



Commission Meeting Minutes

South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks

523 E Capitol Avenue | Pierre, South Dakota 57501

June 6-7, 2024 | NFAA Easton Yankton Archery Center | Yankton, SD

REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING

Call Meeting to Order

Chair Rissler called the meeting to order at 1 pm CST at the NFAA Easton Yankton Archery Center in Yankton, SD on June 6, 2024. Commissioners Stephanie Rissler, Julie Bartling, Jim White, Robert Whitmyre, Jon Locken, Travis Bies, Travis Theel, and Bruce Cull were present. With eight commission members present, a quorum was established. The public and staff could listen via SDPB Livestream and participate via conference or in person, with approximately 93 total participants attending via Zoom or in person.

1. Conflict of Interest Disclosure [Action Item]

Chair Rissler requested the disclosure of any potential conflicts of interest, but none were brought forward.

2. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes [Action Item]

Chair Rissler called for any additions or corrections to the regular minutes of May 2024 meeting. Minutes are available at <https://gfp.sd.gov/commission/archives/>.

MOTIONED BY BIES, SECONDED BY THEEL TO APPROVE THE MAY 2024 REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Additional Salary Days [Action Item]

Chair Rissler called for additional salary days from the Commissioners. The following additional days were submitted: Theel (2), Bies (1), White (1), and Locken (1).

MOTIONED BY WHITMYRE, SECONDED BY LOCKEN TO APPROVE THE ADDITIONAL SALARY DAYS. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Budget Discussion [Action Item]

Deputy Secretary Scott Simpson brought the Fiscal Year 2025 Department recommended budget before the commission for approval.

MOTIONED BY CULL, SECONDED BY BARTLING TO ADOPT THE FY25 BUDGETS AS PROPOSED. The motion carried unanimously.

5. New Staff Introduction [Info Item]

Director Kirschenmann and Director VanMeeteren introduced department employees.

Public Hearing

Senior Staff Attorney Nick Michels opened the floor at 2:04 pm CST for discussion from those in attendance in matters of importance to them that are listed on the agenda as a finalization.

Agenda Item #14: Furbearer Seasons and Methods: Hunting Raccoons with Dogs

2:07 pm: Nancy Hilding of Black Hawk, SD representing the Prairie Hills Audubon Society testified in opposition to hunting raccoons with dogs.

2:13 pm: Julie Anderson of Rapid City, SD testified in opposition to hunting raccoons with dogs.

2:27 pm: David Williams of Rapid City, SD testified in favor of raccoon hunting with dogs. [His testimony was provided during the public hearing as he was having technical difficulties with Zoom.]

Agenda Item #15: Elk Raffle License



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2:16 pm: Gary Ledbetter of Yankton, SD testified XXXXXXXX.

Agenda Item #15: Landowner Own Land Elk

No testimony provided by the public.

Senior Staff Attorney Michels closed the Public Hearing at 2:19 pm CST.

Open Forum

Senior Staff Attorney Nick Michels opened the floor following the conclusion of the public hearing at 2:20 pm CST for discussion from those in attendance in matters of importance to them that are listed on the agenda not as a finalization or may not be on the agenda.

2:20 pm: Nancy Hilding of Black Hawk, SD representing the Prairie Hills Audubon Society testified in opposition to raccoon hunting.

2:23 pm: Dana Rogers of Hill City, SD representing the South Dakota Wildlife Federation provided positive feedback on the South Dakota Wildlife Federation Conservation Camp.

2:28 pm: Jim Lane of Yankton, SD provided testimony concerning public access on the James River.

2:32 pm: Ron Kolbeck of Salem, SD representing the South Dakota Bowhunters Association provide testimony in opposition to the Spring Turkey Bowhunting Season recommendations. He also testified in favor of the National Archery in Schools Program (NASP).

2:38 pm: Jonathan Magyar of Sioux Falls, SD thanked the Commission for placing signs at Cedar Shore. He testified in support of Petition #219 asking for limits on blue gill take.

Senior Staff Attorney Michels closed the Open Forum at 2:42 pm CST.

6. Petition #217: Lake Francis Case Paddlefish Season

[Action Item: Petition]

Aaron Leingang of Pierre, SD submitted petition #217 in which requested the Commission establish catch and release licenses for paddlefish.

Wildlife Director Kirschenmann explained that paddlefish tags for anglers increased from 350 to 500 in 2024 for Lake Francis Case to provide additional opportunity. He also expressed concern for overcrowding should more tags be issued.

MOTIONED BY WHITE, SECONDED BY BIES TO DENY PETITION #217. The motion carried unanimously.

MOTIONED BY BIES, SECONDED BY THEEL TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 24-11 TO DENYING PETITION #217. The motion carried unanimously.

7. Petition #218: Motor Use on Lakes

[Action Item: Petition]

Timothy Staples of Sioux Falls, SD submitted petition #218 in which requested the Commission amend Minnehaha County public water safety zones by allowing use of electric motors only on the waters of Family Park.

Wildlife Director Kirschenmann informed the Commission that when developing Family Park, City park staff, GFP Staff, and City and County Law Enforcement met and drafted a set of rules for the park to ensure that the users would have high-quality experience and items and activities such as swimming, motorized watercraft, snowmobiles, ATVs, scuba diving, fireworks, firearms, open fires and feeding of waterfowl were prohibited. The primary objective for creating and managing a fishery at Family Park Lake and similar urban fishing lakes is to provide close-to-home fishing opportunities for family, youth and novice anglers, and



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provide shore fishing opportunities. He expressed a potential for conflict between boat anglers and shore anglers at Family Park Lake as it is small, relatively narrow, and has the highest fishing pressure per surface acres in the state. The City of Sioux Falls expressed their support for retaining the “no motors rule” on watercraft using Family Park Lake.

MOTIONED BY BARLTING, SECONDED BY LOCKEN TO DENY PETITION #218. The motion carried unanimously.

MOTIONED BY WHITE, SECONDED BY THEEL TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 24-12 TO DENY PETITION #218. The motion carried unanimously.

8. Petition 219: Special Management of Panfish [Action Item: Petition]

Jonathan Magyar of Sioux Falls, SD submitted petition #219 requesting the Commission to establish reduced statewide harvest limits for sunfish, yellow perch, and crappie, and for sunfish on select water. He requested the limit of Panfish from 15 to 10 per day statewide and special management of lakes including Pactola and Sheridan in the Black Hills and Enemy Swim to a 5 fish limit per day on Bluegills.

Wildlife Director Kirschenmann informed the commission that there is a current evaluation on bluegill harvest in select northwestern South Dakota waters. The current estimates on panfish species does not indicate overharvest. And indicated that panfish species often exhibit short-life spans, which result in short periods for anglers to utilize the resource.

MOTIONED BY LOCKEN, SECONDED BY CULL TO DENY PETITION #219. The motion carried unanimously.

MOTIONED BY WHITMYRE, SECONDED BY LOCKEN TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 24-13 DENYING PETITION 218. The motion carried unanimously.

9. Petition 220: Harvest Limits on Panfish [Action Item: Petition]

Scott Olson of Rapid City, SD submitted petition #220 requesting the Commission establish reduced harvest limits for sunfish on Sheridan Reservoir and other select waters.

Wildlife Director Kirschenmann informed the commission that there is a current evaluation on bluegill harvest in select northwestern South Dakota waters. The current estimates on panfish species does not indicate overharvest. He also stated that the bluegill population in Sheridan Reservoir is relatively new, and growth, recruitment, and mortality rates have no stabilized, newly introduced populations often exhibit fish growth and high recruitment before stabilizing.

MOTIONED BY CULL, SECONDED BY BIES TO DENY PETITION #220. The motion carried unanimously.

MOTIONED BY BARLTING, SECONDED BY THEEL TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 24-14 DENYING PETITION #220. The motion carried unanimously.

10. Air Gun Hunting [Action Item: Proposal]

Law Enforcement Section Chief Sam Schelhaas presented a rule proposal that would edit § 41:06:04:17 to reduce air gun muzzle velocity minimum from 1,000 feet per second to 600 feet per second to hunt cottontail rabbit, red squirrel, fox squirrel, grey squirrel, and any other species defined as a predator/varmint in § 41-1-1(21). § 41-1-1 (21) includes coyote, wolf, gray fox, red fox, skunk, gopher, ground squirrel, chipmunk, jackrabbit, marmot, opossum, porcupine, crow, and prairie dog.

41:06:04:17. Minimum air gun specifications. No person may hunt species listed in SDCL [41-8-31\(1A\)](#) with an air gun that is factory-rated to produce a muzzle velocity of less than ~~1,000~~ 600 feet per second. Only hunting pellets are permitted.



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NO ACTION WAS TAKEN AS THERE WERE NO CHANGES TO THE PROPOSAL.

11. Wild Turkey Hunting Seasons

[Action Item: Proposal]

Andrew Norton, Wildlife Program Administrator, brought forth the Wild Turkey Hunting Season proposals.

11a. Spring Wild Turkey Hunting Season

Andrew Norton presented the Spring Wild Turkey Hunting Season proposal which would (1) Edit § 41:06:13:02 to change Unit PST-18A to PST-10A to have the unit label represent one of the counties (Aurora) contained in the unit that includes Aurora and Douglas counties. Clark County is county number 18. (2) Edit § 41:06:13:02 to expand the archery statewide turkey hunting unit to include the portion of Lake County south of State Highway 34 and specify archery hunting is valid in any unit that has limited issue spring turkey licenses available.

MOTIONED BY WHITE, SECONDED BY LOCKEN TO APPROVE THE PROPOSAL FOR JULY 2024 FINALIZATION. The motion carried unanimously.

11b. Custer State Park Wild Turkey Hunting Season

Andrew Norton presented the Custer State Park Wild Turkey Hunting Season in which the department had no recommended changes.

NO ACTION WAS TAKEN AS THERE WERE NO CHANGES TO THE PROPOSAL.

11c. Fall Wild Turkey Hunting Season

Andrew Norton presented the Fall Wild Turkey Hunting Season proposal in which the department recommended the following edits: (1) Edit § 41:06:14:02.01 to exclude Douglas County from Unit PFT-17A (Charles Mix County). (2) Edit § 41:06:14:02.01 to change Unit PFT-18A to PFT-10A to have the unit label represent one of the counties (Aurora) contained in the unit that includes Aurora and Douglas counties. Clark County is county number 18. (3) Edit § 41:06:14:02.01 to add Unit PFT-58A Stanley County.

MOTIONED BY THEEL, SECONDED BY WHITMYRE TO APPROVE THE PROPOSAL FOR JULY 2024 FINALIZATION. The motion carried unanimously.

11d. Fall Wild Turkey Hunting Season License Allocation

Andrew Norton presented the Fall Wild Turkey Hunting Season License Allocations. Recommended license number changes for the Fall Wild Turkey hunting season units. Detailed license number recommendations by type are included in supportive information tables. License number recommendations will continue to be evaluated during June and final license number recommendations will be provided at the July Commission meeting.

NO ACTION WAS TAKEN AS THERE WERE NO CHANGES TO THE PROPOSAL.

12. Annual Park Entrance License Options

[Action Item: Proposal]

Parks and Recreation Director Jeff VanMeeteren presented a second reading on a rule proposal would remove ARSD 41:03:03:05 which authorizes the provision of a discounted half price second annual license, and the provisions for securing multiple discounted additional licenses through common vehicle registration. The proposal also amends 41:03:03:06 to formalize the availability of a double license option (one full price license and one half price license when purchased together). There are no limits on how many double licenses may be purchased.

NO ACTION WAS TAKEN AS THERE WERE NO CHANGES TO THE PROPOSAL.



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13. Antelope Hunting Seasons

[Action Item: Proposal]

Andrew Norton, Wildlife Program Administrator, brought forth the Antelope Hunting Season proposals for a second reading.

13a. Archery Antelope Hunting Season

Andrew Norton presented the Archery Antelope Hunting Seasons proposal to the Commission in which would edit § 41:06:24:01 to remove five access permits for Custer and Pennington Counties within the Black Hills Fire Protection District.

NO ACTION WAS TAKEN AS THERE WERE NO CHANGES TO THE PROPOSAL.

13b. Antelope Firearm Hunting Season

Andrew Norton presented the Antelope Firearm Hunting Season proposal to the Commission which would edit § 41:06:23:01 to allow an individual that applies for a “special antelope” license to apply for another antelope license in the second lottery drawing instead of the third lottery drawing. It would also edit § 41:06:23:02 with a minor unit boundary adjustment to use Interstate 90 instead of the Black Hills National Forest as the boundary for unit PRA-15B in Butte County. And provide a rule clean-up for unit boundary descriptions to exclude unit PRA-45B (Ft. Pierre National Grasslands) from PRA-41A (Jones County) and PRA-58A (Stanley County).

NO ACTION WAS TAKEN AS THERE WERE NO CHANGES TO THE PROPOSAL.

13c. Antelope Firearm Hunting Season License Allocation

Andrew Norton presented the recommended license allocations to the Commission but advised that the aerial survey data and final recommendations are still being evaluated. The final license allocation recommendation will be presented at the July 2024 meeting.

NO ACTION WAS TAKEN AS THERE WERE NO CHANGES TO THE PROPOSAL.

13d. Landowner Own Land Antelope and Mentored Youth Antelope Licenses

Andrew Norton presented the Landowner Own Land Antelope and Mentored Youth Antelope Licenses proposal for the Commission’s consideration. Edits would provide a rule clean-up to § 41:06:01:12 to specify mentored youth antelope licenses are only valid on private land that is not leased by the Department for public hunting access. Recommended changes from the initial proposal would be to restrict landowner own land license types from one “any antelope” or one two-tag “any antelope” and “any doe-fawn antelope” to one “buck antelope” only (§ 41:06:01:07.03). The final edit would be to close mentored youth antelope season (§ 41:06:01:12).

MOTIONED BY THEEL, SECONDED BY BIES TO APPROVE THE PROPOSAL WITH THE CHANGES FOR JULY 2024 FINALIZATION. The motion carried unanimously.

14. Furbearer Seasons and Methods: Hunting Raccoons with Dogs [Action Item: Finalization]

John Kanta, Terrestrial Section Chief, presented the Furbearer Seasons and Methods: Hunting Raccoons with Dogs finalization to the Commission. The proposed changes to rule § 41:08:01 would allow nonresidents to use a dog as an aid in taking a raccoon.

Administrative Rule Changes: § 41:08:01:12. Nonresident restrictions. Notwithstanding the season dates established in this chapter, no nonresident may take any mink or weasel from February 4 first through November 30 thirtieth, or take any muskrat, beaver, or raccoon from March 16 sixteenth through November 30 thirtieth or take any bobcat from February 16 sixteenth through the Friday preceding the second Saturday of January. No nonresident may use a dog as an aid in the taking of a raccoon.



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MOTIONED BY WHITE, SECONDED BY LOCKEN TO ADOPT THE FINALIZATION. The motion carried unanimously.

15. Elk Raffle License

[Action Item: Finalization]

John Kanta, Terrestrial Section Chief, presented the Custer State Park Elk Hunting Season finalization in which would repeal § 41:06:27:02.07 to allow an individual to obtain more than one elk raffle licenses in a lifetime. All applicants will remain limited to only one elk license in a single year.

Administrative Rule Changes: § 41:06:27:02.07. Eligibility of successful entrant for other elk licenses. A successful entrant is not eligible again for any Custer State Park rifle elk license obtained through a raffle similar to the raffle contained in this chapter. The license received from this raffle, however, does not bar eligibility for a Custer State Park rifle elk license issued through the lottery selection process by the licensing division of the department. The restrictions of chapter 41:06:07 do not disqualify the successful entrant from obtaining a license through this raffle, but the recipient of the license from the raffle may not apply for or obtain a Custer State Park rifle elk license through the state lottery for the same year. Repealed.

MOTIONED BY THEEL, SECONDED BY BARTLING TO APPROVE THE FINALIZATION. The motion carried unanimously.

16. Landowner Own Land Elk Application for License

[Action Item: Finalization]

John Kanta, Terrestrial Section Chief, presented the Landowner Own Land Elk Application for License finalization. Changes from last year would be to describe a new prairie elk hunting season resident antlerless elk landowner own land license type in § 41:06:01:07.03. The landowner own land elk license is valid in Prairie Elk hunting season units in Bennett and Jackson County (PRE-11D and PRE-11E) and West River Area (PRE-WRA) as described in § 41:06:59. It would also describe a landowner own land landowner or landowner-operator in § 41:06:01:15(4) by the following criteria: (a) A minimum of 240 acres of land within an elk unit. (b) Members of the qualifying landowner-operator's family including grandparents, parents, spouse, children, children's spouse, or grandchildren who live on the ranch or in the closest community and have an active role in the ranch operation also qualify. (c) Only one qualifying applicant per ranch unit per year may purchase a landowner own land elk license. (d) A qualifying applicant for a ranch unit may not purchase a landowner own land elk license if any qualifying member of the ranch unit holds an elk license valid in the prairie elk hunting season. (e) A ranch unit is described as all private property owned and leased for agricultural purposes by written agreement by an individual qualifying landowner in the state. (f) A ranch unit may not be subdivided for the purpose of qualifying for more than one landowner own land elk license. The final edit would be to establish a fee for landowner on own land antlerless elk license of one-half the fee of the antlerless elk license in § 41:06:02:03(15).

The department submitted the following change from the original proposal: Add both Harding County units, PRE-25A and PRE-35B, to the prairie elk units in which a landowner on own land antlerless elk license would be valid.

MOTIONED BY CULL, SECONDED BY WHITMYRE TO ADOPT THE AMENDMENT TO THE FINALIZATION. The motion carried unanimously.

MOTIONED BY CULL, SECONDED BY THEEL TO APPROVE THE AMENDED FINALIZATION. The motion carried unanimously.

17. Pickerel Lake Cabin Staff Construction Project

[Parks & Rec Info Item]

Willy Collignon, Parks Regional Supervisor, presented a slide show of the staff lead construction process used to build the new Pickerel Lake Recreation Area Modern Cabin between October of 2023 through completion in May of 2024. Regional staff assisted Building Maintenance Specialist Mark Crawford with over



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700 hours of outside Pickerel assistance, gaining knowledge, experience and skills to continue in-house maintenance and construction tasks that equate to savings on license dollars such as the estimated \$100,000 plus for this project.

18. Lake Alvin Spillway Project Update

[Parks & Rec Info Item]

Adam Kulesa, Planning & Development Coordinator, and Derek Dorr, Parks Regional Supervisor, provided a short power point presentation with the commission explaining the details of the upcoming Lake Alvin Spillway Replacement Project. Information was shared on recreation area impacts, construction schedule, and closure dates to some of the amenities at Lake Alvin Recreation Area. Contractor will start mobilizing on July 1st and lake draw down will begin as early as July 15th with the beach area and boat ramps being closed upon the first day of the lake draw down starting. The lake will be drawn down between 10-15 feet until the new spillway is in place. The project is expected to be completed prior to spring runoff in 2025.

19. Renaming of South Scalp Creek LSU & GPA

[Parks & Rec Info Item]

Parks & Recreation Director VanMeeteren updated the Commission on the renaming of South Scalp Creek Lakeside Use Area and Game Production Area. During the 2024 Legislative Session, SB160 was introduced to rename South Scalp Creek Lakeside Use Area as the name is offensive to local tribal people. The bill was killed in committee, but GFP agreed to work with the sponsor to look at a name change. After much research, the name "Star Valley LUA" was selected as it is the local township name and is consistent with several other park areas in the immediate vicinity (i.e., Whetstone and White Swan) that utilize the local township names as well. The adjacent GPA will also utilize the name Star Valley.

20. Reel in Memories Campaign Update

[Parks & Rec Info Item]

April Larson, Marketing Coordinator, and Chris Hull, Communications Specialist, shared an update on South Dakota State Parks' ongoing efforts to promote fishing opportunities as part of the 2024 Reel in Memories campaign. A new promotional video has been launched on the GFP YouTube Channel, showcasing the annual park activity, which can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NaJCSdDrTaw/>. This summer, a new First Catch Kids T-Shirt promotion will coincide with the First Catch Center events in the parks. Park Managers and Conservation Officers will distribute youth-sized t-shirts to kids who make their first catch in a South Dakota State Park, creating memorable experiences for young anglers. Additionally, a new Tagged Fish Pilot Program will launch at Farm Island Recreation Area, where fish will be tagged and released. This initiative encourages participants to fish in the park with an opportunity to win a prize.

21. Camper Survey

[Parks & Rec Info Item]

Al Nedved, Parks & Recreation Deputy Director, reported a camper survey has been developed by the Division of Parks and Recreation to better understand state park campers and what their preferences are. It will help identify and prioritize facilities, amenities, and services that campers expect. It will allow the Department to understand the camper market in South Dakota in comparison to other markets such as the growing private campground industry and help clarify GFP's role. The survey will be an online survey through email and advertised through media outlets. A random sample of approximately 3500 participants will be pulled from the list of approximately 147,000. Participation in the survey will be completely voluntary and all responses will be anonymous. Survey will be delivered in June and July with a final report issued this fall.

22. Revenue and Camping Reports

[Parks & Rec Info Item]

Parks & Recreation Director VanMeeteren presented the camping and revenue reports for the month of May and YTD. Camping unit numbers remain strong for May and YTD with increases of 10% and 13% respectfully. Camping revenue follows suite and is up 5% for May and 3% YTD. Park entrance permit revenues remain strong and are up 3% in May and 11% YTD.



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23. Antelope Action Plan

[Wildlife Info Item]

Andy Lindbloom, Senior Big Game Biologist

24. Habitat Projects and CREP Update

[Wildlife Info Item]

Ryan Wendinger, Habitat Program Administrator, provided an update on public and private lands habitat program activities for this spring. For private lands, these updates included the private lands food plot program, a big game mix that was added, woody habitat planting accomplishments, and a new grant GFP and others partnered with Ducks Unlimited on through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). On public lands information was shared about the prescribed fire and tree planting taking place on GPAs along with a new funding source through the USFWS to fund wetland and grassland improvement projects on GPAs in eastern South Dakota. Mark Norton shared information on the James River and Big Sioux River CREP programs. Information included the enrollment process, program goals, positive impacts it has on the environment and the habitat it provides. Additional information on acres enrolled, the cost of the program along with how the habitat stamp has helped fund the program was shared.

25. Blue Sucker Survey

[Wildlife Info Item]

BJ Schall, Fisheries Biologist, presented to the Commission that the Department has been conducting research on Blue Suckers in eastern South Dakota's rivers in collaboration with the University of South Dakota and South Dakota State University to assess movements, age, growth, and mortality. It has been found that Blue Suckers can live to over 60 years and can make very large migrations into and out of the James River annually.

26. Spring Fish Stocking Summary

[Wildlife Info Item]

Brian Blackwell, Fisheries Research and Surveys Coordinator, presented to the Commission an overview of spring stockings by staff. As of June 6, 2024, staff had stocked 17 different fish species across the state at 187 unique waterbodies. Over 50 million walleye and saugeye fry have been stocked into state waters, with additional fingerling stockings planned. Staff have also stocked over 270,000 adult fish from both hatcheries and other state waters to provide catchable products to users.

27. License Sales Report

[Wildlife Info Item]

Wildlife Director Kirschenmann provided the Commission an update on hunting and fishing licenses sales. In general, license sales remain good. Habitat stamp sales are up in comparison to last year by 5,800. Small game license sales remain ahead of last but with little change over the past month. Kirschenmann stated that changes will begin in the month of September when small game hunting begins for the fall. Fishing license sales are stable yet above the 3-year average. Kirschenmann also pointed out that the general trend observed in big game applications is an across the board increasing trend in interest.

28. Adjourn

[Action Item]

A Regular Commission Meeting will be held on July 11-12, 2024, starting at 1 pm CST at the Good Earth State Park in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

MOTIONED BY THEEL, SECONDED BY BIES TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 11:09 AM CST ON JUNE 7, 2024. Motion carried unanimously.

Submitted respectfully,

Kevin Robling, Department Secretary