

MINUTES

SOUTH CAROLINA WILDLIFE AND MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING

National Wild Turkey Federation
Edgefield, South Carolina
April 19, 1991
10:00 A.M.

The regular monthly meeting of the South Carolina Wildlife and Marine Resources Commission was held at 11:00 a.m. on Friday, April 19, 1991, at the National Wild Turkey Federation Office in Edgefield, South Carolina, with Chairman Burnside presiding. Notice of the date, time and place of the meeting was mailed to the state's media. Commissioners present included: Chairman Burnside, Commissioners Drummond, Compton, Pendarvis, Poston, Graham, Owen, and Miller. Staff members present included: Dr. Timmerman, Dan Dobbins, Benny Reeves, Prescott Baines, Paul Sandifer, Brock Conrad, Bill Chastain, Buford Mabry, and various other staff members and guests.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Burnside called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m., welcomed all guests, and introduced Gary West of the National Wild Turkey Federation who welcomed the Commission and guests to their facility.

ITEM I - READING OF MINUTES

The Commission adopted a motion to dispense with the reading of the Minutes of the March 22, 1991, Commission meeting and approve them as submitted.

At this time, Dr. Timmerman introduced John Plowman, Legislative Liaison of the Pennsylvania Game Commission, who was attending the meeting as a guest of the Commission.

ITEM II - COMMENTS

Dr. Timmerman stated that he had been pleasantly surprised yesterday by the House's action to approve the saltwater fishing stamp legislation. He stated that a great deal of credit was due to Dr. Paul Sandifer and the Marine Resources staff, Commissioner Pendarvis and his Marine Advisory Board, and particularly to Chairman Ed Bennett of the House Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Committee, Subcommittee Chairman Tom Rhoad, and Commissioner John Snow who were instrumental in the swift passage of that legislation.

Dr. Timmerman stated that, as a part of the ACE Basin concept, the Department of Commerce plans to establish an Estuarine Research Reserve in the ACE Basin area. He said that the last public hearing was held recently and went extremely well.

Dr. Timmerman reported that Dr. Vic Burrell had retired and that a retirement party had been held for him on April 5 at the Ft. Johnson Center and was extremely well attended. He stated that several honors had been bestowed on Dr. Burrell at that time and that the Department was very appreciative of the service that he had rendered during his tenure.

Dr. Timmerman informed the Commission that Larry Cartee was not able to attend the meeting because his wife was in the hospital, the Commission then instructed that flowers be sent to Mrs. Cartee on their behalf.

Dr. Timmerman then discussed the status of the State budget, stating that he had been extremely upset by the move in Senate Finance Committee to divest agencies of vacant positions as a means of balancing the budget, and distributed a copy of a letter he had sent to the Chairman of the Finance Committee on that matter. He then called on Benny Reeves to give the Commission a briefing on the budget status. Mr. Reeves stated that on the House version of the budget, our Department had basically lost about \$100,000 when compared to the present budget. As the Senate budget presently stands, we have lost about \$397,000 of personal service and employee contribution funds and eight (8) FTE's and we have to make up this additional money in our existing budget, as well as the normal vacant factor with which all agencies must contend. Dr. Timmerman stated that this will have grave consequences for the agency. He stated that the Department has run a very conservative shop in the past as far as requesting new employees through the budgetary process, only adding eighteen (18) additional employees to the Department roster since 1979. He felt that agencies who have been spendthrifts in requesting large numbers of new employees in the past were being rewarded in this process, and fiscally responsible agencies like the Department were being punished. At the first of this year, he stated that this situation had been foreseen and existing vacancies had been frozen at that time, resulting in the Department being spared having to lay off individuals at the end of the fiscal year in order to make up personnel budgetary shortfalls. Dr. Timmerman thanked Senator Drummond for killing a measure that would have required the Department to return all funds raised by selling surplus equipment, which would have cost the Department up to \$351,000.

Dr. Timmerman then distributed the most recent Accident Report Summary to the Commission for their information.

ITEM III - LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Dan Dobbins then distributed the most recent Legislative Report and briefed the Commission on several key items.

ITEM IV - NEW BUSINESS

A. Proposed Management Plan: Buzzard Roost Heritage Preserve - Stu Greeter then briefed the Commission on the proposed Heritage Preserve management plan for Buzzard Roost Heritage Preserve and expressed appreciation to the Department's staff and the Volunteer Stewardship Committee, a private group who helped develop the plan and who will help manage and oversee this area. After a brief discussion on the part of the Commission, Chairman Compton made the motion that the plan be approved, Commissioner Owen seconded the motion, and the motion was passed.

B. Proposed Approval For Shrimp Opening: Dr. Sandifer then briefed the Commission on the status of the State's white shrimp crop. Dr. Sandifer stated that last year, the over-winter kill of the white shrimp crop was so severe that the Commission closed the season and requested the federal government to close the season out two hundred miles off our coast, and that Georgia followed suit. He stated that this effort was successful and that, coupled with mild weather, could result in this year's shrimp crop being one of the best on record. Dr. Sandifer stated that the law dictates that the shrimp season will open on May 15 unless the Department determines that the condition of the shrimp stocks are such that it should be delayed. Since May 15 occurs prior to the next Commission meeting, he asked the Commission to authorize the Marine Resources Division to make the decision as far as the opening date and to notify the Commission of that decision once it is made, based on the scientific determination of the condition of the shrimp crop at that time. After a brief discussion, Commissioner Miller made the motion that the Commission authorize the Division as requested, but that it not be open before May 15, Commissioner Pendarvis seconded the motion, and the motion was approved.

C. Division Reports:

1. Administrative Services: There was nothing to further to report.

2. Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries: Brock Conrad briefed the Commission on the changes in the antlerless deer quota program that had passed the General Assembly, describing the program that would be in effect during the next season.

3. Law Enforcement and Boating: There was nothing to further to report.

4. Conservation Education and Communication: There was nothing further to report.

5. Marine Resources: Dr. Sandifer stated that they had just begun the second set of interviews to fill the vacancy created by Dr. Burrell's retirement, and that he had four candidates for that position.

D. Advisory Board Reports:

1. Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries: Commissioner Owen reported that there were no items needing Commission action, but gave the Commission a briefing on the items discussed by the Advisory Board at their meeting at Tillman held April 18.

E. Other Remarks: There were no further remarks.

At this time Commissioner Pendarvis made a motion that the Commission hold an Executive Session to consider personnel matters. Commissioner Miller seconded, and the motion passed. Chairman Burnside announced that at this time the Commission would hold an Executive Session.

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RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION

Following the Executive Session, the regular meeting was resumed and participants were invited into the meeting.

The Chairman then called on Jim Quinn to make a special presentation. Jim then called William Brown before the Commission and presented him with a Honorary Lt. Colonel and Aide-de-Camp to the Commission and resolution expressing the appreciation of the Commission and the Department for his service as a law clerk.

Commissioner Compton made the motion for the Commission to approve the appointments and re-appointments of Deputy Wildlife Conservation Officers to include Wallace Dingle for a statewide DWCO appointment. Commissioner Owen seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

Minutes - SCWMRC Meeting
April 19, 1991
Page 5

ITEM VI - TIME AND PLACE OF THE NEXT MEETING:

Commissioner Graham stated that he would like to invite the Commission to hold their next meeting at the Riverbend Hunting Lodge in Spartanburg County on May 17 at 12:30 p.m. He stated that CEC Advisory Board would meet at 2:00 p.m. and asked that any Commissioners who could to attend their meeting. He stated that the Harry Hampton Wildlife Fund Banquet would be held that evening at 6:00 p.m.

ITEM V - ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Commission, a motion was adopted to adjourn the meeting.

