

Deer Management Task Force Meeting

Zoom Meeting

12/21/22

- Susan Lettis set up a Zoom meeting with Tom Hart, Deer Management, from the town of Camillus.
 - Tom provided a history of Camillus's Plan:
 - 2017-2019 the Deer Committee worked with the DEC and hired the USDA. The USDA wrote up a management plan and charged the town to harvest deer. The cost for the service was \$26-\$29k per year. In the 3 years the USDA worked with Camillus, 105 deer were harvested.
 - 2020 COVID hit. The town needed to save money. Tom wrote a plan modeled after the Trumansburg, Hamilton, and Cayuga Heights plans. The plan was approved by the DEC.
 - Deer Damage Permits (DDP) were issued by the DEC. They were provided with 60 tags. When those tags were used, the DEC issued more.
 - All shooters that participated are volunteers. Tom stressed the fact that this is not hunting. It is deer removal. The rules and regulations for the DDP differ from typical hunting regulations. Permits are issued for before and after open deer hunting. Non-hunting methods such as baiting and hunting at night are permitted. (Please see link for additional info) <https://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/104956.html>
 - The first year, 5 volunteers removed 40 deer. The next year 23 deer were removed.
 - The cost was approximately \$6,000 for needed equipment: Ground Blinds, Tree Stands, Trail Cameras and fees to track digitally, Sleds to remove deer, Bait, Bolts (arrows for crossbows).
 - Tom discussed the Release forms and Proficiency Tests. These are included in the Camillus Plan.
 - It is important to remember that the DDP shooters work within the city limits.

This is what is needed:

- A skilled, experienced shooter to manage the program
- Approximately a half dozen skilled shooters

The workforce discussed our next steps:

- December 27 at 5:00, the QLIC will meet. Wendy, Sandy, Susan Lettis, and Cathie will work on final edits to the group's recommended actions for the city to undertake. The draft will be circulated via email to the taskforce members. Please respond with suggestions.
- Two members (honestly I forgot to write down who) will give the recommendations to the QLIC and request questions be submitted to Betsy (room103@rocketmail.com). We will review questions and research responses.
- Group will meet again in January. It was agreed that we could use the Camillus plan. It was approved by the DEC. Tom Hart reminded us that their plan was modified from other upstate towns. We will review the proposal and determine what revisions may be needed to be unique to the needs of Oneonta. Tom suggested having a hunter involved in this step. Tom contacted Jon Clark from Oneonta Sportsmen's Club and he appears to be interested in supporting this.

City ordinance does not permit the use of crossbows within the city limits. There have been exceptions to this in the past. The city council will need to discuss this with the city attorney.

Concerns were raised about liability.

Susan Lettis has accessed the county mapping system. This will allow shooters to gather needed information about distance from a road and provide a 250 ft radius away from any buildings. At our next meeting, Susan will demonstrate the mapping program.

Susan spoke with Police Chief Witzenberg. He stated that he may be able to provide names of potential shooters.

There was additional discussion concerning the actual shooting. We agreed that those concerns and questions were very specific and would be decided at a later date by people with more knowledge and experience with the issues.

We will meet again early in January, date TBD. The Camillus Plan will be revised to reflect the needs of the City of Oneonta. This proposal will be presented to the QLIC at their meeting at the end of January.

- *Although it may have been easier to use the Camillus Plan from the beginning, I personally feel that the educational piece was necessary. Ultimately, we need to convince Council Members to approve this proposal. Understanding the impact*

*of the overabundance of deer on our city's ecosystem and health of our citizens
is key to their support.*

Thank you!

Betsy