



NORTH CAROLINA **YOUTH OUTDOOR** ENGAGEMENT COMMISSION

AGENDA

October 4, 2023, 10:30 AM

Electronic Meeting VIA Zoom

- 1) Call To Order** – Chairman Dell Murphy
- 2) Roll Call** – Megan Law, Communications Manager
- 3) Mandatory Ethics Inquiry** - North Carolina General Statute 138A-15(e)
mandates that the Commission Chair shall remind all Commissioners of their duty to avoid conflicts of interest and appearances of conflict under this Chapter, and that the chair also inquire as to whether there is any known conflict of interest or appearance of conflict with respect to any matters coming before the Commission at this time. It is the duty of each Commissioner who is aware of such personal conflict of interest or of an appearance of a conflict, to notify the Chair of the same. – Chairman Dell Murphy
- 4) Approval Of Minutes** – Take action on the July 26, 2023 NC Youth Outdoor Engagement Commission meeting minutes as written in the exhibit and distributed to members **(EXHIBIT A)**
- 5) 2023 Legislative & Budget Update** – Justin Burr, Executive Director
(EXHIBIT B)
- 6) Trailblazers Club Report** – Alan Pomeroy, Program Director, and Noel

Griffin, Outreach and Engagement Manager

7) GO Grants Program Report – Alan Pomeroy, Program Director, and
Megan Wendt, Grants Coordinator

8) Patch Program Report – Alan Pomeroy, Program Director

9) Communications Report – Megan Law, Communications Manager

10) Outreach Report – Noel Griffin, Outreach and Engagement Manager

11) Trust Fund Report – Layne Randolph, Fundraising and Finance Manager

12) Commission Discussion/Other New Business – Chairman Dell Murphy

13) 2024 Meeting Schedule – Chairman Dell Murphy (**EXHIBIT C**)

14) Closing Remarks – Chairman Dell Murphy

15) Adjourn

EXHIBIT A
Outdoor Heritage Advisory Council Meeting
July 26, 2023, 10:00 AM
Raleigh, NC
MINUTES

1) Call To Order – NC Youth Outdoor Engagement Commission Chairman Dell Murphy called the meeting to order at 10 am.

2) Roll Call –

COUNCIL ATTENDANCE

Owen Andrews
Austin Barnhill
Brick Brown
Mikey Nye Fulk
Jim Harrell
Kevin Howell
Channing Jones
Dell Murphy
Gordon Myers
Mitch St. Clair
Aaron Thomas

STAFF ATTENDANCE

Justin Burr, Executive Director
Alan Pomeroy, Program Director
Megan Law, Communications Manager
Layne Randolph, Fundraising and Finance Manager
Megan Wendt, Grants Coordinator
Noel Griffin, Outreach and Engagement Manager

3) Mandatory Ethics Inquiry – At the request of Chairman Murphy, Megan Law read the mandatory ethics inquiry as stated in GS 138A-15(e).

4) Approval of Minutes – Commissioner Aaron Thomas moved that the minutes from May 3rd, 2023 be approved as written and Commissioner Kevin Howell seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously approved the minutes.

5) Welcome New Staff Member – Grants Coordinator Megan Wendt introduced herself to the Commissioners and provided them with her background. She stated that she looks forward to working with staff and the Commission to award grants to schools throughout the state. The Commissioners welcomed Megan to the team.

6) 2023 Legislative Update – Executive Director Justin Burr informed the

Commissioners of the date (6/23) the organization's name changed from the former, NC Outdoor Heritage Advisory Council, to the current name, NC Youth Outdoor Engagement Commission. He also elaborated on the Sports Betting Bill, its progress, and the language of the bill in reference to the Commission and the funding that will come from the bill.

7) Trailblazers Clubs Report – Program Director Alan Pomeroy briefed the Commission on the progress of the Trailblazers Clubs and funding of these clubs. Chairman Murphy asked Alan to remind him of the number of clubs that were approved to be awarded and receive funding. Alan answered that 34 clubs were awarded and that staff is in the process of sending the funds to each of the schools. The Program Director then mentioned that workplans and a program guide have been sent to all recipient schools. The downloadable sign-up materials will also be available on the website. Alan presented a recent addition to the website, an interactive map, which Outreach and Engagement Manager Noel Griffin had put together in an effort to connect website viewers with activities and educational programming throughout the state, including State Parks, nature trails, and shooting ranges. One of the high schools, in Rutherford County, has already taken a trip. Alan displayed pictures from this recent update and informed Commissioners of upcoming plans from other schools. Staff will continue to review and approve workplans and build out the clubs resources further.

8) GO Grants Program Report – Alan Pomeroy, Program Director, summarized funds spent in fiscal year (FY) 23, how the funding was allocated, and the number of grants awarded for the year in total. Chairman Murphy asked if any applications had been declined due to lack of funds available for the upcoming school year. His question was answered by Alan Pomeroy who stated that some trips have been postponed until funding from the General Assembly is received. Commissioner Brown posed a question regarding how staff would handle the applications that have accrued (and continue to accrue) until funding from the General Assembly is received. Executive Director Justin Burr responded that the funds for these trips would need to be pulled from the Trust Fund until funding from the General Assembly is made available to the Commission, therein presenting a motion for the Commission to authorize staff to act accordingly. Executive Director Burr took a moment to reiterate how important it is for the Commission to request and receive recurring funding so that future applications don't have to be postponed or turned down due to delays or a lack thereof of funding. Commissioner Brown asked for the number of grants that had accrued. At the time of the meeting, there was an estimated \$330,000 worth of grants applications awaiting funding. Commissioner Andrews asked whether the grants that do not meet guidelines are immediately declined. The Program Director assured the Commission that staff tries to work with the applicants to adjust their application to fall in line with YOEC's set guidelines and to answer any questions the applicant might have before encouraging them to resubmit their application. Moving

forward, Pomeroy announced, staff suggested incentives for applicants to apply for multi-day field trips and certain types of structures, including Archery Ranges, Agricultural Facilities (hydroponic greenhouses and agricultural barns, for example), Aquatic Packages (on-campus docks or piers for fishing or launching kayaks), and Interactive Nature Trails with interpretive signage and educational aspects. These incentives would be financial- a proposed opportunity for up to \$5,000 for a multi-day off-campus field trip (amounting to an extra \$1,000 per day up to 2 additional days), and a proposed increase in awarded structure grants up to \$20,000 for any of the 4 aforementioned types of mission-focused project packages (while traditional outdoor classroom applications would still be accepted up to \$15,000). Commissioner Brown asked if the structures are contiguous to school property. Alan Pomeroy confirmed that the structures are built on the premises at the school that applies for the grant. Commissioner Myers inquired as to whether the new options, such as the shooting sports/archery range package, could also be used to award funds to groups requesting travel to tournaments for youth/students. Executive Director Burr stated that this is a possibility and that this is something that the Commission could grant and award funding to. Following this discussion, Commissioner Myers motioned to approve the request to add additional GO Grant options and increase award allowances as presented by the Program Director. This motion was seconded by Commissioner St. Clair. The motion passed. Commissioner Fulk made a motion to authorize staff to use trust fund dollars to award GO Grants until the state budget has been passed, with the understanding that the trust fund dollars used for GO Grants will be replaced with the general fund appropriations the Commission receives in fiscal year (FY) 23-24's state budget. Commissioner Andrews provided the second motion to approve this request. The motion passed. Chairman Murphy asked whether there is a limit to the number of grants one school can receive within an academic year. Alan Pomeroy answered that the Grant Selection Committee does attempt to impact as many students as possible, with a preference for students that have yet to be impacted. Executive Director Burr added that there is a limit to 1 structure per school for every other year. These guidelines were made in an effort to prioritize impacting new counties, schools, and students when possible. Chairman Murphy requested the number of counties yet to be impacted, which stands at 6 counties remaining (Anson, Beaufort, Camden Caswell, Polk, and Richmond).

9) Communications Report – Communications Manager Megan Law gave an overview of the new branding materials, including brochures, an event tent, and stickers. Megan scrolled through the recent newsletter that was sent to subscribers, teachers, and legislators and displayed visuals of the ads she created for Carolina-based magazines Carolina Sportsman and the Wildlife Regulations Digest. YOEC placed ads in these publications that are now in circulation throughout the state. Megan discussed the updates to the

website and social media, where the name change was announced. She also updated the Commissioners on the status of the NC STEM Explorers filming, previously discussed during the March meeting, which took place in early July.

10) Outreach Report – Outreach and Engagement Manager Noel Griffin presented Patch Program data, including the number of patches awarded for the year as of July 2023 and the frequency in which each patch was requested. She discussed the events staff attended over the past 3 months, including the Big Rock Kids Tournament in Morehead City, the Fur, Fish, and Game Camp in Ellerbe, and NC Trail Days in Elkin, NC. She concluded her presentation by informing the Commission of upcoming events YOEC will attending in the coming months, including the State Fair.

11) Trust Fund Report – Fundraising and Finance Manager Layne Randolph gave a breakdown of donations received, interest earned, and the status of the Trust Fund as a whole. Chairman Murphy noted the peak in donations around August each year, which Layne confirmed and stated she was looking forward to seeing this year, as well. Chairman Murphy also asked who controls the interest in reference to the Trust Fund. Executive Director Justin Burr stated that the interest-bearing account is handled by the state and that the money appropriated to YOEC from the General Assembly is requested (by Burr) to be deposited directly to the Trust Fund in order to accrue as much interest as possible. Commissioner Brown asked whether there was a minimum on what funding had to remain in the Trust Fund. His question was addressed by Executive Director Burr, who answered that there is no minimum. A motion was introduced for the Commission to authorize staff to use trust fund dollars to establish the North Carolina Youth Outdoor Engagement Foundation. There was discussion regarding the motion, including questions raised by Commissioners Fulk, Brown, Howell, and Myers. Commissioner Fulk asked who would oversee this process. Executive Director Burr stated that staff would be performing the checks and balances in this case. Commissioner Myers asked how the Foundation would be established and whether the funds would continue to be transferred from the Trust Fund once established. Executive Director Burr commented that an attorney would set up the new structure and that the Trust Fund dollars would only be used to set up the fund legally and no further monies would be added from the Trust Fund. Commissioner Howell requested the total amount of dollars in the Trust Fund at the time of the meeting, to which Executive Director Burr replied “just South of \$1.2 million”. With no further discussion, the proposed motion was re-stated before Commissioner Owen Andrews moved that the motion be approved, followed by Commissioner Channing Jones, who seconded the motion. The motion passed.

12) Commission Discussion/Other New Business – Megan Law, Communications Manager, introduced to the Commissioners the idea of

creating a page on the website that highlights the Commissioners. The page would include headshots of all 13 members, along with short bios providing a background on each of their careers and experience relevant to YOEC's mission. She noted that shirts with the organization's new logo would be ordered for each member for them to wear in the headshot and requested that they send her their size preferences.

13) Next Meeting: November 15, 2023 (Raleigh) – Communications Manager Megan Law announced that the next meeting would take place in person at the Wildlife Resources Commission Headquarters in Raleigh, NC on November 15th, 2023 at 9:30 am. She requested that any attendance conflicts be sent to her ahead of time.

14) Closing Remarks – Chairman Murphy thanked the team for their hard work and noted that he was proud of all that had been accomplished in the past year. This compliment to staff was echoed by several Commissioners.

15) Adjourn – Chairman Dell Murphy adjourned the Commission meeting at 11:15 am.

EXHIBIT B

YOEC

FY 23-24 Budget

Trailblazers Clubs

50 new clubs (10,000 each)

\$500,000

Inaugural Clubs (\$5,000 each)

\$170,000

Trailblazer shirts/hats/other materials/shipping

\$25,000

Year-End Training Conference w/ Advisors

\$30,000

GO Grants

New Grants

\$2,700,000

Patches

2023 Patches Reorder

\$10,000

2024 Patches

\$15,000

Other

Promotional Items/Ads*

\$50,000

TOTAL

\$3,500,000

*Ads and promotional items will be used to promote our GO Grants and Patch Program.

EXHIBIT C

2024 Commission Meeting Schedule

Thursday, February 8, 2024
Council Meeting and Retreat – Wallace, North Carolina

Wednesday, May 22, 2024
Council Meeting – Raleigh, North Carolina

Thursday, August 1, 2024
Council Meeting – Virtual

Thursday, November 14, 2024
Council Meeting – Raleigh, North Carolina