

Minutes
Board of the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
Rembert C. Dennis Building, RM 335
1000 Assembly Street
Columbia, SC
May 20, 2021 10:00 AM

The regular meeting of the Board of the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources was held at 10:00 a.m., May 20, 2021. 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 Mike Hutchins, Jerry Lee, Carlisle Oxner, Jake Rasor, Jr. and Duane Swygert. Board member Mark Hartley's absence was excused. 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. Invocation

Chaplain Eric Skidmore, SC Law Enforcement Assistance Program (SC LEAP), offered the invocation.

III. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Hutchins led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. Chairman's Comments

Chairman Pulliam welcomed and thanked Board members for being present. Chairman Pulliam expressed his appreciation to Director Boyles and staff for keeping business going during this difficult time.

V. Introduction of Guests

Phil Maier, Deputy Director for Marine Resources, introduced Scott Whitaker, Coastal Conservation Association; Tiara Pitts, SC Realtors Association; and Mike McShane, Nemours Foundation.

VI. Constituent Comments

Mr. Maier noted that there were no requests for constituent comment.

VII. Approval of Minutes

Chairman Pulliam asked if there were any additions, deletions or corrections to the March 18, 2021 meeting minutes. *Mr. Hutchins made a motion that the Board approve the minutes of the March 18, 2021 meeting and April 22, 2021 workshop be approved as presented. Mr. Oxner seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*

VIII. Presentations/Commendations

A. Director Boyles commended Angie Cassella, Scott Speares, Julie Jarrett, Ashley Ellis and staff of the Division of Administration for their efforts in opening the SCDNR Boat Titling and License Sales Office in Horry County in the town of Aynor, including coordinating the Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony at the office on April 5, 2021.

- B. Director Boyles commended the 2020 Division Employees of the Year: Administration: Julie Jarrett; Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries: Joe Lemeris; Land, Water and Conservation: Melissa Griffin; Executive: Mary E.A. Lucas; Marine Resources: Olivia Bueno, and Law Enforcement: Stacey Taylor. The overall 2020 Employee of the Year was Julie Jarrett.
- C. Director Boyles commended Maria Cox Lamm of Land, Water and Conservation on her selection as FEMA's 2020 NFIP State Coordinator of the Year which is based on peer nominations for contributions to floodplain management and flood loss reduction measures in our state.
- D. Director Boyles commended Tyler Brown of Land, Water and Conservation and Kevin Ryan of the Executive Office for their efforts in coordinating Governor Henry McMaster's Proclamation proclaiming April 25-May 2, 2021 as Soil and Water Stewardship Week.
- E. Director Boyles commended Valerie Shannon of the Office of Media and Outreach for her efforts in promoting Earth Day and Earth Month in April and SCDNR's Earth Month Competition encouraging us to be mindful about our environment and the impact we make and encouraging us to participate in any kind of zero waste, sustainable, eco-friendly practices.
- F. Director Boyles commended Charles Ruth and Jay Cantrell of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries, and Mark Litz and Stephen Robinson of Information Technology for their work on the Turkey Harvest Reporting Program and SC Game Check.
- G. Director Boyles commended Law Enforcement Region 2 Captain Matt McCaskill and his officers who received a letter from Sheriff James Hudson, Jr., Darlington County Sheriff, thanking them for their assistance at the Darlington Raceway. Sheriff Hudson said, "All of your officers that participated with race weekend conducted themselves in a professional manner and provided us with much needed support."
- H. Director Boyles commended Law Enforcement Staff Sergeant Raquel Salter who while on deployment with the U.S. Coast Guard served as an Executive Assistant to the Chief of the COVID-19 Response in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response to the Joint Coordination Cell who are tasked with coordinating the National COVID-19 strategy among various governmental agencies such as the White House, the Vaccine Program, the Department of Defense, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Department of Homeland Security, and HHS. Director Boyles received a letter from Vice Admiral D.B. Abel, U.S. Coast Guard, thanking him for his support of Lieutenant Commander Raquel Salter, U.S. Coast Guard Reserve, and commitment to those who volunteer to serve in uniform and confront the COVID-19 pandemic.
- I. Director Boyles commended Law Enforcement Region 1 Captain D.J. Riley and Lt. Amy Staton on their efforts to meet with and answer questions from the Friends of Lake Keowee during their Virtual Town Hall Meeting with 120 participants in attendance from the Keowee Key Community.

- J. Director Boyles commended the Law Enforcement Dive Team for their commitment and dedication in recent search and recovery operations on the Lumber River in Horry County, on the Savannah River in Hampton County, and on the Intracoastal Waterway near North Myrtle Beach in Horry County and all they do every day.

IX. Advisory Committee Reports

A. Marine

Mr. Swygert reported that the Marine Advisory Committee met virtually on March 26, 2021. The Advisory Committee received presentations on Marine Resources Division's Coastal Managed Lands, Shorebirds and Seabirds on DNR's managed lands and Multi-Jurisdictional Marine Fisheries Management in South Carolina.

B. Law Enforcement

COL Chisolm Frampton, Deputy Director for Law Enforcement, reported that the Law Enforcement Advisory Committee met at the SC Waterfowl Association in Rimini on April 6, 2021. The Advisory Committee toured the facility and received updates on budget and legislation. The Advisory Committee also reviewed new Law Enforcement initiatives.

C. Heritage Trust

Ken Rentiers, Deputy Director for Land, Water and Conservation, reported that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board met at Parker Annex on May 13, 2021. The Advisory Board received a report on current management challenges at Bald Rock Heritage Preserve and updates on Crab Bank and Lewis Ocean Bay. The Advisory Board approved several property items that will be brought before the Board later in the meeting.

D. Land, Water and Conservation

Ken Rentiers reported that the Land, Water and Conservation Advisory Committee met at Harbison State Forest on May 18, 2021. The Advisory Committee received Division Program Reports and approved Conservation District Commissioner appointments and reappointments.

E. Saltwater Recreational Fisheries

Mr. Lee reported that the Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Advisory Committee met virtually on May 18, 2021. The Advisory Committee reviewed program proposals for FY 2022 and received reports on oyster shell collection sites and license fees.

X. Items for Board Information

Climate Update

Hope Mizzell, Land, Water and Conservation Division, reviewed the forecast for the upcoming hurricane season. Dr. Mizzell provided rainfall totals, precipitation percentiles, streamflow, lake levels, groundwater monitoring wells around the state, precipitation forecast and temperature forecast.

XI. Director's Briefings

Director Boyles reviewed the status of the budget.

XII. Legislative Report

Kevin Ryan, Director of Government Affairs, reported that conference committees have not yet met and the General Assembly will return on June 8, 2021 to take up the budget.

XIII. Environmental Report

Lorianne Riggan, Director, Office of Environmental Programs, gave the Board an update on Crab Bank restoration, Horry County Rezoning (Lewis Ocean Bay) and Haile Gold Mine Expansion.

XIV. Deputy Directors' Reports

A. Law Enforcement

COL Frampton provided a brief update on the new class of officers.

B. Marine Resources

No further report.

C. Administration

No further report.

D. Land, Water and Conservation

No further report.

E. Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries

Emily Cope, Deputy Director for Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries, distributed the Tom Yawkey Wildlife Center Project Report. Mrs. Cope reviewed the results of the Youth Bass Fishing Championship. Mrs. Cope reviewed the 2021 turkey season.

XV. Item(s) for Board Action

A. Approval of Governor's Cup Billfishing Series 2020 Annual Report

Mr. Oxner made a motion that upon the recommendation of DNR Staff and approval by the Governor's Cup Billfishing Series Advisory Board, I move that the DNR Board approve the Governor's Cup Billfishing Series 2020 Annual Report, as presented. Mr. Swygert seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

B. Approval of Comprehensive Permanent Improvement Plan

Mr. Hutchins made a motion that upon the recommendation of DNR Staff, I move that the DNR Board approve the Comprehensive Permanent Improvement Plan, as presented. Mr. Razor seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

C. Amended Contract for Sale of Waterline Easement at Lewis Ocean Bay Heritage Preserve

Mr. Razor made a motion that upon the recommendation of DNR Staff and approval by the Heritage Trust Advisory Board, I move that the DNR Board approve the proposed amended Contract for Sale of Waterline Easement with Grand Strand Water and Sewer Authority at Lewis Ocean Bay Heritage Preserve. Mr. Oxner seconded the motion and the motion carried.

D. Use of Wildlife Endowment Fund

Mr. Rasor made a motion that upon the recommendation of DNR Staff, I move that the DNR Board approve the Use of Wildlife Endowment Fund, not to exceed \$315,000.00, to fund personal services, employer contributions and other operating expenditures of the Hunting and Fishing License Section and other operating expenditures of the Marine Resources Operations Office, as presented. Mr. Swygert seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

E. Property Acquisition in Lancaster County

Mr. Rasor made a motion that the DNR Board approve the acquisition, by donation from Haile Gold Mine, of the Flat Creek Corridor Properties, a 2,759.38-acre compensatory mitigation package in Lancaster County to be dedicated as a Heritage Preserve and placed into the Corpus of the Heritage Trust Program as a part of the Forty Acre Rock Heritage Preserve, as recommended by the Heritage Trust Advisory Board, conditional upon the successful completion of all due diligence and approval by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and authorize expenditure of up to \$20,000 in Heritage Trust Funds to conduct due diligence if needed. Mr. Oxner seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

XVI. Executive Session

Mr. Hutchins made a motion that the DNR Board go into executive session pursuant to SC Code Section 30-4-70(A)(2) to discuss contractual matters and legal advice related to Items for Board Action F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N and O. Mr. Rasor seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

XVII. Open Session

Mr. Hutchins made a motion that the DNR Board return to open session, noting that no action was taken during executive session. Mr. Rasor seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

XVIII. Item(s) for Board Action

F. Property Acquisition in Lancaster County

Mr. Hutchins made a motion that upon the recommendation of DNR Staff, I move that the DNR Board approve the acquisition, by donation from Duke Energy, of the 801.79-acre tract in Lancaster County to be incorporated into the Wildlife Management Area Program with 545 acres associated with the Heritage Tracts and 250 acres associated with Liberty Hill, conditional upon the successful completion of all due diligence. Mr. Oxner seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

G. CCEHBR Outbuilding Ground Lease

Mr. Oxner made a motion that, upon the recommendation of the SCDNR Staff, the SCDNR Board approve the proposed 10-year ground lease of 0.42 acres at Fort Johnson to NOAA for \$7,775 per year as presented. Mr. Hutchins seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

H. Potential Property Acquisition in Edgefield County

Mr. Rasor made a motion that the DNR Board accept the recommendation as approved by the Heritage Trust Advisory Board to investigate a potential property

acquisition of approximately 86 acres adjoining Horse Creek Heritage Preserve that would be dedicated as a Heritage Preserve and placed into the corpus of the SC Heritage Trust and the expenditure of up to \$20,000 of Heritage Trust funds for associated due diligence activities. Mr. Hutchins seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

I. Potential Property Acquisition in Beaufort County

Mr. Swygert made a motion that the DNR Board accept the recommendation as approved by the Heritage Trust Advisory Board to investigate a potential property acquisition of approximately 126 acres on Coosaw Island in Beaufort County that would be dedicated as a Heritage Preserve and placed into the corpus of the SC Heritage Trust and the expenditure of up to \$20,000 of Heritage Trust funds for associated due diligence activities. Mr. Oxner seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

J. Ft. Frederick Heritage Preserve – New License for Beaufort County and Town of Port Royal

Mr. Oxner made a motion that the DNR Board accept the recommendation as approved by the Heritage Trust Advisory Board to terminate the August 28, 2019 Lease and Management Agreement, terminate the June 25, 2019 License Agreement, and accept a new Beaufort County and Town of Port Royal License Agreement. Mr. Razor seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

K. Property Acquisition in Greenville County

Mr. Razor made a motion that the DNR Board accept the recommendation as approved by the Heritage Trust Advisory Board, subject to standard due diligence, and grant final approval of the acquisition of approximately 17 acres east of Bunched Arrowhead Heritage Preserve in Greenville County that would be dedicated as a Heritage Preserve and placed into the corpus of the SC Heritage Trust, and the expenditure of up to \$70,000 in Heritage Trust funds. Mr. Lee seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

L. Property Acquisition in Colleton County

Mr. Hutchins made a motion that the DNR Board, upon the recommendation of SCDNR staff and subject to standard due diligence, grant final approval of the acquisition of approximately 237 acres in Colleton County known as a portion of South Hutchinson Island in Colleton County. Mr. Oxner seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

M. Potential Property Acquisition in Horry County Adjoining Waccamaw River Heritage Preserve

Mr. Swygert made a motion that the DNR Board accept the recommendation as approved by the Heritage Trust Advisory Board and grant preliminary approval to investigate the potential purchase of approximately 394 acres adjoining Waccamaw River Heritage Preserve/WMA in Horry County that would be dedicated as a Heritage Preserve and placed into the corpus of the SC Heritage Trust, and the expenditure of up to \$20,000 in Heritage Trust funds to conduct due diligence

activities. Mr. Hutchins seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

N. Potential Property Acquisition in Jasper County

Mr. Swygert made a motion that the DNR Board accept the recommendation as approved by the Heritage Trust Advisory Board and grant preliminary approval to investigate the potential purchase of approximately 121 acres adjoining Tillman Heritage Preserve/WMA in Jasper County that would be dedicated as a Heritage Preserve and placed into the corpus of the SC Heritage Trust, and the expenditure of up to \$20,000 in Heritage Trust funds to conduct due diligence activities. Mr. Rasor seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

O. Potential Property Acquisition in Charleston County

Mr. Oxner made a motion that the DNR Board, upon recommendation of the DNR staff and subject to available funds from the General Assembly, investigate a potential property acquisition of approximately 23 acres adjoining Ft. Johnson. Mr. Rasor seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

XIX. Time and Location of Next Board Meeting

The Board's next meeting is scheduled for June 17, 2021 in Columbia.

XX. Adjournment

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