

Minutes
Board of the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
SC Waterfowl Association
9833 Old River Road
Pinewood, SC
November 19, 2015 10:00 am

The regular meeting of the Board of the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources was held at 10:00 am, November 19, 2015, at the SC Waterfowl Association headquarters, Pinewood, SC. Notice of the date, time and place of the meeting was posted and mailed to the news media. Chairman Glenn McFadden presided at the meeting. Board members present included Michael Hutchins, Randy Lowe, Norman Pulliam and Larry Yonce. Board member Cary Chastain and Elizabeth Willis' absences were excused. Director Alvin Taylor and staff members of the Department of Natural Resources were present at the meeting.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Glenn McFadden called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

II. Invocation

Rev. Eric Skidmore, SC Law Enforcement Assistance Program, offered the invocation.

III. Pledge of Allegiance

Larry Yonce led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. Introduction of Guests

Breck Carmichael, Special Assistant to the Director, introduced the following guests: Buford Mabry, SC Waterfowl Association; Marcie Kapsch, US Fish and Wildlife Service; David Wielicki, SC Waterfowl Association; and Jason Johnson, The Conservation Fund.

Mr. Wielicki welcomed the group and gave a brief overview of the SC Waterfowl Association.

V. Constituent Comments

Mr. Carmichael reported that there were no requests for constituent comment.

VI. Approval of Minutes

Chairman McFadden asked if there were any amendments, additions, deletions or corrections to the September 23, 2015, meeting minutes. *Norman Pulliam made a motion that the Board approve the minutes of the September 23, 2015 meeting as submitted. Mike Hutchins seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*

VII. Presentations/Commendations

Director Taylor commended Deputy Director Emily Cope, Charles Ruth and staff who coordinated the seven public meetings held across the state to receive input from hunters concerning DNR supported legislation related to future deer management in SC.

Director Taylor commended the Law Enforcement Officer of the Year: PFC Wes Stewart of Lancaster.

Director Taylor commended Law Enforcement Investigator Tony Spires who was honored by The International Hunter Education Association (IHEA).

Director Taylor commended Emily Cope and staff involved in the Wateree River Heritage Preserve Dedication Ceremony on November 18 at the Cook's Mountain Education Center in Eastover.

Director Taylor commended Caroline Causey, Red-cockaded Woodpecker Project Leader, Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries Division – SCDNR's Red-cockaded Woodpecker Safe Harbor Program was recognized at the Southeastern Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies Annual Meeting for its success.

Director Taylor commended Robert Boyles, Phil Maier and Marine staff involved in the Marine Center Open House event on Saturday, October 24.

Director Taylor commended all staff for their work during the recent flood event.

VIII. Advisory Committee Report(s)

A. Saltwater Recreational Fisheries

Robert Boyles, Deputy Director for Marine Resources, reported that the Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Advisory Committee met October 13 in Charleston. The Advisory Committee received updates on license revenue and reef development.

B. Governor's Cup Billfishing Series

Mr. Boyles reported that the Governor's Cup Billfishing Series met October 29 in Charleston. The Advisory Committee approved the 2016 Series. Mr. Boyles noted that the 2015 Series had the highest amount in sponsorship. The Advisory Committee was advised of two upcoming vacancies.

C. Migratory Waterfowl

Chairman McFadden reported that the Migratory Waterfowl Advisory Committee met November 4 in Columbia. The Advisory Committee was shown a preliminary picture of the upcoming stamp. The Advisory Committee discussed ways of increasing sales.

D. Law Enforcement

Mr. Pulliam reported that the Law Enforcement Advisory Committee met November 9 and 10 in Pinewood. The Advisory Committee received an overview of the SC Waterfowl Association. The Advisory Committee reviewed the reports of the boating safety and deer management public meetings. The Advisory Committee received a report on activities during the recent flood event.

E. Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries

Mr. Hutchins reported that the Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Advisory Committee met November 10 in Columbia. The Advisory Committee received updates on the app and lottery hunts. The Advisory Board was informed that there is \$3-3.5 million worth of damages to DNR properties. The Advisory Committee was given the results of the public dove shoots. The Advisory Committee received reports on restocking of the Carolina Heelsplitter and whirling disease.

IX. Item(s) for Board Information

A. Managing the Blue Crab Fishery

David Whitaker, Assistant Deputy Director for Marine Resources, gave the Board a brief presentation on management needs for the blue crab fishery. Mr. Whitaker noted that the Marine Advisory Committee has received this presentation and has endorsed the recommendations. The presentation reviewed the timeline of legislative actions for the fishery and annual commercial landings since 1966. The recommendations are to seek authority to manage the resource; change licensing; propose dirty float/line violations, specifying a reduced number of points; raise the recreational trap limit to five; establish a recreational limit; and require escape rings on recreational traps.

B. Potential Changes to Cobia Management

Mr. Boyles reviewed the current state and federal regulations regarding cobia. Mr. Boyles noted that issues with SC cobia are that both the SC fishery and SC population have declined. The goals are to rebuild the population and to maintain a sustainable fishery. Mr. Boyles informed the Board of the plan for public meetings. Mr. Boyles reviewed the Marine Advisory Committee recommendations for cobia management needs. Their recommendations are: adopt a catch and release period of cobia in the Southern Sounds for the month of May, and change the bag limit to 1 cobia per person, per day, and 3 cobia per boat per day. This proposed law change will come with a sunset clause of 6 years, in which DNR Staff will continue to monitor the fishery.

C. Climate Update

Hope Mizzell, State Climatologist, provided the Board with a presentation on the recent flood event and reviewed rainfall totals, precipitation percentiles, streamflows, lake levels and ground-water monitoring wells around the state. Dr. Mizzell then provided the Board with an overview of the DNR Flood Mitigation Program and their activities during the flood event.

Director Taylor and the Deputy Directors reported on the flood response and damages from each division.

X. Director's Briefings

Director Taylor informed the Board that staff are planning for an upcoming industry summit on fishing.

XI. Legislative Report

CPT Mike Sabaka provided the draft boating and deer management public meeting reports. CPT Sabaka reported that public meetings regarding hunting with dogs will be held in December.

XII. Executive Session

Mr. Hutchins made a motion for the Board to hold an Executive Session to discuss the proposed acquisition of properties, and Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Advisory Committee appointment. Mr. Lowe seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

XIII. Open Session

Mr. Pulliam made a motion that the Board return to regular session, noting that no actions were taken during Executive Session. Mr. Hutchins seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

XIV. Item(s) for Board Action

A. Five-Year Timber Harvest Plan

Emily Cope, Deputy Director for Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries, briefly reviewed the five-year timber harvest plan as included in the Board meeting packet. Mr. Pulliam made a motion that the Board approve the timber harvest schedule as presented. Mr. Hutchins seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

B. Property Donation at Marsh WMA in Marion County

Bob Perry, Director of Environmental Programs, reviewed the proposal for the property donation at Marsh WMA as included in the Board meeting packet. Mr. Lowe made a motion that the Board approve the acquisition of the King Tract, approximately 100 acres, by donation, an in holding in the Marsh Furniture Wildlife Management Area in Marion County, as presented and pursuant to staff working with the applicant, its agents and the Pee Dee Land Trust to finalize details presented in the mitigation plan as approved by the US Army Corps of Engineers. Mr. Pulliam seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

C. Property Donation at Marine Resources in Charleston County

Ken Prosser, Assistant Deputy Director for Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries, reviewed the proposal for the property donation at the Marine Resources Center in Charleston County. Mr. Yonce made a motion that the Board accept a property donation of approximately 141 acres adjoining the DNR's Marine Resources Center on James Island in Charleston County. Mr. Hutchins seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

D. Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Advisory Committee Appointment

Mr. Hutchins made a motion that the Board appoint Titus Duren, of Richland County, to fill the expired term of John T. Gramling, II, on the Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Advisory Committee. Mr. Pulliam seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

E. Property Acquisition at Lake Wateree in Kershaw County

Mr. Pulliam made a motion that the Board approve the acquisition of approximately 2.06 acres adjoining Lake Wateree in Kershaw County. Mr. Lowe seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

F. Property Acquisition at Wateree River Heritage Preserve in Richland County

Mr. Yonce made a motion that the Board approve the acquisition of approximately 131 acres adjoining the Wateree River Heritage Preserve/WMA in Richland County. Mr. Lowe seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

XV. Environmental Report

Bob Perry introduced Lorianne Riffin. Mr. Perry informed the Board that Duke Energy decided not to build the Foothills Transmission Line over the Blue Ridge Parkway.

XVI. Deputy Directors' Reports

A. Land, Water and Conservation

Ken Rentiers, Deputy Director for Land, Water and Conservation, reiterated the efforts of staff during the recent flood event. Mr. Rentiers gave the Board a brief update on surface water assessment.

B. Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries

Mrs. Cope provided the Board with the results of the mountain bear season and opening day dove for WMAs. Mrs. Cope informed the Board that Derrell Shipes was recently recognized by the SC Chapter of the Wildlife Society.

C. Law Enforcement

Nothing further to report.

D. Marine Resources

Nothing further to report.

E. Outreach and Support Services

Derrick Meggie, Deputy Director for Outreach and Support Services, informed the Board that the licensing section is scheduled to move to the Farmer's Market on December 1 and will be open to the public after January 1.

XVII. Time and Location of the Next Meeting

The January meeting of the Board will be held Wednesday, January 6, 2016 in Columbia.

XVIII. Adjournment

There being no further business to be brought before the DNR Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned.