

**Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission  
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania**

**MINUTES**

**154<sup>th</sup> Meeting**

**Volume 74**

**HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA**

**May 17, 2023**

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Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission

Agenda

The 154<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission was held on Wednesday, May 17 at the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission headquarters, 1601 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17110 and virtually via Webex.

The public session for review of this agenda began on May 17, 2023, at approximately 8:01 a.m.

**Call to Order**

This meeting was called to order by the Commission President Robert B.J. Small and was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Roll Call**

**Robert B.J. Small, President**  
**William J. Gibney, Vice President**  
**William C. Brock**  
**Charles J. Charlesworth**  
**Eric C. Hussar**  
**Richard Kauffman**  
**Richard Lewis**  
**John E. Mahn, Jr.**  
**Daniel J. Pastore**

**Public Comments to Commissioners and Staff**

The Commission received a total of eight public comments regarding the proposed rulemaking: four comments support the proposal, and four comments oppose the proposal. Copies of all public comments were provided to the Commissioners. No public comments were made in-person at the meeting.

## **EXECUTIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROPOSED RULEMAKING**

### A. Establishing Fees for Fishing Licenses and Permits.

#### Commentary:

Pennsylvania's fishing and boating programs are paid for by anglers and boaters through the User Pays, User Benefits Model, primarily from the sale of fishing licenses, permits, and boat registrations.

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (Commission) has two legislatively authorized Special Funds: The Fish Fund and Boat Fund. These Funds receive money mainly from fishing license and permit fees, boat registration fees, fines and penalties, tax refunds of motorboat fuel, and federal funds.

By far, the largest source of revenue for the Fish Fund is from fishing license and permit fees, and these fees account for more than 67% of Fish Fund revenues.

Commission staff regularly monitors the status and fiscal health of the Fish Fund to ensure that adequate funds are available to maintain and support programs designed to meet the expectations of anglers and other users of Pennsylvania's aquatic resources.

An adjustment to the fees for fishing licenses and permits is needed to cope with inflationary pressures, maintain and improve existing programs, and to address and meet anglers and boaters' desires for:

- Strategic and timely fisheries management to protect, conserve, and enhance the aquatic resources of Pennsylvania.
- Critical infrastructure improvements and maintenance efforts for state fish hatcheries, hazardous dams, boat launch access areas and ramps, and other Commission-owned facilities to improve and maintain fishing opportunities.
- Upgrades and replacement of equipment, vehicles, and watercraft for customer and employee safety and for sustained service delivery.
- Aquatic resource field and classroom education and angler information programs.
- Conservation law enforcement.
- Maintain operations and offset inflationary costs.

If new revenues are not in place for the 2024 license year, the Commission will not be able to maintain adequate levels of services to Pennsylvania's anglers, let alone respond to angler desires for expanded efforts in many program areas.

To maintain adequate funding to sustain these important programs and invest in the future, the Commission is seeking a modest fee increase for all fishing license and permit categories as shown in the following table:

License Category	Fee		
	Current	Change	Proposed
Resident Annual	\$ 23.50	\$ 2.50	\$ 26.00
Non-resident Annual	\$ 55.00	\$ 4.00	\$ 59.00
Senior Resident Annual	\$ 11.25	\$ 1.25	\$ 12.50
Senior Resident Lifetime	\$ 75.00	\$ 10.00	\$ 85.00
3-Day Tourist	\$ 27.50	\$ 2.50	\$ 30.00
7-Day Tourist	\$ 35.00	\$ 2.50	\$ 37.50
1-Day Resident	\$ 11.25	\$ 1.25	\$ 12.50
1-Day Tourist	\$ 27.50	\$ 2.50	\$ 30.00
Trout Permit	\$ 10.50	\$ 2.50	\$ 13.00
Trout/Lake Erie Permit	\$ 16.50	\$ 2.50	\$ 19.00

If approved, the license and fee permit package as described is estimated to provide the Fish Fund with additional, annual revenues of roughly \$2.4 to \$2.9 million and will help sustain the Fish Fund. The Commission has the authority to modify these fees pursuant to Section 322.1 (relating to power to set fees) of the Fish and Boat Code, 30 Pa.C.S. § 322.1.

Staff propose that 58 Pa. Code Chapter 63 be amended as follows:

**§ 63.57. License, Permit, and Issuing Agent Fees.**

**(a) License fees.--The following fees apply to fishing licenses issued under this chapter and shall be paid into the Fish Fund:**

- (1) Resident Annual Fishing License, \$26.00.**
- (2) Senior Resident Annual Fishing License, \$12.50.**
- (3) Senior Resident Lifetime Fishing License, \$85.00**
- (4) Nonresident Annual Fishing License, \$59.00.**
- (5) Seven-Day Tourist Fishing License, \$37.50.**
- (6) Three-Day Tourist Fishing License, \$30.00.**
- (7) One-Day Resident Fishing License, \$12.50.**
- (8) One-Day Tourist Fishing License, \$30.00.**

**(b) Permit fees.—The following fees apply to permits issued under this chapter and shall be paid into the Fish Fund:**

- (1) Trout permits, \$13.00.**
- (2) Combination trout permit and Lake Erie permit, \$19.00.**

(c) *Effective date.* The fees imposed under subsections (a) and (b) are effective beginning December [31, 2022] **1, 2023.**

A notice of proposed rulemaking was published at 53 Pa.B. 2048 (April 15, 2023) (Exhibit A). In accordance with Act 56 of 2020, a public hearing was held on April 24, 2023.

The Commission received a total of eight public comments regarding the proposed rulemaking: four comments support the proposal and four comments oppose the proposal. Copies of all public comments were provided to the Commissioners.

Briefer:

Tim Schaeffer, Executive Director

Recommendation:

Staff recommend the Commission adopt the amendments as described in the agenda. If adopted by the Commission and approved in accordance with Act 56 of 2020, these amendments will go into effect on December 1, 2023.

Action:

A motion was made by Commissioner Lewis and seconded by Commissioner Hussar to adopt the amendments as described in the Commentary above. If approved in accordance with Act 56 of 2020, these amendments will go into effect on December 1, 2023. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

## **Other New Business**

### **Time and Place of July 2023 Commission Meeting**

Announcement of the July 24, 2023 quarterly Commission Meeting in Harrisburg, PA at 10:00 a.m.

### **Adjournment**

A motion was made by Commissioner Lewis and seconded by Commissioner Gibney to adjourn the meeting at 8:16 a.m. Motion carried by unanimous vote.