



# CITY OF IOWA CITY MEMORANDUM

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DATE: FEBRUARY 14, 2018  
TO: CITY COUNCIL  
FROM: SUSAN DULEK, ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY  
RE: DEER MANAGEMENT HISTORY

The purpose of this Memo is to provide a history of the City's deer management efforts.

## 1996

In discussions with the City, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) recommends that the City form a committee to determine the best methods for the City to manage the deer population.

## 1997

City Council establishes a 13-member committee consisting of 3 City staff members and representatives of the following groups: Project Green, resident living in area heavily populated with deer, resident in area not heavily populated with deer, animal rights, science/biology background (2 persons), Iowa Wildlife Federation, City of Coralville, Coralville resident living in area heavily populated with deer, and Board of Supervisors. The Committee spends 5 months deciding whether to reduce the number of deer and how to do so. The Committee recommends reduction by sharp shooting and trap and kill, but not bow hunting. Council adopts Resolution No. 97-367 establishing the first deer management plan.

## 1998

The City enters into a contract with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to sharp shoot.

## 1999

In January 1999, the USDA begins sharpshooting deer. In February 1999, three out-of-state animal rights organizations, the University of Iowa Animal Rights Coalition, and four Iowa City residents file a federal lawsuit in Washington DC against the USDA alleging a violation of the National Environmental Policy Act. The Court enters a temporary restraining order which terminates the sharpshooting that spring, and the City ends its relationship with the USDA.

## 1999-2000

The City contracts with White Buffalo, Inc. for the first time to sharp shoot during the winter of 1999/2000.

## 2001

City Council formalizes the ad-hoc deer committee into a 9-member Deer Task Force in Resolution No. 01-80, which included a sunset provision for 2004. Members represent the following categories: 2 animal welfare advocates, 1 gardener, 1 hunter, 1 biologist/scientist, 1 non-government conservationist, and 3 at-large.

## 2004

Council extends the sunset provision for the Deer Task Force to March 15, 2007 in Resolution No. 04-225.

### 2005

The Task Force recommends that Council consider bow hunting in addition to sharp shooting. The City Manager and the Police Chief recommend against bow hunting, and Council votes 5-2 against bow hunting.

### 2007

In Resolution No. 07-123, Council extends the sunset provision of the Deer Task Force to March 15, 2008.

### 2008

The Deer Task Force dissolves consistent with the sunset provision, and the Task Force recommends to Council that a standing City board for deer management not be established.

### 2000 to 2009

The City contracts with White Buffalo, Inc. in each of these years. Following each winter, White Buffalo, Inc. issues a summary report to the City, and attached is the last report, 2010 Summary Report of White Buffalo, Inc. Table 2 on page 2 of the report sets forth the number of deer harvested each year.

Except for the last year, the annual cost ranges from approximately \$60,000 to \$95,000. A large expense (approximately \$15,000) is to process all the deer meat at a local locker and store the meat, which is distributed free through the Crisis Center.

During these years, the Deer Committee and then the Deer Task Force recommend to City Council two deer management plans, a long-term plan and an annual plan. The long-term plan requires Council to review it annually and also approve an annual plan. There was not a significant difference between the two plans and in 2008 they were combined into one plan. Council approved the last deer management plan in Resolution No. 09-130. These plans were the basis for the City's request each spring to the Iowa Natural Resources Commission (NRC) to allow sharp shooting the following winter. Although members of the NRC often comment during the meetings that they want the City to allow recreational bow hunting, a majority of the NRC always approves the City's request to shoot. In addition to the recommendation of killing deer, the long term and annual plans call for educating the public and taking steps to minimize deer/vehicle accidents.

### 2010

Because the numbers are at a reasonable population level, the Interim City Manager in a letter to the NRC dated May 10, 2010 does not seek authorization to sharp shoot the following winter.

Enc.

Copy w/enc. to:

Eleanor M. Dilkes, City Attorney

Geoff Fruin, City Manager

Kellie K. Fruehling, City Clerk

Jody Matherly, Police Chief

Bill Campbell, Capt. ICPD

Liz Ford, Animal Services Coordinator