

Deer Management Task Force Meeting Notes September 14, 2023

Meeting with the Mayor to determine a strategy to support the city to implement the approved deer management plan.

- Reviewed Phase One of the City Council approved. Timeline established by Council: June 2023–May 31, 2024

Problem: City currently is unable to afford to hire a coordinator to implement the plan. In addition, current city staff is understaffed and unable to take on the task of implementation.

- Task force members agreed to objectives that prioritize actionable items from Phase One that could be supported by volunteering. They include the following:
 - Implement **AVID**.
 - Create a Deer Nuisance Reporting Tool
 - Create flyers and information concerning Deer Management Permits.
 - Educational Press releases and programs
 - Pre-prepare DMAP application ahead of August 2024 deadline

Action items, as they are completed, will be submitted to City Council for their final approval before being launched.

AVID:

- The Environmental Board has posted information with a link to download the free AVID app on their Facebook page. AVID was *intended by its developers to be a citizen scientist tool* that was simple to use, educational, and provide useful data to evaluate the impact of deer browsing. (To understand more about this program: <https://aviddeer.com> and https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ybKVqgsNmMrtut26s6v9im_vyB23bapb/view?usp=drivesdk).
- Council states: *Opportunity* for collaboration with Hartwick and SUNY (environ/bio) Department heads. In addition, it states that “data collection should be led by higher ed.”
 - The Mayor (Mark) will meet with presidents of Hartwick and SUNY to request support from Department heads.
 - Sandy will contact Donna Vogler if she or someone she knows would be interested in working with this project.

- Members of the taskforce have higher ed degrees. We will provide our names and list our credentials and feel that we can fill in if we are unable to recruit Department head volunteers.

Deer Nuisance Reporting Tool

Using the criteria established by the Council (not anonymous, location specific, drop down menu for ease of collecting and assessing data) Wendy has agreed to create a draft survey tool that can be accessed online. *Further conversation 9/15:* Wendy will create a Google Document that we can access to add suggestions, verbiage, to the “sketch” of the draft survey. Once this step is completed, Mark will ask Kerri Harrington to create an online survey using city software. This will be presented to the Council for their approval before being launched.

Market Deer Hunting

- Create flyers to be counter-topped at Lossie’s as well as other hunting supply outlets that encourage hunters to apply for DMP.
<https://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/6403.html>
- Susan will contact Rick Brockway about support with this in his newspaper column.
- Create a short informational piece that can be included in house of worship bulletins that encourages hunting as a means of addressing food insecurity in the community. Cathie will write and will send to Mark and he will send to the houses of worship on City letterhead.

Apply for DMAP (Deer Management Assistance Program) for city owned property

It’s been a while since we were all fluent in hunting lingo! Here is a link:

<https://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/33973.html>

To meet next August 2024 deadline, an application will be completed and signed by the appropriate city personnel by the end of December. It will be submitted to the New York State DEC at that time.

Item 8 in Phase One calls for discussions regarding future DMAP permits with Otsego NOW, Job Corps, Hartwick College, Oneonta City School District and SUNY Oneonta. Mark will meet with those administrators and will report back to the group of the results.

Item 9 calls for Council discussions for a DMAP permit for additional city parcels for August 1, 2024.

- Map will be created that identifies current parcels and future parcels to be included in the DMAP application. Susan will help with creating the map. Mark will address printing the map for presentation to the Council.

Note: I found this in my files. Following our community meeting last fall, a question was asked about bow hunting within city limits. Here is the answer. (When you go to the link it'll show a photo of a crossbow, tap it for more info.)

Question about bow-hunting in the city:

It is legal to hunt with a crossbow within the city limits by following the DEC regulations:

<https://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/68802.html>

Education Program

Items that we prioritized are: deer resistant planting and feeding restrictions.

- Deer resistant planting: A flier was created by Wendy and included in the first presentation to the QLIC. Signage created and placed in Park Pavilions instructing people about not feeding deer and legal consequences.
- Cathie will speak with Lauren Takores from the Daily Star about press releases
- Residents living on the road east of the high school have requested that hikers and bikers not use the trails behind the high school during hunting season because it scares the deer away and they are hunters. *Can we legally put signs up warning about hunting? If so, it was suggested that they be placed on kiosks at the trail heads. Placing signs where the hunting will begin will protect the safety of all. I'm not sure what the final decision was on this. This could be coordinated with the Town of Oneonta.*
- Susan will contact the Bow and Gun Club of Oneonta. Susan suggested that a Hunter Safety Class be scheduled by the DEC in a city location as a way to encourage more hunting.

Just a note: This is an email sent to Selinda concerning DMAP and AVID in May of 2023.

Hi Selinda,

I want to be sure that I am memorializing today's phone conversation (5/31/23) accurately.

You stated that the survey that the Deer Management Task Force conducted showed that the majority of the respondents are concerned about the deer population on themselves and to the environment.

The survey results satisfy the need to show social and ecological problems perceived in the City of Oneonta.

The DMAP does not require data collected from a monitoring tool such as AVID. This tool was designed for forested areas and is not as effective in an urban area,

Suggested monitoring: Continue surveying city residents on a regular basis to determine public persona of deer nuisance issues. The survey, similar to a "customer satisfaction survey," will show if residents notice a change in deer nuisance issues.

Please let me know if I am stating the information accurately.

Thank you for your time.

Betsy Holland