

Minutes
Board of the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
Teleconference Meeting
May 28, 2020 10:00 AM

The regular meeting of the Board of the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources was held by teleconference at 10:00 am, May 28, 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 commented on the happenings over the past three months with respect to COVID-19 and weather events. Chairman Pulliam thanked staff for continuing to keep the agency moving forward.

III. Approval of Minutes

Chairman Pulliam asked if there were any additions, deletions or corrections to the April 16, 2020 meeting minutes. *Mr. Oxner made a motion that the Board approve the minutes of the April 16, 2020 meeting as presented. Mr. Hinson seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*

IV. Director's Briefings

Director Boyles commended CPT D.J. Riley on his graduation from the FBI Academy on March 13.

Director Boyles commended Deputy Directors, LT Ben Thomas and staff for their ongoing work in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Director Boyles commended Charles Ruth on being honored by The Deer Committee of the Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society with the 2020 Deer Management Career Achievement Award.

Director Boyles commended Hope Mizzell, Maria Cox Lamm and LWC Flood Mitigation staff on the SC Flood Mitigation Program being recognized as one of nine Advanced States in the Country by FEMA.

Director Boyles commended LT Rusty Monnet, SGT Thomas Spann, SGT Freddie Earhart, FSGT Brian Crawford, Officer Hunter Ellis, LCPL Bill Bense, PFC Courtney Angotti-Smith, and Officer Savanna Taylor who were recognized in a letter from Berkeley County Sheriff Duane Lewis for their hard work in the aftermath of the tornado that touched down in Berkeley County on April 13.

Director Boyles announced the 2020 Division Employees of the Year: Executive Office - Kevin Ryan; Land, Water and Conservation - Katie Luciano; Law Enforcement - Helen Cofield; Marine Resources - Tanya Darden; Office of Support Services - Bonnie

Greenwood; and Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries: Willie Simmons. The 2020 Department Employee of the Year will be announced at a later date.

Shannon Bobertz, General Counsel, and Eva Smith, Director of Human Resources, briefed the Board on Plans for Re-Entry for state agencies.

V. Advisory Committee Reports

A. Heritage Trust

Mr. Razor reported that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board met May 14, via teleconference. The Advisory Board received an update on Grassy Mountain Heritage Preserve. The Advisory Board approved several property acquisitions which will come before the Board later in the meeting.

B. Saltwater Recreational Fisheries

Mr. Hinson reported that the Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Advisory Committee met May 19, via videoconference. The Advisory Committee approved the FY 2020-2021 Saltwater Recreational Fisheries License Program budget as presented by staff. There was a motion made and passed to encourage the DNR Board to try to raise non-resident license fees.

VI. Items for Board Information

A. Climate Update

Hope Mizzell, Land, Water and Conservation Division, reported on Tropical Storm Bertha, the 2020 Hurricane Season Outlook, and the recent tornado outbreaks. Dr. Mizzell also covered the 30-day observed rainfall, streamflow, the 7-day precipitation forecast, and the 6-10 day temperature outlook.

B. WMA Category 1 Waterfowl Hunter Survey Results

Will Dillman, Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries, reviewed the results of the 2019-2020 Category 1 Waterfowl Hunter Survey, as included in the meeting packet. The summary for the survey are: ratings and comments were extremely positive; the application process is easy; information provided to participants is appropriate and delivered by professional staff; participants value these opportunities; and participants are highly satisfied and will continue to participate. The negative comments and ratings were spread across sites. They represented local daily conditions, individual experience, not deficiencies; wait times – balance opportunity and maintain quality; and preference points and duplicate customer IDs.

VII. Item(s) for Board Action

A. Policies Update

Ms. Smith briefly reviewed and answered questions regarding the proposed policies update, as included in the meeting packet. *Mr. Hutchins made a motion that the Board approve updated policies 700.07, 700.10, 701.01, 701.05, 702.02, 703.04, 704.05, 705.06, 706.01, 706.02 and 706.03 as recommended by staff. Mr. Swygert seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*

B. Expenditures from the Broad River Mitigation Trust Fund

Lorianne Riffin, Director of the Office of Environmental Programs, reviewed the proposed expenditures from the Broad River Mitigation Trust Fund, as included in

the meeting packet. *Mr. Oxner made a motion that the Board approve the expenditure of \$85,000 from the Broad River Mitigation Trust Fund for fisheries habitat enhancement activities as proposed on Cane Creek by the U.S. Forest Service, as presented. Mr. Swygert seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*

VIII. Executive Session

Mr. Hutchins made a motion that the Board go into executive session pursuant to SC Code Section 30-4-70(A)(2) to discuss contractual matters related to Items for Board Action (C, D, E and F). Dr. Hartley seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

IX. Open Session

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

X. Legislative Report

Kevin Ryan, Director of Government Affairs, reported that the General Assembly passed a Continuing Resolution and a *Sine Die* resolution. The General Assembly will return in September to pass an Appropriations Act for the remainder of FY 2020-2021. Under the terms of the *Sine Die* resolution, only two bills of interest to the Department are eligible to be considered when the General Assembly reconvenes. Those bills are S. 1068 – Duck Stamp/Print Program Sunset and H. 4831 – Reptiles and Amphibians/Wildlife Trafficking.

XI. Item(s) for Board Action

C. Property Acquisition in Edgefield County

Mr. Rasor made a motion that the 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 134 acres in Edgefield County to be dedicated as a heritage preserve and placed into the corpus of the SC Heritage Trust. Mr. Hutchins seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

D. Potential Property Acquisition in Colleton County

Mr. Hutchins made a motion that the Board grant preliminary approval to evaluate a potential property acquisition of approximately 148 acres near the Edisto River WMA in Colleton County. Mr. Hinson seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

E. Potential Property Acquisition in Colleton County

Mr. Hutchins made a motion that the Board grant preliminary approval to evaluate a potential property acquisition of approximately 237 acres on South Hutchinson Island in Colleton County. Mr. Oxner seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

F. Property Acquisition in Berkeley County

Mr. Rasor made a motion that the Board approve the donation of the 440.26-acre French Quarter Creek Mitigation Bank Site in Berkeley County from Environmental Banc and Exchange to be dedicated as a Heritage Preserve and placed into the corpus of the SC Heritage Trust conditioned upon the successful completion of all due diligence and satisfactory completion of the mitigation work required by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, as approved by the Heritage Trust Advisory Board. Mr. Swygert seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

XII. Deputy Directors' Reports

A. Law Enforcement

COL Chisolm Frampton, Deputy Director for Law Enforcement, reported on the Law Enforcement Division activities regarding COVID-19, Memorial Day activities and Bike Week activities. COL Frampton informed the Board that K9 Officer Blue suffered a medical condition and passed away after training.

B. Marine Resources

Phil Maier, Deputy Director for Marine Resources, reported that the General Trawl Zone opened May 27. Mr. Maier informed the Board that the Carolina Billfish Classic will be held June 17-20.

C. Support Services

Angie Cassella, Deputy Director for Support Services, reported that all customer service staff reported back to the office on May 6. Mrs. Cassella noted that the customer service area are still receiving 700-1,000 phone calls per day.

D. Land, Water and Conservation

Ken Rentiers, Deputy Director for Land, Water and Conservation, commended Katie Luciano on being selected the Land, Water and Conservation Division Employee of the Year. Mr. Rentiers commended Melissa Griffin for her work on the Pandemic Task Force. Mr. Rentiers also recognized the Flood Mitigation Program on being recognized as one of nine Advanced States in the Country by FEMA.

E. Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries

Emily Cope, Deputy Director for Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries, commended Willie Simmons on being selected the Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division Employee of the Year. Mrs. Cope reported that approximately 2/3 staff are working in the field and 1/3 staff are telecommuting. Mrs. Cope informed the Board that Bald Rock and Sassafras Mountain have been opened. Mrs. Cope reported that as of May 13, both resident and non-resident fishing license sales are up.

XII. Time and Location of Next Board Meeting

The time and location of the next meeting is to be determined.

XIII. Adjournment

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