

MINUTES

SOUTH CAROLINA WILDLIFE & MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING

Dutch Plaza
Columbia, South Carolina
August 18, 1978

The regular monthly meeting of the South Carolina Wildlife and Marine Resources Commission was held in the Conference Room of the Dutch Plaza Office, Columbia, S. C., at 10:00 a. m., August 18, 1978 with Chairman Trask presiding. Notice of the date, time, and place for the meeting was mailed to the state's newspapers, radio and television stations by a news release dated August 14, 1978. Commissioners present at the meeting included Commissioners Trask, Boykin, Stubbs, Dawson, Shuler, Edens and Dennis. Directors and staff members present included Dr. James A. Timmerman, Larry Cartee, Dan Dobbins, Johnny Evans, Bob Campbell, David Scott, Dr. Edwin Joseph, Dr. Vic Burrell, Dr. Paul Sandifer, Benny Reeves, Pat Ryan, Jeff Fuller, Tommy Strange and Tom Kohlsaat. Guests present included Dr. Jackie Jacobs and Mr. Bernard Goette of the S. C. Wildlife Federation, Mr. Sam Crouch of the Law Enforcement and Boating Advisory Board, and Dr. Wayne Beam of the S. C. Coastal Council.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Trask called the meeting to order at 10:00 a. m.

ITEM I. READING OF THE MINUTES

Commissioner Boykin moved to dispense with the reading of the Minutes of the July 21, 1978 Commission Meeting and approve them as submitted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Edens and adopted by the Commission.

ITEM II. COMMENTS

Dr. Timmerman noted that a recent news editorial in the "Columbia Record" discussed the Department's internal sunset concept in a favorable manner and called upon other agencies to follow suit. In addition, Ashley Cooper presented some favorable remarks regarding the Department in the Charleston newspaper. Dr. Timmerman stated that he is working with the Division Directors in reviewing all programs in the Department.

Dr. Timmerman noted that he had met with Bill Putnam and Ed Vaughn of the State Auditor's Office to discuss the FY 79-80 budget picture and receive the Department's allocation. It was noted that the FY 79-80 projected budget of \$1.5 billion represents a \$135 million increase over FY 78-79, but most of



this will be absorbed by built-in costs. Thus, for State agencies, there will be less generating funds and each agency has been asked to reduce their budget by five percent (5%). In FY 78-79, the Department received \$7,146,133 in State funds. In addition to this, \$226,132 was provided for equipment, \$500,000 was appropriated in the supplemental bill for vehicles, and \$24,000 was provided for Lake Long. This represents a total of \$7,896,265 for FY 78-79. The allocation in State funds for FY 79-80 is \$7,139,709. Dr. Timmerman stated that the Department plans to bite the bullet and ask the State Budget and Control Board for this amount. The new budget is to be turned in to the Budget and Control Board shortly after September 15, 1978. This will be discussed with the Commission Finance Committee before the next Commission meeting for presentation to the Commission at the September 15, 1978 meeting. Commissioner Edens asked about plans to transfer employees to the State payroll. Dr. Timmerman stated that one of the primary objectives of the next budget year is to see if employees paid from revenue can be transferred to the State payroll. The revenue for such would be transferred to the general fund. Dr. Timmerman noted that he did not intend to ask for any new personnel, as positions in the Department will be re-evaluated to see where we can get the most from existing employees. Commissioner Dennis noted that the five percent (5%) cutback in State agency budgets is necessary in order to provide a five percent (5%) cost-of-living increase and merit increments for State employees. Commissioner Dennis stated that the institutions of higher learning have increased personnel each year; thus, leaving less funds for use with existing personnel. In addition, Commissioner Dennis noted that proposed five percent (5%) reserve fund is important to the State's fiscal management so as to guarantee services for the State and preserve the State's credit rating and that of other political subdivisions in South Carolina.

Dr. Timmerman informed the Commission that a marine biologist position in the Beaufort area was being established. The Department's research coordinator position is being broken down to establish a position at the Dennis Center to study large game animals. Other areas of concentration over the next few months will include the development of an effective public relations program at the Marine Center, focusing attention on problems at Santee Cooper, emphasize improving fishing opportunities on streams and rivers, and evaluating the doe harvest system with emphasis on the upstate. Dr. Timmerman stated that he hoped the Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Advisory Board would give the doe harvest program further consideration.

Dr. Timmerman noted that he had received several calls and requests concerning a position of Kershaw County that was annexed into Lancaster County. With this annexation, the property went from Game Zone Five to Game Zone Four, which has greater restrictions. This has caused some discontent with the affected



landowners and Dr. Timmerman asked the Commission for their guidance on such. Following some discussion, Commissioner Boykin moved for Dr. Timmerman to take action on this matter, if legal hurdles can be cleared until this is taken care of legislatively next year. Commissioner Dennis seconded the motion and such was approved by the Commission.

Dr. Timmerman informed the Commission that the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies would meet at Hot Springs, Virginia, on November 5 - 8, 1978, and invited any of the Commissioners to attend. A memorandum on absentee voting for the General Election was distributed for information as this meeting falls at the time of the General Election.

Dr. Timmerman noted that he had recently discussed with Commissioner Buchanan, plans concerning the Department's houses on Lake Greenwood. The house in Laurens County is being put into good shape for future use by the Department. The other house is located at the Lake Greenwood Dam in Newberry County and is leased to the Department from Greenwood County. In recent years, this facility has not been used and the lease can be cancelled at any time by either party, subject to necessary repairs to the facility. As such, Greenwood County has stated that the facility can be repaired for \$1,900 which represents a very reasonable cost. Dr. Timmerman, thus, recommended that the house be fixed to a proper condition for \$1,900 and the lease cancelled with the property being returned to Greenwood County. Commissioner Boykin moved that such action be taken. Commissioner Edens seconded the motion and such was adopted by the Commission.

Dr. Timmerman also informed the Commission that the Department owns a house and two (2) acres of land on Jefferies Creek in Florence County which is not being used by the Department. Pat Ryan noted that an office is being established in Florence and this facility is no longer needed. This facility was originally bought with funds from the Florence County Game and Fish Fund and used by law enforcement personnel. Dr. Timmerman stated that this facility is now a liability and he recommended that it be sold, with the proceeds being placed back into the Florence County Game and Fish Fund. Following some discussion, Commissioner Dennis moved that this matter be discussed with Florence County legislators and the property sold with the proceeds from such being placed in the Florence County Game and Fish Fund. Commissioner Boykin seconded the motion and such was approved by the Commission.

Dr. Timmerman noted that he was in Washington recently with representatives of Ducks Unlimited and had talked about the Department's duck identification film. As a result, a letter was received from the DU President wanting to buy twenty (20) copies of the film.



ITEM III. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Dan Dobbins presented the Commission a summary report on 131 bills affecting the Department that were presented in the General Assembly in 1978. This was broken out into bills that became law and those which did not pass. Of the twenty-four (24) bills recommended by the Department, nineteen (19) passed during 1978. In addition, a draft legislative format was presented to the Commission for their suggestions and comments. It was noted that problems affecting the Department's operations will be looked at to see if such can be solved without legislative action. Dr. Timmerman stated that he wanted to get a complete staff review of all legislative proposals that are submitted through the Department's legislative process.

ITEM IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. 1978-79 Waterfowl Seasons: Tommy Strange presented the proposed 1978-79 Waterfowl Seasons and Regulations which are attached to these Minutes. The primary change this year is the opening for duck hunting at one-half hour before legal sunset, instead of noon which was the case last year. There are fifty (50) days total hunting time for ducks with the bag limits being the same as last year. Dr. Timmerman stated that he had met in Washington with the USFWS and was able to convince the 50-day season would not be harmful. In addition, it was recommended that the goose season be closed in Beaufort, Colleton and McCormick Counties due to the project in this part of the State to establish a resident population of Canada Geese. Commissioner Boykin moved that the waterfowl seasons and regulations be approved as submitted. Commissioner Edens seconded the motion and such was approved by the Commission,

B. Division Reports:

1. Administrative Services: Benny Reeves distributed a copy of the programmatic chart that will serve as the format for the FY 79-80 budget. This is tied to the Department's Five-Year Plan and will provide the General Assembly a look at program costs and benefits. Dr. Timmerman noted that we will develop various sub-elements in each program area.

2. Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries: There was nothing to add to the written report.

3. Law Enforcement and Boating: Pat Ryan did not have anything to add to the written report. Dr. Timmerman informed the Commission that the General Assembly had approved the use of watercraft gasoline tax rebates for water recreational activities upon approval of the County Delegations. These funds will be transmitted to the Department. Commissioner Dennis stated that the counties have been using these funds for general operations whereas the intent was to use these funds for boating activities.



4. Information and Public Affairs: There was nothing to add to the written report.

5. Marine Resources: Dr. Joseph informed the Commission that they had met with DHEC personnel and representatives from the coastal counties on the proposed use of discarded tires for the artificial reef program. Due to the magnitude of this proposal, Dr. Joseph noted that he had recommended that the individuals involved discuss this matter with the Commission to see what such involves. Dr. Timmerman stated this matter would be studied further and brought before the Commission. Dr. Timmerman also noted that the Sea Grant legislation had passed this year and the national Sea Grant Office has taken a more favorable view on this legislation. In addition, Senator Waddell has met with the college presidents and the new structure is proceeding along well.

C. Advisory Board Reports:

1. Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries: Commissioner Edens reported that the Board met on August 10, 1978, and the Minutes of the meeting were mailed out. There are no items for Commission action, but Commissioner Edens noted that the staff is working on commercial fishing regulations which is being coordinated with the district fisheries biologists and will be presented to the Commission in October or November.

2. Law Enforcement and Boating: Commissioner Shuler noted that the Board had met and discussed the problem of stray dogs in the State. The Board recommended that Dr. Timmerman, or staff, contact the S. C. Wildlife Federation, Audubon Society, Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and the like to discuss the problem and see if some ideas can be developed on how to handle the situation. Commissioner Shuler put this recommendation in the form of a motion; it was seconded by Commissioner Boykin and approved by the Commission. In addition, Commissioner Shuler noted that the Department has maintenance responsibility for boat ramps at Santee Cooper and the Board recommended that prisoners from the Department of Corrections be used under the provisions of the new litter law to clean up these ramps and do routine maintenance on such. Dr. Timmerman stated that we would follow through with this suggestion. Commissioner Edens noted that he recently saw a lot of litter at Lake Wateree and the litter laws need to be enforced. Commissioner Dennis stated that wild dogs in the State were a real menace and he would support a bill to allow the statewide trapping of such dogs and he urged the Department to work with the Department of Corrections on a program of using prisoners to clean up around boat ramps.

3. Marine Resources: Commissioner Dawson stated that the Board had met on August 11, 1978. The Board discussed the public oyster grounds noting that the funding is lacking for this program. Dr. Timmerman stated that we



need to develop a funding procedure for the public oyster beds. Commissioner Dawson stated that the Board had asked that the Commission review the crab pot tagging proposal. Dr. Timmerman stated that this matter had been delayed for further study.

4. Heritage Trust: Tom Kohlsaas reported that the Board recommended to the Commission that an Angel Oak tree in Charleston County be registered through the Heritage Trust. Following some discussion, Commissioner Dennis moved that this property and Angel Oak tree be registered through the Heritage Trust. Commissioner Boykin seconded the motion and such was approved by the Commission.

E. Salary Review Committee

Dr. Timmerman reported there were three outstanding and one marginal reviews to report to the Commission.

F. Appointments

Dr. Timmerman distributed the recommendations for appointments and re-appointments of Deputy Wildlife Conservation Officers and the re-appointments of Conservation Officers and other Department personnel (copy attached to original Commission Minutes). Through various motions, the Commission approved all of these appointments and re-appointments as recommended. In addition, Dr. Timmerman recommended the appointment of Earl C. Tairney, Jr., as a Conservation Officer in Berkeley County, subject to a favorable background and physical examination. Commissioner Dennis moved to approve the appointment of Mr. Tairney. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Boykin and approved by the Commission.

Commissioner Edens noted that the Commission had approved the new DWCO program in January, 1977 and recommended that the procedure be followed for two (2) years and then see where we could cut down on some of the paperwork involved. Dr. Timmerman noted that the staff is working on streamlining the process and will be reporting back to the Commission.

G. Other Remarks

Commissioner Stubbs asked about the Department's involvement in the Mountain Ridge Project. Dr. Timmerman stated that the staff has reviewed this project and is supportive of the concept, but only a small portion of the property would meet the criteria of the Heritage Trust Act. Commissioner Stubbs noted that it may be worthwhile for the Commission to review this project. Dr. Timmerman informed Commissioner Stubbs that the staff would brief him on this project.



In consultation with Chairman Trask, Dr. Timmerman noted that Commissioner Shuler had been appointed to the Commission Finance Committee, but will not be able to serve. As such, Commissioner Edens has agreed to serve for one year as a member of the Finance Committee.

G. Time and Place of Next Meeting

It was recommended that the next Commission meeting be held in Columbia at Dutch Plaza at 10:00 a. m. on September 15, 1978. Dr. Timmerman noted that Commissioner Buchanan has recommended that the October Commission meeting be held at the Webb Wildlife Center.

ITEM V. ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the meeting, a motion was made, seconded and passed to adjourn.

