

**EAST GOSHEN TOWNSHIP
DEER MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
1580 PAOLI PIKE
OCTOBER 6, 2008, 7:00pm**

The East Goshen Township Deer Management Committee held their regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, October 6, 2008 at 7:00pm at the East Goshen Township building. Members in attendance were: Chairman Jim McRee, members Al Zuccarello, Linda Polishuk, Matt Keating, John Babiec and Chuck Matasic. Also in attendance were: Marty Shane (Board of Supervisors), Bob Huebner (Park & Rec), and Chas Linder (Public Works).

CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Jim McRee called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance. A moment of silence was observed for the troops.

REVIEW OF MINUTES

Jim announced that the minutes from August and September are still pending and are not available for review yet.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Jim announced that a federal lawsuit has been filed against the Deer Management Program, but he had no details.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS

Jim welcomed new members John Babiec and Chuck Matasic, who will replace Bob Huebner and Walter Wujcik. He asked John and Chuck to introduce themselves.

John has lived in Hershey's Mill for 7 years. He is a retired chemist, and a Wharton School graduate. He volunteers with SCORE, and is a certified Master Composter in Chester County. He enjoys gardening in his spare time, which has led to his interest in the deer issue.

Chuck is originally from Ottawa and has lived in Wentworth for 9 years. He is a graduate of the Naval Academy and works in the chemical industry. He is knowledgeable about hunting and feels he can be a valuable contributor to the DMC.

HERD REDUCTION PROGRAM UPDATE

Jim reported that 10 deer have been harvested since hunting began on September 22. Five of the 10 came from Bow Tree. There have been no incidents except for one case of harassment of a hunter.

DEER/VEHICLE COLLISIONS

Bob Huebner reported on some of the information he gathered from the Council of Governments website:

- Signs lose effectiveness over time.

Bob noted that deer carcass pickup stats are now available from Terry Bonenberger in the Codes Department. He suggested this information be posted to the website.

- Fencing can be effective to keep deer off roadways, but is cost prohibitive, and there is no consensus on what height is most effective.
- Trimming of vegetation along roadways can give drivers more warning time before a deer enters the road.
- Public service announcements (PSAs) are recommended. They can be given at key Township meetings and events, and it would be good to have a table with informational handouts at Township events.
- Auto collisions with deer decrease during hunting season.

Linda reported on some of the information she had gathered:

- The sight of deer carcasses along the road causes drivers to slow down.
- Signs giving commands are more effective than signs giving warnings.
- Flashing lights on signs increase their effectiveness.
- “Shock” signage is effective (such as showing the total # of deer killed in an area).
- Speeding drivers are a major cause of deer/vehicle collisions.

Al suggested the Township consider installing six signs with flashing lights in areas with high deer/vehicle collision rates.

Marty Shane advised that the DMC needs to get their requests for 2009 budget items to the Board of Supervisors within the next couple of weeks.

John asked if the DMC is aware of what areas of roadway are the most dangerous for deer collisions. Bob told him that Terry Bonenberger in the Codes Dept. has a Township map marking all the reported accidents involving deer.

Chuck asked how many high-collision areas there are within East Goshen. Bob told him about six. Chuck asked if there is any way the DMC can get six signs up ASAP. Chas Linder said he would check to see what signs Public Works might have on hand. He said he believes they also have some battery-powered lights available.

Jim advised Linda and Bob that the DMC will need a well-developed proposal by October 20 to move forward.

Public Comment: Leo Andrew Sinclair, 217 N. Lochwood Lane – Suggested the Township contact some companies that make deer warning signs and deer-deterrent devices, such as high-frequency noise boxes, and request samples to be tested out in East Goshen. He is familiar with some of these firms and volunteered to email the contact information to the DMC.

TICK PROGRAM UPDATE

Chas Linder reported that three of the 4-post feeders are still in operation at this point, and 460 lbs of corn were consumed last week. The units will need to be put away for the winter once the temperature goes down to 40°F and remains there. He has ordered more parts for next year, and he is working on getting prices for new hoppers.

Jim reported that approximately one and a half cases of tick tubes were sold. The Township will break even or perhaps make a small profit on the sales.

OVERALL PROGRAM NAME

The members discussed suggestions for an overall program name.

Public Comment: Rosemarie O'Keefe, 219 Lochwood Lane – Said the name of the program does not matter; the DMC should be concentrating on the safety of the residents instead.

The members agreed to call the program the “East Goshen Deer Program.”

LYME DISEASE FORUM

Jim announced that a Lyme Disease Forum will be held at Octorara High School in Atglen (West Fallowfield Twp) on Saturday, October 11 if anyone is interested.

CAPTURE/EUTHANIZE OPTION FOR 2009

Jim summarized some limited information he had obtained on a capture/ethanize method for deer control. It involves a higher cost than hunting. The reference used police labor. In addition, the Public Works Dept. might have to clear vegetation in the program area. Matt advised waiting to see how the approved hunting program progresses before tackling another option, especially since the hunting program thus far seems to be going well, with 30% of the goal reached.

Al said a capture/ethanize program would eliminate the need for bow hunters, and is very quick and effective. The downside is that it much more visible to residents, who may find it upsetting, especially as the deer “go berserk” when they are captured in the net waiting to be killed.

Public Comment: Elizabeth Byers, Margo Lane – Said she has some knowledge of this so-called “Net & Bolt” method used to kill deer. She said it costs approximately \$800-\$900 per deer, is very cruel to the animals, and is ineffective as a means of herd control. She said if the Township plans to consider this approach, it involves a great deal of research. She noted that if the Township has the money to spend on such a program, she hopes they have the funding for a survey of residents and a referendum, which Mr. Shane says the Township cannot afford. She recommended fencing as an alternative. Jim explained that the DMC is not taking any action on this item tonight other than to decide if it is something they want to explore further. He told

Ms. Byers the Supervisors decided against a survey due to the cost factor, and they also determined that a referendum is not possible.

Public Comment: Francis Thomas O'Keefe, Jr., 219 Lochwood Lane – Said the issue is safety. Residents don't want people with weapons on or near their property. Residents believe the bow hunters are incompetent.

Public Comment: Marcia Gordon, 3008 Valley Drive – Said she is opposed to the Net & Bolt method, and noted that it falls outside the Game Commission's regulations.

The members were in agreement to table any research of this method for now.

VACANCY

Jim announced that the Committee will have another vacancy in January when Al departs to spend more time on his Planning Commission duties. Anyone who is interested can file an application with the Township.

VENISON FOR RESIDENTS

The Committee reviewed a draft letter that will be sent to residents who inquire about obtaining venison from the hunt. Matt asked how many inquires have been received thus far and Jim said there have been four. Jim will edit the letter and send it to the Township Solicitor for review.

Al said he was concerned that a venison distribution program will result in more paperwork and administrative work for the Township staff and/or the hunters. Jim said there will be no extra work and no paperwork besides a letter being sent to interested residents. After the letter is sent, any transaction that takes place is between the hunters and the residents, with no Township involvement. Jim said he wanted to make it clear to the audience that the Township is not selling venison. Selling game venison is illegal.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Anne Quinn, Supplee Valley – Asked why the DMC added a Zone F to the Supplee Valley open space, when Mr. Zuccarello said in a previous meeting that area was unsafe to hunt. Jim explained that Zone F was actually created by carving space from existing Zone E, and that no new land has been added to the hunt. Ms. Quinn said the entire Supplee Valley is unsafe for hunting. She asked the DMC to consider adding a safety zone 50 feet from residential property lines. Jim reminded her that the existing program has a number of safety features built into it, which have been explained to her many times before. Ms. Quinn asked if the DMC would consider reducing the length of the hunt, because four months is unreasonable. Al Zuccarello said he agreed, and added that he also thinks a 10-year program is too long. Jim said he is comfortable with the approved program that is in place, which the DMC can review again in 2009. He asked the other members if they were interested in a change, and no one indicated they were. Ms. Quinn asked the DMC to consider calling off the hunt on school snow days. She asked if something is going to be done about the tree stand ladders which are too low. Jim said the ladders should be 5½ feet from the ground. Ms. Quinn said some of the ladders are lower than that. Matt suggested she take photographs of the ladders in question and email them to the Township. She asked what the Township would do at that point. Jim said the hunters for that

area would be told they cannot hunt there until the ladders have been fixed. Ms. Quinn said she first brought this issue to the Township's attention a month ago, and that she already provided the necessary information to Mr. Shane. Ms. Quinn then advised that per the *Daily Local*, deer contraception is under consideration in Valley Forge.

Andie Brakman, 1420 E. Strasburg Road – She disagreed with a previous comment from the DMC that lots of deer are killed on her road. She said she has lived there for 36 years and to her knowledge only 1 deer has been killed and only 1 deer has been injured. She said she is surprised more deer aren't killed because people speed so much down the road. She said she doesn't understand why the Township can't use contraceptives in conjunction with the hunt. Jim told her the short answer is because the Township is not allowed to use contraceptives per the Game Commission.

Several residents challenged Jim's statement. Mr. and Mrs. O'Keefe said they were told by the Game Commission that funding exists for a contraceptive program. Mrs. O'Keefe stated she would get something in writing from the Game Commission to this effect and provide it to the Township.

Jim said if any resident has tangible evidence of a commercially available contraceptive for deer to please provide the information to the DMC and he promised they would investigate it. Although residents tell him contraceptives are available, to date no one has been able to provide any proof.

NEXT MEETING

The next DMC meeting is scheduled for October 20.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Linda moved to adjourn the meeting. Al seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. There was no further discussion or public comment. The meeting adjourned at 8:35pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Meddings
Recording Secretary