

Minutes  
Board of the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources  
Videoconference Meeting  
June 25, 2020 10:00 AM

The regular meeting of the Board of the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources was held by videoconference at 10:00 am, June 25, 2020. Notice of the date, time and place of the meeting was posted and mailed to the news media. Chairman Norman Pulliam presided at the meeting. Board members present included Mark Hartley, Keith Hinson, Mike Hutchins, Carlisle Oxner, Jake Rasor, Jr. and Duane Swygert. Director Boyles and staff members of the Department of Natural Resources were present at the meeting.

**I. Call to Order**

Chairman Norman Pulliam called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**II. Chairman's Comments**

Chairman Pulliam, again, thanked staff for continuing to keep the agency moving forward. Chairman Pulliam stated that he is hopeful that the next meeting can be held in person. Chairman Pulliam discussed the Comprehensive Permanent Improvement Plan, that was recently sent to Board members, and noted that he wanted full Board input before signing such a document. Chairman Pulliam has also asked staff to adjust their deadlines for submitting documents to allow the Board to review and give input. *Mr. Oxner made a motion that the Board give Chairman Pulliam the authority to sign the Comprehensive Permanent Improvement Plan, after any further input from Board members. Mr. Swygert seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*

**III. Approval of Minutes**

Chairman Pulliam asked if there were any additions, deletions or corrections to the May 28, 2020 meeting minutes. *Mr. Oxner made a motion that the Board approve the minutes of the May 28, 2020 meeting as presented. Mr. Hutchins seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*

**IV. Advisory Committee Report**

**Law Enforcement**

COL Chisolm Frampton, Deputy Director for Law Enforcement, reported that the Law Enforcement Advisory Committee held a virtual meeting on June 16. The Advisory Committee received updates on COVID response, civil unrest activities and turkey season.

**V. Items for Board Information**

**A. Pee Dee River Basin Flooding Concerns**

Ken Rentiers, Deputy Director for Land, Water and Conservation, gave a brief presentation on the Pee Dee River Basin and the flooding concerns. Mr. Rentiers' presentation included a basin overview, drainage areas, general high inflow event reservoir operations, historic annual rainfall in the basin, streamflow levels for January – June 2020 in the Basin, the Great Pee Dee/Waccamaw/ICS Interaction, and also reviewed the environmental and aquatic habitat protections included in Settlement Agreement and Federal Energy Regulatory Commission license articles.

B. Climate Update

Mark Malsick, Land, Water and Conservation Division, reported on the tropical storm season, thus far. Mr. Malsick also covered the 90-day outlook.

VI. Item(s) for Board Action

A. Contribution to Ducks Unlimited Canada

Emily Cope, Deputy Director for Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries, reviewed the Proposed Contribution to Ducks Unlimited Canada – FY 2020, as included in the meeting packet. *Dr. Hartley made a motion that the Board approve the \$13,787.00 requested contribution to Ducks Unlimited Canada as required by S.C. Code Section 50-9-920(B). Mr. Razor seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*

B. Use of Wildlife Endowment Fund

Scott Speares, Assistant Deputy Director for Support Services, reviewed the request for Use of Wildlife Endowment Fund, as included in the meeting packet. The purpose of this request is to fund personal services (i.e. – salaries and wages), employer contributions (i.e. – health insurance, taxes, etc.) and other operating expenditures of the Hunting and Fishing License Section and other operating expenditures of the Marine Resources Operations Office. *Mr. Hutchins made a motion that the Board approve the Use of Wildlife Endowment Fund, in an amount not to exceed \$315,000.00, as presented by staff and included in the meeting packet.*

C. Haile Gold Mine Mitigation Trust Fund Budget

Billy Dukes, Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division, reviewed the request for expenditure from the Haile Gold Mine Mitigation Trust Fund, as included in the meeting packet. The funds are needed for staff, supplies and equipment in order to provide safe, controlled public access and accomplish necessary enhancements to facilities and habitat, as well as to continue assessment and preparation for required restoration activities. Actions covered under this work plan include, but are not limited to: road and facilities maintenance, habitat restoration and enhancement, wildlife research and monitoring, status surveys and archeological surveys. *Mr. Razor made a motion that the Board approve the expenditure of \$350,000 from the Mitigation Trust Fund of South Carolina, Haile Gold Mine Mitigation Maintenance and Management Endowment for management and archeological surveys of the Rainbow Ranch, Cooks Mountain, and Goodwill Plantation Tracts, as requested by staff.*

D. Georgetown Office – Transfer of Easement to Georgetown County Water and Sewer District

Van Whitehead, Assistant General Counsel, reviewed the proposed easement, as included in the meeting packet. *Mr. Hutchins made a motion that the Board, upon recommendation of and as presented by the Department's staff, grant the 50-year 15' sewer easement across the Department's property at 1601 North Fraser Street to Georgetown County Water and Sewer District subject to payment of appraised value and obtaining approval from the Department of Administration and State Fiscal Accountability Authority.*

## **VII. Director's Briefing**

Director Boyles commended 2019 Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division and overall DNR Employee of the Year – Willie Simmons. Director Boyles also commended the Division Employees of the Year: Executive Office - Kevin Ryan, Land, Water and Conservation - Katie Luciano, Law Enforcement - Helen Cofield; Marine Resources - Tanya Darden, and Office of Support Services - Bonnie Greenwood.

Director Boyles commended Dr. Bill Clendenin, State Geologist, on his pending retirement on June 30th.

Director Boyles commended Julie Jarrett of OSS for her and her staff's continued excellent work under COVID-19 conditions and continuing to issue titles and licenses as needed.

Director Boyles commended Brian Long of LWC-Heritage Trust who was commended by Carole Jackson, Charleston County Council member, for his quick and efficient help when she requested assistance after the Fort Lamar site was vandalized with graffiti.

Director Boyles commended Emily Cope and Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries staff for their work in preparation of the SC Fieldwork Guidelines for work during COVID-19 for the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies (AFWA).

Director Boyles commended Amy Dukes of the Marine Resources Division on her selection to participate as a Fellow in Cohort 15 of the National Conservation Leadership Institute (NCLI).

Director Boyles commended Law Enforcement K9 Officer Blue for his service. K9 Officer Blue, a Labrador retriever who joined the agency in 2017, passed away during a training exercise and a memorial service was held for him on June 8.

Director Boyles commended Alix Pedraza and staff of the Office of Media and Outreach on DNR's Diversity Outreach Program's selection by The Wildlife Society to receive their Diversity Award for 2020. This award recognizes an individual or organization for outstanding efforts in promoting ethnic and gender diversity in the natural resource professions, especially wildlife conservation and education.

## **VIII. Legislative Report**

Kevin Ryan, Director of Government Affairs, reported that the House and Senate will be taking up CARES Act Funding. The General Assembly will return on September 16 to take up the budget.

## **IX. Deputy Directors' Reports**

### **A. Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries**

Ms. Cope reported that there will not be an in person Youth Bass Fishing Tournament, but possibly a virtual tournament will be held this fall. Ms. Cope reported on public hunts and noted that Webb Center will be holding modified hunts

and will not be hosting overnight hunters at the lodge. All other other hunts will be held.

B. Law Enforcement

COL Frampton reported on COVID response and civil unrest activities.

C. Marine Resources

Phil Maier, Deputy Director for Marine Resources, informed the Board of MRD's CARES funding application. Mr. Maier reported that Dr. Byron Bailey and Mr. Coker Day will be departing the Marine Advisory Committee.

D. Support Services

Mr. Speares informed the Board that 50% +/- of Support Services personnel are telecommuting. Mr. Speares reported that the customer service section has been averaging 623 calls per day and 407 pieces of mail per day. In person transactions will resume once Phase II is in place.

E. Land, Water and Conservation

Mr. Rentiers also commended Bill Clendenin on his upcoming retirement. Mr. Rentiers reported a well for saltwater monitoring will be installed at Donnelley.

X. Time and Location of Next Board Meeting

The next meeting will be held on August 20, 2020.

XI. Adjournment

*Mr. Rasor made a motion that the meeting be adjourned. Mr. Oxner seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*