

MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING

Arizona Game and Fish Commission Appointment
Recommendation Board
5000 West Carefree Highway
Phoenix, AZ 85086

PRESENT: (Board Members)

Richard Williams, Chair
Johnny Basha
Michael Cravens
Jared Lyman
Nathan Rees

Wednesday October 23, 2025

(Directors Staff)

Linda Pollock, Assistant Attorney General
Madeline Gaffney, Board Secretary

Chairman Williams called the meeting to order at **9:00** a.m. This meeting followed an agenda dated October 23, 2025

1. Welcome and Introductions from the Arizona Game and Fish Commission Appointment Recommendation Board

The Chair welcomed the general public, Board members and staff present.

The Chair introduced members and staff; Johnny Basha from Tempe, representing Mission to Increase, Sustain, and Conserve Wild Turkey, Deer, Elk, Pronghorn, Bighorn Sheep, Ducks, Quail, and Fish, Jared Lyman from Tonto Basin, representing Cattlemen and Ranchers, Nathan Rees from Tempe, representing Sportsmen's Organization confined to a specific area or region, Michael Cravens from Parks, representing the general public, and Richard Williams from Scottsdale, representing Wildlife Conservation and Sportsmen Organizations.

2. Overview of the Role and Conduct of Boards and Commissions under Arizona Law

Presenter: Linda Pollock, Assistant Attorney General

Assistant Attorney General, Linda Pollock, summarized the rules to be adhered to in these proceedings:

(1) Arizona Open Meeting Law - The open meeting law is the most important, as the consequences for violating this law are severe. All discussions, deliberations, and votes must be in the presence of the public in public session. The legislature has defined a public meeting as "the gathering in person or through technological devices like cell phones, or computers of a quorum of the Board (which is three of you) at which you discuss, propose, or take legal action." Board members cannot splinter the quorum, which means one Board member communicates with a second Board member, who communicates to a third Board member. It is recommended to avoid communicating via email, text, or other electronic methods regarding the applicants. If these communications do occur, it is recommended that the Board members share these communications with the Board Secretary, Madeline Gaffney, to be distributed to all five members.

(2) Public Records Act - As a Board member, any notes taken and voting tally sheets from the interview meeting are public record. At the conclusion of the second meeting, it is requested that Board members give any notes taken to the Board secretary.

(3) Conflict of Interest Law - The conflict of interest law applies only if a Board member has a financial or proprietary tie to any candidate. Board members should state their knowledge of a particular candidate and at this time, should recuse themselves if there is a financial or proprietary tie. If the Board member has no such tie to a candidate, he/she should state on the record that there is no pecuniary or financial interest in the selection of the candidate and the association will not affect an

objective and impartial analysis of the candidate's qualifications for the position. If a Board member is familiar with a candidate only in a social setting, that is not a conflict of interest.

(4) Qualified Immunity - Board members have qualified immunity for their statements and conduct while serving on the Board. Board members may make comments and exchange viewpoints or opinions regarding an applicant's qualifications, and it is considered protected speech. Board Members could be at risk of losing qualified immunity if false or malicious comments are made, which are known or suspected to be untrue.

Michael Cravens inquired about communications outside of the meetings with candidates. Attorney General Linda Pollock advised not to communicate directly with applicants after today's meeting.

3. **Call to the Public**

The Chair invited any public attendees on the call-in line who wanted to be heard.

There were no attendee or call-in comments from the public.

4. **Discussion and Deliberation of Board Process and Procedures, Including the Process for Evaluating Applicants**

Chairman Williams reviewed the process for evaluating and interviewing applicants by reading the Commission Appointment Recommendation Board (CARB) Standard Operating Procedures document.

Johnny Basha inquired whether it should be mentioned if they know applicants from previous years. Chairman Rich Williams responded yes.

5. **Disclosures and Recusals**

The Chair asked to proceed with disclosures and recusals from each Board member:

Johnny Basha stated he is familiar with Patrick Cooley and Jessica Manuell from previous years' interviews; he has no disclosures or recusals.

Michael Cravens stated he is familiar with Patrick Cooley and Jessica Manuell from previous years' interviews. Jessica Manuell is a neighbor where he lives. He knows Robert Rimsza not personally but through social channels. He has no disclosures or recusals.

Rich Williams stated he is familiar with Patrick Cooley and Jessica Manuell from previous years' interviews. He knows Jessica Manuell through the National Wild Turkey Federation, which they are both members of. He has no disclosures or recusals.

Jared Lyman is not familiar with any of the applicants; he has no disclosures or recusals.

Nathan Rees stated he is familiar with Patrick Cooley and Jessica Manuell from previous years' interviews; he has no disclosures or recusals.

6. **Review and Selection of Applicants for Interview**

The Chair read the list of applicants' names in alphabetical order. The applicants receiving a vote of 'further consideration' are as follows:

Chevrefils, Julie
Cooley, Patrick
Eade, Christine
Herr, Robert (Jeff)
Manuell, Jessica
Mattausch, David
Sargent, Kevin

MOTION: JARED LYMAN moved, and JOHNNY BASHA seconded to INVITE THE SEVEN CANDIDATES WITH TWO OR MORE VOTES TO BE INTERVIEWED.

VOTE: Unanimous

The Chair asked the Board Secretary to notify the candidates and schedule oral interviews for Thursday, November 6, 2025.

7. Future Meeting Schedule and Location

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, November 6, 2025, at 9:00 a.m., with interviews to begin at 9:15 a.m. The meeting will be held at the Arizona Game and Fish Department, Quail Room, 5000 West Carefree Highway, Phoenix, AZ 85086-5000.

8. Future Agenda Items

The Board will be interviewing selected applicants for recommendation to the Arizona Game and Fish Commission.

The Chair asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION: JARED LYMAN moved, and JOHNNY BASHA seconded to ADJOURN THE MEETING.

VOTE: Unanimous

The meeting adjourned at 9:31 a.m.
