

**CITY OF STEVENS POINT
DEER MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
AGENDA**

**JANUARY 11, 2017
3:00 PM**

**CITY HALL
1515 STRONGS AVE.
CITY CONFERENCE ROOM**

(A quorum of the City Council may attend this meeting)

1. Approval of The Deer Management Committee minutes of the November 16, 2016 meeting.
2. The 2016-2017 Culling Project
 - A. Update on Culling project
 - B. Total number of Deer culled.
 - C. Any issues pertaining to deer culling in the city.
3. Discussion Regarding any changes to the culling program.
4. Update on wildlife Nuisance abatement grant.
5. Discussion on the Joint urban Wildlife Damage abatement for Stevens Point, Plover and Whiting.
6. Date, time and location of the next meeting.
7. Adjournment.

Any person who has special needs while attending this meeting or needs agenda material for this meeting should contact the City Clerk as soon as possible to ensure a reasonable accommodations can be made. The City Clerk can be reached by telephone at 715-346-1569, or by mail at 1515 Strong's Ave. Stevens Point, WI 54481

Copies of ordinances, resolution, reports and minutes of the committee meetings are on file at the office of the City Clerk for inspection during the normal business hours from 7:30 am to 4:30p.m.

Deer Management Committee Meeting
November 16, 2016
3:00 pm
City Conference Room

Voting Members

Chair: John Okonek, 2916 Dixon St., Stevens Point, WI 54481 715-630-0230,
Email: johno64@att.net.
Member Elbert J. Rackow, 1824 Gilkay St., Stevens Point, WI 54481, 715-341-1393
Member Roger Trzebiatowski, Email: rogertreb@charter.net, 3309 McCulloch, Stevens Point,
WI 54481, 715-344-2322
Member Alder Mary Kneebone, 5718 Sandpiper Drive, Stevens Point, WI 54482,
715-295-4689, Email: marykneebonealder@gmail.com.
Member Dr. Scott Hygnstrom, Email: shygnstrom@uwsp.edu.
Member Kevin Leahy, Email: kevinleahy@att.net.
Member Barb Jacob, 1616 Depot St., Apt. A, Stevens Point, WI 54481, H: 715-342-1390,
B: 715-343-1730, Email: barbjacob22@gmail.com, extended leave of absence.

Advisory Members

DNR Rep. Lesa H. Kardash, 473 Griffith Ave., Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494. 715-421-7813,
lesa.kardash@wisconsin.gov.
Police Chief Martin Skibba, 1515 Strongs Ave., Stevens Point, WI 54481, 715-346-1500.
Mel Dow, Interfaith Food Pantry of Portage County, 821 Sixth St., Plover, WI 54467,
715-341-5379, mpdow@charter.net.
Bryan Lockman, bryan.lockman@wisconsin.gov, 715-344-3694.
Jon Scharbarth, jonscharbarth@wisconsin.gov. 715-344-3694
William J. Horvath, 350 McDill Ave., Stevens Point, WI 54481, 715-341-4021,
billjhorvath@gmail.com.

Present: Chairperson John Okonek, Members Randy Orlikowski, Elbert Rackow, Roger Trzebiatowski, Alder Mary Kneebone. Excused: Barb Jacobs.
Also present: Dr. Scott Hygnstrom, Kevin Leahy, Comptroller/Treasurer Corey Ladick, Dr. Robert Brush.

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 pm by Chairperson Okonek. The Chair indicted a quorum was present. Member Rackow moved to approve the September minutes, second by Member Trzebiatowski. Ayes all, nays none, motion carries.

New Committee member Dr. Scott Hygnstrom was introduced. Scott is a College of Natural Resourced faculty member. His email is: shygnstrom@uwsp.edu. Kevin Leahy also joins the Committee. His email is: kevinleahy@att.net.

Chair Okonek updated the committee on culling efforts. There were a total of 19 deer culled in September and October. There were eight by the convent on Maria Drive, four on West River

Drive, two on HH, two at Iverson Park and three by the snow lot. John and Mel will coordinate the tag numbers.

Patrol Chief Zenner was unable to attend the meeting but had contacted Alder Kneebone regarding a complaint regarding a suspected culler hunting a buck on the Green Circle Trail west of the river. Chair Okonek was also notified. It was determined that the hunter was not one of the cullers for the City. They are restricted to antlerless deer. Cullers also are responsible for alerting the Stevens Point Police Department when and where they will be culling. Some history about the culling program was provided for the new members.

Comptroller/Treasurer Ladick confirmed a \$1000 donation from Sentry Insurance.

Alder Kneebone updated the Committee on the status of the Wildlife Damage Abatement Grant. It was submitted on time but had an incorrect signature. That issue has been resolved. We will not hear anything until 2017.

Resident Robert Brush requested cullers look into some nuisance deer around the Yvonne Drive area. The cullers will contact Dr. Brush and see if they can provide some relief for the neighborhood.

The next meeting has been scheduled for January 11, 2017 in the City Conference Room. Trzebiatowski moved to adjourn, Hygnstrom seconded. Ayes all, nays none, meeting adjourned at 3:55 pm.

**A Joint Urban Wildlife Damage Abatement Control Plan for
Plover, Whiting, and Stevens Point.
2016-2025**

Background

In 1999, the Villages of Whiting and Plover and the City of Stevens Point formed a deer management committee to determine how they might deal with a continuing problem of controlling the population of nuisance deer in urban areas. The immediate result in all three communities was the adoption of individual ordinances prohibiting the feeding of deer and a resolution authorizing the submission of an application to the Wisconsin DNR requesting funds in order to carry out a culling program.

The Village of Whiting and City of Stevens Point have operated a deer culling program since 2000. The Village of Plover was initially involved in deer culling, but discontinued deer harvesting in 2010. Due to deer damage complaints from its citizens between 2015 and 2016, the Village of Plover approached the Village of Whiting regarding developing a joint deer management plan in 2016. The City of Stevens Point also agreed to join the effort to develop a joint urban wildlife damage abatement control plan. The Joint Urban Wildlife Damage Abatement Control Plan for Plover, Whiting, and Stevens Point will be developed in 2016 and implemented in 2017. The Plan includes management recommendations, including deer harvesting, which will begin in 2017.

Currently, the City of Stevens Point allows private individuals to use a bow or crossbow method to harvest deer through a City certification program. The Village of Whiting contracts with Urban Wildlife Specialist Inc. (UWS) for professional sharpshooters to carry out deer harvesting. UWS utilizes rifles to harvest deer. The Village of Plover has indicated they will use UWS to achieve deer harvesting goals.

Because State funding assistance for deer management efforts are limited, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources suggested that the City of Stevens Point and Villages of Plover and Whiting combine their program efforts. All three communities have agreed to the development of a Joint Urban Wildlife Damage Abatement Control Plan. The Joint Plan also makes sense for biological reasons, since deer frequently travel between all three communities.

While the Joint Urban Wildlife Damage Abatement Control Plan is a combined effort between all three communities, it seeks to maintain the sovereignty of each community as well as reflect and address the needs of each respective community involved. The Joint Plan recognizes the similarity of habitat, adjoining boundaries, and the need to reduce the number of deer in each community.

The permits for each community to conduct deer culling are granted by the State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Deer are held in trust by the state which grants the licenses to harvest deer.

Plan Development

Plover and Stevens Point have boundaries that change from time to time as the communities grow through annexation. It is possible that Plover will grow to the east, south and west, while Stevens Point may grow to the north, east and west. Often this growth is in areas with favorable deer habitat. As such, the logistics of deer culling may be subject to change as community boundaries change.

Whiting is bounded by the Wisconsin River on the west, the City of Stevens Point to the north and east, and the Village of Plover to the south and east. As such, Whiting's municipal boundaries are not expected to change during the planning period.

In 1998, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) recognized that there deer were becoming a significant nuisance in urban areas. WDNR subsequently developed an urban wildlife damage abatement program to allow the reduction of deer numbers.

Stevens Point, Plover, and Whiting have individually documented deer problems since 2000. Specific problems identified include deer/car collisions and complaints by homeowners identifying destruction of gardens and flower beds and damage to trees and shrubs in their yards. Based on the problems documented above, Plover, Whiting, and Stevens Point have agreed to enact a program to reduce the deer population in defined nuisance areas. All three communities recognize that this Plan will not attempt to eliminate all deer, but rather reduce the conflict between deer and automobile and deer and property owners to acceptable levels for each municipality. This objective is also in agreement with WDNR expectations.

Stevens Point currently culls every year while Whiting and Plover will cull every two years per the recommendations of culling contractors. Each community's intent is to continue culling according to this schedule.

The Joint Plan will be approved for a ten year period with the understanding that it will be reviewed for possible amendment(s) every three years. The Joint Plan requires a meeting of Stevens Point, Plover and Whiting representatives twice a year before and after culling, designed primarily to set culling goals and program objectives for the following year. The convening of representatives shall be decided by those assigned to administer their respective program. Whiting shall convene the first meeting in 2016 with rotation occurring every year amongst the three. A primary contact shall be established for each community.

Filing a joint application to WDNR for financial assistance will be decided on an annual basis because it is anticipated that each community may have different priorities annually. Because funding applications receive a higher ranking when adjoining communities have a joint plan, it is recommended that Stevens Point, Plover, and Whiting submit a joint application when financial assistance is desired.

Culling of deer can be very controversial with residents. A person who has property destroyed by deer has an entirely different view than a person who does not garden and loves to see a deer in their backyard. As such, education and community outreach is intended to play an important role in this plan. A set of education and community outreach materials will be developed that each community can use to educate its residents and property owners on the issues and problems associated with deer overpopulation and the need to manage the deer herd.

Each community will be encouraged to produce and distribute jointly developed information and educational materials via community outreach. Information and educational materials may include suggestions to reduce deer damage to property, such as planting specific varieties of plants that deer do not like.

The Joint Plan also calls for gathering statistics involving deer/car collisions; damage to private property and public property; tracking the number of deer culled in each community, and comparing information and coordination of culling locations. This information will be used to confirm the need for state funding.

The Joint Plan will be used to satisfy state funding requirements whether funding is sought individually or as a group.

The Joint Plan will not be used to dictate harvest methods. Each community will be entitled to utilize their own system. This approach strikes the right balance between community autonomy and respecting and accomplishing the needs and desires of each municipality.

Each community will be individually responsible for the disposal of the culled deer carcasses. Stevens Point allows archers who have been approved to cull to claim the first carcass culled. Whiting utilizes a Village resident sign up procedure to dispose of deer carcasses. Plover will ~~utilize use the method they believe produce the best results~~ offer deer carcasses to Interfaith Food Pantry first, People's Meat Market (for distribution to the needy) second, and to a call list if deer carcasses remain.

Stevens Point is currently reviewing a liability insurance waiver for deer cullers to promote additional deer culling in the City.

Plan Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Joint Urban Wildlife Damage Abatement Control Plan Goals:

1. Identify and document deer associated issues/problems as well as high priority nuisance areas in the City of Stevens Point and Villages of Plover and Whiting.
2. Develop solutions to address deer issues/problems in the City of Stevens Point and Villages of Plover and Whiting.
3. Seek Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources approval of Joint Urban Wildlife Damage Abatement Control Plan
4. Approve and implement a Joint Urban Wildlife Damage Abatement Control Plan

Joint Urban Wildlife Damage Abatement Control Plan Objectives:

1. Monitor and map deer populations in Stevens Point, Plover and Whiting and establish priority management areas.
2. Continue managed deer hunt programs in Stevens Point and Whiting
3. Re-establish a managed deer hunt program in Plover.
4. Develop educational materials that educate community residents on the issues, problems and management solutions related to deer overpopulation.
5. Develop procedures for donating culled deer to charitable organizations.
6. Pursue funding assistance for deer management efforts as needed.

Joint Urban Wildlife Damage Abatement Control Plan Policies:

1. Collect documentation on deer issues and problems on an annual basis (deer collections, damage to private property and public property, tracking the number of deer culled in each community, and comparing information and coordination of culling locations).
2. Review and update high priority nuisance area maps
3. Obtain deer culling permits from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources as needed.
4. Stevens Point deer culling to occur annually. Culling will be performed by archery.
5. The Villages of Plover and Whiting will cull on an ever other year basis (2017 is the next year culling will occur). Culling will be performed by a WDNR approved culling sharpshooting contractor.
6. Stevens Point, Plover and Whiting representatives will meet twice a year (before and after culling) to set culling goals and program objectives for the following year.
7. Submit joint applications to WDNR for funding assistance as needed.

8. Develop and distribute informational materials that educate residents and property owners on the issues and problems associated with deer overpopulation and the need to manage the deer herd.

The plan to conduct deer removal (culling) was developed by a Committee of representatives from the City of Stevens Point and the Villages of Plover and Whiting and approved by their respective governing bodies. Signed resolutions approving the Joint Urban Wildlife Damage Abatement Control Plan from each community can be found in Appendix 1.

Appendix 2 includes a map of that identifies key deer habitat areas in the three communities involved in the Plan. The map is intended to identify areas that have been determined to be “general nuisance areas” due to higher concentrations of deer and reported problems. Each community understands that deer are highly mobile and are not limited to “general nuisance areas”.

Appendix 3 contains an outline of the rules in which DNR carries out its obligation for operating a culling program.

APPENDIX 1

SIGNED RESOLUTIONS APPROVING THE
JOINT URBAN WILDLIFE DAMAGE ABATEMENT CONTROL PLAN

APPENDIX 2
KEY DEER HABITAT AREAS