Pennsylvania Wildlife Rehabilitation & Education Council
Meeting Minutes
REDACTED

Date: July 15, 2026
Time: 2:00 PM to 3:45 PM
Location: Zoom Meeting

Attendees

- **Sue D.**, Chairperson
- **Leah S.**, Treasurer
- **Peggy H.**, Council Member
- **Alexis F.**, Council Member
- **Dr. Erica M.**, Council Member
- **Sandra A.**, Secretary
- **Katie K.**, Council Member

Absent: Chad E., Law Enforcement, PGC.

Applicant Interviews

- One applicant was interviewed for a general wildlife rehabilitation permit; passed all three examinations. Sponsored by an existing permit holder at an established wildlife center.
- The Council discussed the applicant's professional background, relationship with local PGC staff, and approach to public interactions and self-care.
- The candidate was quiet and reserved but well received; several members recalled seeing the applicant at a previous PAWRC conference.

Applicant Vote

- Chad E. was not present for this meeting; the Chairperson will notify him of the Council's recommendation.

Motion: To recommend the applicant for approval/permitting.
Moved by: Sue D.
Second: Peggy H.
Vote: All in favor. Motion carried.

Call to Order

- Sue D. called the meeting to order following the applicant interview.

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes: May 12, 2026

- Sandra A. previously distributed the full and redacted minutes for the May 12, 2026, meeting.
- Katie K. reviewed the redacted version but abstained, as did Dr. Erica M., because neither was present at the May meeting.

Motion: To approve the May 12, 2026 meeting minutes (full and redacted versions).
Moved by: Sue D.
Second: Leah S.
Abstained: Katie K., Dr. Erica M.
Vote: All in favor. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report

- Leah S. noted a mathematical or typographical error in the previously distributed report, which referenced $53,000 remaining from the original $15,000 lead grant. She will correct and recirculate the report.
- The only change since the May 11, 2026 balance ($40,745.23) is the receipt of the $50,000 PGC Eagle Rehabilitation grant.
- Current balance: approximately $90,745.23.
- Conference reserve: approximately $37,000, designated for the 2027 conference.
- Leah noted the Council needs to better promote the availability of the Eagle Rehabilitation grant funds, since funds must be used within two years of receipt.

Motion: To accept the Treasurer's Report, subject to the correction noted above.
Moved by: Sue D.
Second: Katie K.
Vote: All in favor. Motion carried.

Law Enforcement Updates: PGC

- Chad E. did not attend; no PGC law enforcement update was given at this meeting.

Nonprofit Status: Hiring a Nonprofit Consultant

- Peggy H. contacted the Botstiber Foundation, a longtime donor contact, for a referral. The Foundation connected the Council at no cost with nonprofit attorney Don Kramer, founder of the Pennsylvania Association of Nonprofit Organizations, PANO.
- The attorney assessed that the Council and PAWRC's current structure and activities do not appear to create significant legal exposure, although he offered no formal guarantee. Income is limited to conference sponsorships and

advertisements and PGC grants. The Council does not solicit public donations or issue tax-deductible receipts. Sponsorship funds must continue to be documented as advertising, not donations.

- Members discussed an alternative option to formally separate the Council, which would retain advisory functions, from a distinct PAWRC entity that would handle finances, conferences, and grants. This would require PAWRC to pursue formal 501(c)(3) status and address why it has operated without that status to date.
- A question was raised about whether PGC grant funds would need to be issued directly to a separated PAWRC entity rather than to the Council. Counsel indicated this is workable but would require PGC's agreement.
- Peggy H. noted that she previously compiled relevant historical filings and drafted bylaws approximately four years ago. Those materials could serve as a starting point if the Council pursues formal separation. She offered to lead a 501(c)(3) filing effort in the winter, after the PAWRC website hosting migration.
- Peggy H. and Leah S. both raised the possibility of retiring from the Council in the coming months. Peggy anticipates retiring by the end of 2026, after the next conference. This was noted as a factor in any decision about restructuring and officer succession for PAWRC.
- The Council referenced a prior, unsuccessful attempt (the Animal Rehab Fellowship, or “ARF”) to formally organize Pennsylvania rehabilitators statewide, citing limited engagement among rehabilitators at that time.
- Peggy H. confirmed the Council/PAWRC's required annual non-profit registration was filed and completed in June.
- Action items:
  - No formal motion was made. The Council agreed to table further action on nonprofit restructuring for now and revisit the matter as needed.

$50,000 PGC Eagle Rehabilitation Grant

- Confirmed received and deposited; reflected in the current Treasurer's Report balance above.
- Funds must be used within two years of receipt; Council to continue encouraging eagle rehabilitators to apply for available grant funds.

Best Practices Documentation

- Alexis F. and Sandra A. reported that this item remains tabled due to the busy rehabilitation season. The target is to have a draft ready by the next meeting, which is expected near the end of September 2026.

Conference Planning: 2027

Venue & Dates

- Tabled to the next meeting.

Next Steps

- Alexis F. has obtained two venue quotes with associated budget estimates and will circulate materials to the Council for review ahead of finalizing a venue, theme, and next steps.

PAWRC Website Update

- Peggy H. has personally funded and maintained the PAWRC website for approximately 20 years. She proposed transferring the site to Council ownership.
- Estimated hosting costs are approximately $180 per year for a standard WordPress site. A current promotional rate offers three years for $216. The Council agreed to authorize a hosting budget of up to $300 to accommodate potential pricing changes.
- In recognition of her years of service, Peggy H. requested that certain existing advertisements remain on the site; the Council agreed that existing resource advertisements will be retained.

Motion: To transfer the PAWRC website to a Council-owned and Council-funded GoDaddy/WordPress hosting account, authorize hosting expenditures up to $300, and retain existing advertisements on the site.

Moved by: Sue D.

Second: Katie K.

Abstained: Peggy H.

Vote: All in favor. Motion carried.

Other Business

- Social Media Best Practices: The Council discussed reviving and revising a social media best-practices document that Sandra A. drafted approximately two years ago. Alexis F. will set up a shared document for Council review, comment, and consensus before distribution to the rehabilitator community. Members also discussed establishing an active Council Facebook page to share educational content.
- Council Posture on a Recent Public Incident: The Council discussed a recent, widely publicized incident involving a Pennsylvania rehabilitation facility and unprofessional public conduct. The related legal matter concluded as a minor summary offense. The Council reaffirmed that it is strictly an advisory body to the PGC and has no independent regulatory or enforcement authority. PGC, through Chad E., has asked the Council to allow its review to proceed without Council intervention. Members agreed that the best course is to continue promoting positive best practice education rather than pursue broader regulatory action. They also noted concern that reopening rehabilitation regulations could create more burdensome requirements for compliant rehabilitators. Members were reminded that suspected regulatory violations should be reported directly to PGC.

- Permit and Inspection Follow-Up: Peggy H. raised a concern regarding a previously approved mammal-permit applicant. The applicant's permit was issued with an expiration date that had already passed by the time it was received. The permit covered January 1 through June 30, 2026, but was not received until approximately July 3. The applicant has continued operating in good faith while working with the assigned PGC game warden to resolve the renewal, and reported some difficulty during a related facility inspection, which was ultimately passed with a second warden present. The Council noted that PGC's special permits staff position recently became vacant, which may be contributing to processing delays. The consensus was to escalate the matter directly to Chad E. for prompt resolution. The applicant was also reminded to submit the required report by the end of July.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned by consensus.

Motion: To adjourn.
Moved by: Sue D.
Second: By consensus.
Vote: All in favor. Motion carried.

Next Meeting: September 9, 2026, 2:00 PM (Zoom).

Sandra Acosta
Recording Secretary