demands. In Wisconsin, they're stocking 7-inch walleye and have 30 percent survival rate. Commissioner Williams – How long to grow from 18 inches to 21 inches? Nygren – About a year and half, most growth in fall. Commissioner Williams – From 15 inches to 18 inches? Nygren – About a year. Chairman Lauber – How much should we protect brood stocks? Bigger limit in lake and easier to get eggs? Nygren – Hope to see natural production if walleye make it to 21 inches. The way we are managing walleye we have to stock. Commissioner Marshall – How much do we spend? Nygren – \$1.7 million a year, about 50 percent of that to stock walleye and takes large portion of pond space.

Michael Pearce – Is this something the Commission votes on? Tymeson – Commission votes on regulation where this reference document is attached. Pearce – When up for vote? Tymeson – October and go into effect Jan 1.

Lance Mitchell (*did not sign in*) - Thanks for taking time to look at resource, not failing, but not prospering either. Overharvest is number one problem and I see a lot of fish go home. As soon as fish hits minimum length it is gone. Get another year out of fish. Biggest reason for declines, the fish have nowhere to hide, lakes under 10,000 acres. With map chips, fisherman can find walleye structure on lakes, fish all in a day; and add social media to that, post on Facebook and people come out. Technology has come a long way and fish have nowhere to hide. If we want more fish, reduce number you can take home, if not catching limit anyway, should not complain about reduced number. Milford saw large tournaments and many came down in September or October to start working the lake. Big tournaments not coming back at 2/day and 21-inch limit. Lose time and nonresidents coming down. Tournaments are doing advertising for Milford, but if not there no advertising. Define what I define as a slot, one over 18 inches; NE has one over 20-inch four fish limit. Harland, Nebraska, not far, and fishes like Glen Elder and tremendous walleye fishery, not appropriate for all lakes. Glen Elder and maybe Milford. Help move forward with this, walleye stamp brought up by Mr. Rader at March meeting could pay to replace what we took. Appreciate time to offer my opinions and views. Chairman Lauber – Of opinion slot limit won't

work unless recruited naturally. We are at bottom of natural walleye range; and Nebraska may have something we don't have. Nygren – Would have to set very narrow slot with exploitation rates to have any fish to grow through that slot, if available in April, May or June 70 percent will be gone. Chairman Lauber – From Junction City/Milford standpoint, not worried about tournaments, want tourism and tax dollars; would have to call it trophy fishing rather than common-man fishing. Rather have healthier harvest of walleye and more statewide than have big tournaments. Have counter measures and issues as well. Commissioner Dill – Read a couple of times, on walleye stamp, thoughts on that and how many could we potentially sell and could we increase length and size? Nygren – There was a stamp in place at Milford that helped us pay for the hatchery there, but dropped when bond was paid off. Administrative decision to have fund for walleye management only. Chairman Lauber – Rather prioritize within budget than start walleye stamp. Not sure that it will make any difference. No extra hatchery space now. Nygren – Don't have enough hatchery space to fulfill requests now, we make decisions every year on what we are not going to raise. Focusing in on Licensed Angler Survey and species that are the highest priority, which are largemouth bass, catfish and walleye; not much on crappie because we get good natural reproduction. In middle of 4th year of 6-year study on largemouth bass and expect that to go up. Hatchery demand is going up, continue to run up against the wall. Commissioner Dill – Do you buy anywhere? Nygren – Channel catfish for urban fishing program and rainbow trout. We have partnerships with some private aquaculture folks and this year Mark Harman will be raising walleye fingerlings for us, we will be providing the fry; and other private sector folks to help with shortfall, but not enough private space in this state to help with what we need. Chairman Lauber – We harvested 72,000 walleye, less than whitetail deer; about 400,000 anglers and I am guessing number of people who would voluntarily buy the walleye stamp would not be that great because right now they are incidental take. Have people who will drive 70 miles. Nygren – People who said walleye was their most preferred species made up about 88,000 in Licensed Angler Survey; I think a good portion of those would. Chairman Lauber – There would be expectation, if I buy the stamp, to have it get better and have more and bigger fish. Nygren – They way you would have to do that is combination of the changes we are proposing today and stocking more and bigger walleye. Commissioner Dill – You said half of production costs are related to walleye? Nygren – Yes, walleye, sauger and saugeye, just under half as far as hatchery space. The private sector purchases of catfish and trout program are not part of the \$1.7 million, those are separate. Commissioner Williams – Do you see win/win down the road to reaching departments goals and satisfying the sportsmen? Nygren – That is what we are asking for; short-term sacrifice to have better walleye at the end of the rainbow. Especially if we are enhancing our stocking program, which we are with the resources we have now. We will be raising 7-inch walleye at Milford inside the building next year and they think they can raise 80,000 and expect 30 percent to 40 percent survival of them and continue to raise traditional fingerlings to a larger size, 45 mm, where scales are complete and they are more likely to survive. Between ability to raise bigger fish and better quality small fingerlings and with more walleye recruits out there, people will see a difference. Commissioner Marshall – If you sold 90,000 stamps at \$10 each that would be \$900,000; what could we expect from that money? Nygren – we would need to do a combination of building additional ponds and enhance ability to intensively raise walleye on artificial diet. We have been working on a larva culture project at Meade and Milford different from the past. Traditionally we hatched the fry, put them in ponds and raised them on natural food and then stock them out when they run out of food. With the larva culture project they start off on artificial diet and don't have to take up any pond space, live in tanks until we are ready to

stock them. We have another technique we can use that can take the fingerlings that have been in ponds, bring back into building at Milford and train them to take an artificial diet. They come in as fingerlings, about an inch and a half long, train them on artificial food and raise them up to 7 inches or larger. Two different ways to get intermediates and with the larva culture could also raise larger numbers of small fingerlings. Once on artificial food you can grow them as big as you want to. In ponds on hatcheries, when they run out of food if you don't get them out they will start eating each other. Chairman Lauber – Other proposed changes? Nygren – The first one past the italicized section is Wilson Reservoir; due to poor forage conditions we want to change to 5/day for striped bass. Commissioner Marshall – Increase or decrease harvest? Nygren – Increase from two to five to get additional harvest; need to thin out until water conditions improve. We may want to go back to two at some point. Commissioner Marshall – You think it is food source opposed just a nutrition issue? Nygren – Just not enough forage in there for primary productivity to provide shad and things stripers need to thrive and do well right now. The lake did come up a little, we were hoping for more but at least moving in the right direction. The rest are relatively small changes on small impoundments; changing name on a lake at Wichita from Cruiser Lake to Wichita K-96 Lake. Reference document subject to changes as Commission or administration requests. Over course of year, we'll be doing spring sampling and shoreline seining and may have other changes as we go throughout the year. This used to be done by Secretary's Orders and is now done in reference document so it is part of the regulation. As part of walleye initiative, we're proposing to reduce length limit on walleye caught in flowing waters; tailraces and streams and rivers across the state and that way the shoreline angler who doesn't have a boat to go out there in May and June and fish the flats will be able to harvest regardless of the length. To do that Chris will tweak KAR 115-25-14 and put in verbiage that sets the statewide minimum on walleye, sauger or saugeye at 15 inches and that does not apply to rivers. New trout stocking area at Glen Elder so we can release trout below the dam, we have been putting them in state park pond, in outlet area and will require a trout permit to fish in that location during trout season. Fishing open season on floatline fishing, currently we have a season that runs from July 15 to September 15, established in the beginning to minimize conflicts with other fishermen and boaters on the water; there has not been a lot of conflict so allow anglers to floatline fish year-round on all federal waters and did restrict to daylight, now add nighttime fishing and may have to add a regulation for reflective tape or something like that and have to be attended. Don't want them to just throw them out and walk away like they do in some other states. KAR 115-18-20 is black bass pass, someone came to last meeting and talked about desire to have bass pass increased from two to five a day for bass pass tournaments. When we set up the program, we were concerned with mortality. Recently, part of research project from Dr. Hal Schramm, Mississippi looked at every phase of a tournament; from time fish is caught, hauled in the livewell, brought to weigh-in, weighed in and released and he has come to the conclusion that most of the mortality occurs at time the fish is caught when it might hook into some vital part of the fish or next worst thing is the temperature at the time of the event. Since our bass pass is not allowed to be used in the heat of the summer, temperature is not an issue, so see no reason to oppose a move from two to five. They have agreed to collect additional information from tournaments to show benefits. Have reports of his report for you to review before we go to vote. Michael Pearce – Is float fishing just on some lakes? Nygren – All federal reservoirs.

4. Law Enforcement Program Update – Kevin Jones, law enforcement division director, presented this update to the Commission. *Kevin unable to be present.*

C. Workshop Session

1. Guiding on Public Lands - Stuart Schrag, Public Lands Division director, presented this report to the Commission (Exhibit J). Update: we're allowing guiding under free permit, under existing regulation KAR 115-8-19. Prohibiting commercial activity through this regulation would encompass both hunting and fishing guides on all state and federal wildlife areas, Walk-in Hunting Area's (WIHA), Fishing Impoundment and Stream Habitats (FISH) access areas, and state fishing lakes under the management and control of KDWPT; omitted state park lands. Heard from one guide service in opposition of what we are proposing. Commissioner Dill – Vote in June? Schrag - Vote in August.

2. Threatened and Endangered Species Regulations – Chris Berens, Ecological Services section chief, presented this report to the Commission (Exhibit K). Legislature has not been in session and currently working through issues with HB 2577. We may be presenting changes to KAR 115-15-3 and KAR 115-15-4 at future meetings in an effort to find resolution with those sponsoring this bill. Chairman Lauber – Ready to move if something changes? Berens – Ready to move when it comes out. Changes to some wording and some of regulations will go into our statute too; but overall something we have worked with proponents on and feel a good compromise.

3. KAR 115-25-9a. Deer; open season, bag limit, and permits; additional considerations; Fort Riley. – Lloyd Fox, big game research biologist, presented this report to the Commission (Exhibit L). This is where we used to put in special events if something came up in the legislature. Personnel at Fort Riley have requested no pre-rut firearm antlerless season, but would like to have four additional days for youth and people with disabilities from October 7-10 and additional days for archery hunting, September 1-11 and also January 9-31. Also, a time period when antlered deer can be taken with archery. Twelve days of firearm season broken into three segments: November 25-27, December 17-23 and December 26-27. Bring back in June for vote.

Chairman Lauber – Had gentleman who approached me at last meeting. Asked about squirrel hunting, and if there would be any hurt to resource if we increased bag limit. Not sure if I would want to harvest more than five, but something to be said and it is a good outdoor sport. Would like someone in small game to kick it around and come back with ideas. Michael Pearce – Which would have more effect, to hunt in February when squirrels are pregnant or this? Keith Sexson – We will take a look at that, it is an interesting concept. Commissioner Rider – Had a guy last year interested too.

VII. RECESS AT 3:30 p.m.

VIII. RECONVENE AT 6:30 p.m.

IX. RE-INTRODUCTION OF COMMISSIONERS AND GUESTS

X. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Michael Pearce – Chris, when will vote be on guiding on public lands? Tymeson – August.
 Pearce – When will employees see a pay raise? Jennison – Working through compaction issue, started that in December or January and universal offer after beginning of next fiscal year, July 1.
 Pearce – Elaborate what is coming with that yet? Jennison – No. Pearce - Who got pay raises already? Jennison – Regional supervisors and captains, not as accepted at lieutenant level, so backed off on that until we work out a few other details. Pearce – Did any of the lieutenants take pay raises? Jennison – We had a couple. Pearce - Do you have a son-in-law in law enforcement? Jennison – Yes. Pearce – What is his rank? Jennison – Lieutenant.
 Nygren – Made a mistake earlier on float line regulations; it is not allowed on all federal waters but only on designated reservoirs and will be looking at adding some more to that list, but not likely on all federal reservoirs. Commissioner Marshall – When you bring it back will you give us a list? Nygren – Yes. Chairman Lauber – Is hand fishing allowed on all federal reservoirs and rivers above? Nygren – On all federal reservoirs and only on Missouri, Kansas and Arkansas rivers, navigable rivers.

D. Public Hearing

Notice and Submission Forms; Kansas Legislative Research Letter and Attorney General Letters (Exhibit M).

1. 115-25-19. Doves; management unit, hunting season, shooting hours, and bag and possession limits. – Rich Schultheis, migratory game bird biologist, presented this report to the Commission (Exhibit N). Proposed changes affect the regular dove season beginning September 1 and running November 29 and exotic dove season that would begin the next day, November 30 and run through February 28. These proposed changes are a result of an increase in the number of days permitted for migratory dove season. It was formerly 70 days and starting with next season, 90 days. Chairman Lauber – It has been suggested collared doves be split off and separated from mourning doves and I don’t know if this is the regulation to do that, but need to look at that in the future. Schultheis – Can be harvested during regular season starting September 1 and during exotic season, which runs through February 28, so can be hunted for about six months. Some states take a different approach, year-long seasons and different definitions of what those birds are, and we can take a look at that. Chairman Lauber – Look into separating them out.

Commissioner Roger Marshall moved to accept staff recommendations on KAR 115-25-19 and bring before the Commission. Commissioner Aaron Rider second.

The roll call vote on to approve was as follows (Exhibit O):

Commissioner Williams	Yes
Commissioner Rider	Yes
Commissioner Marshall	Yes
Commissioner Hayzlett	Yes
Commissioner Dill	Yes
Commissioner Cross	Yes
Commissioner Lauber	Yes

The motion as presented passed 7-0.

2. Waterfowl Regulations – Tom Bidrowski, migratory game bird program manager, presented this update to the Commission (Exhibit). Included in briefing book are the 2016-17 waterfowl seasons and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) frameworks for September teal, general duck and goose seasons, youth and extended falconry season. Briefing also included background material with historical season dates, hunter and harvest data. Also, season staff recommendations for 2016/2017 season. Staff recommendations similar to previous years with exception of dark and light goose split and High Plains split, both moved to early January. Commissioner Rider – Why did we move goose split? Bidrowski – Hunters want to harvest ducks while goose hunting and geese while duck hunting. During the time we normally open the season, like last year, open for two days and closed for two days for geese and that is the time we have a lot of hunters in the field so having it close when duck season closes will give opportunities in November while we are still allowed 105 days. January 2 is the holiday this year so will be closed January 2 and 3. Commissioner Rider – One thing that was bothering me a little bit was having the 2nd as holiday, a lot of people have that day off so would be losing that day. Bidrowski – If we close everything on the 1st or after the 1st everyone knows there is no waterfowl hunting on 2nd and 3rd, one the reasons we left it that way. Commissioner Rider – I go with this 51 percent, I mentioned this earlier and you talked about why we did it. Provide as much opportunity as possible and having entire state closed, bothered me because people travel during the holidays. There is no perfect solution on this. Bidrowski – That is a serious discussion we had in developing these recommendations, the ability to travel, but with the way the calendar year fell and the holiday, we need to take five days off and we thought the best time for the southeast zone would be January 2 through 6 and restart again on first Saturday of January. Commissioner Rider – Did not see how we could do it much different. Goose season interests me about keeping open on 2nd and closed on Tuesday and Wednesday, but for simplicity sake it is probably the right move to go with your recommendations. Bidrowski – Particularly in central part of Kansas, those two days were always difficult for hunters to remember that light goose and Canada goose were closed so put hunters in jeopardy when you overlap like that.

Commissioner Gary Hayzlett moved to accept staff recommendations on waterfowl regulations and bring before the Commission. Commissioner Harrison Williams second.

The roll call vote on to approve was as follows (Exhibit Q):

Commissioner Williams	Yes
Commissioner Rider	Yes
Commissioner Marshall	Yes
Commissioner Hayzlett	Yes
Commissioner Dill	Yes
Commissioner Cross	Yes
Commissioner Lauber	Yes

The motion as presented passed 7-0.

Chairman Lauber – A couple of things suggested, traditionally to get most public input to hold meeting when that was discussed at Great Bend. Now that we changed from August meeting as to when we make waterfowl decisions, do we want to move meeting from August to April in Great Bend? Think about it. Reason initially, from previous Secretary, wanted some consistency and Topeka, Wichita and Great Bend were places where we had a reasonable amount of participation. Something to think about. Commissioner Marshall – If making this decision in April I thinking moving meeting to Great Bend is good idea and then August in Wichita. Commissioner Dill – Spoke to Sheila about thinking about Clay Center. Commissioner Marshall – Think about moving meeting in August from Great Bend to Clay Center. Tymeson – Nothing published so we can. Chairman Lauber – Move August of 2017 to Wichita, need motion to move meeting location for this August to Clay Center? Tymeson – No vote necessary.

XII. Old Business

None

XIII. Other Business

A. Future Meeting Locations and Dates

June 23, 2016 – Fort Scott, Danny & Willa Ellis Family Fine Arts Center, Fort Scott Community College, 2108 S. Horton

August 11, 2016 – moved to Clay Center

October 20, 2016 – Liberal, Seward County Event Center, 810 Stadium Rd

January 5, 2017 – Emporia, Flint Hills Technical College, 3301 W 18th Ave

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:49 p.m.

(Exhibits and/or Transcript available upon request)