

MINUTES

SOUTH CAROLINA WILDLIFE & MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION Ft. Johnson Charleston, South Carolina

February 20, 1976

The regular monthly meeting of the South Carolina Wildlife & Marine Resources Commission was held at the Marine Resources Center at Ft. Johnson, Charleston, South Carolina at 10:00 am February 20, 1976 with Chairman Hudson presiding. Other Commissioners present were Boykin, Buchanan, Harris, Rhame, Bennett and Lumpkin. Others present were Dr. Timmerman, Mr. Webb, Jeff Fuller, Brock Conrad, Joe Logan, Pat Ryan, Bill Chastain, T. C. Welch, Jr., Ed Latimer, Jim Mills, Benny Reeves, Pete Laurie, John Culler, Mike Copeland, Larry Cartee, Dr. Joseph, Dr. Laurent, Dr. Burrell, Charlie Bearden, Ned Pendarvis, Bob Joyner, Clark Surratt (State Newspaper), H. H. Von Harten (President, S. C. Shrimpers Association) and various other staff members.

CALL TO ORDER

ITEM I. READING OF LAST MEETING MINUTES: The Minutes of the January Commission Meeting were approved as they were mailed out with no corrections or additions.

REQUEST FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION: A motion was made, seconded and passed to hold an Executive Session following the regular meeting to discuss personnel matters.

COMMENTS:

Dr. Joseph introduced Mr. H. H. Von Harten, President of the S. C. Shrimpers Association, as a guest at the meeting.

Dr. Timmerman stated that the Executive Office is interested in looking at problem areas in each Division's activities and develop solutions to such problems. The Executive Office is having staff put together a public involvement program and the area of management of employees is being analyzed by the Executive Office. He reported that minutes of a recent Staff Meeting were mailed to the Commission so as to keep them informed of progress in the Department. John Culler is working with each Division Director in developing a Public Involvement Program for submission at the March Commission Meeting. The purpose of this plan is to give the Department a chance to communicate better with the public and attain feedback from such. An example of public feedback is the Points System Bill introduced this year by Representative Koon. Timmerman states that he has received numerous telephone calls in regard to this Bill. He stated that he will ask Bill Cotty to send a copy of this Bill to the Commission for discussion at the next Commission Meeting. Dr. Timmerman stated that he recently met with officials from Ducks Unlimited. A joint meeting will be held in Columbia on March 30th to discuss administrative problems, cost of waterfowl management, biological problems, etc. The potential state duck stamp will be discussed with proceeds being used for a waterfowl management program.

ITEM II. OLD BUSINESS

A. HUNTER SAFETY AND EDUCATION PROGRAM OVERVIEW: Jim Mills presented a report on the Hunter Safety and Education Program. He noted that the program is being worked into the school system which is quite advantageous as many already have outdoor facilities and the same goals are pursued. In addition,



the program acquaints educators with their roles in conservation. Thus far, over 100 educators have been trained in twenty-five (25) counties. There is a chance for the program to branch out further as teachers that are certified by the program get credit toward their Teacher's Certificate. The staff is currently working with Clemson University's Continuing Education Program to certify more people. In addition, teacher workshops at colleges and tech schools will be held this summer. Chairman Hudson asked if the program could be made available to certify people to attain hunting licenses in other states that require a course. Mr. Mills noted that a reciprocal agreement exists with the twenty-two (22) states requiring a course to attain a license, with the exception of Utah, whereby the course taught in the state is recognized. Chairman Hudson noted that this information needs to be publicized so that hunters can take the course before seeking a license in one of the twenty-two (22) states that require a course to be taken. John Culler noted that Utah does not recognize the courses of other states in order to keep hunters from California from coming to the state to hunt.

B. REPORT ON PERMANENT COLUMBIA OFFICE FACILITY: Dr. Timmerman noted that the Dutch Plaza lease agreement of 35,000 square feet expires in January, 1977. In this regard, there are three primary alternatives: (1) look for a building to purchase; (2) seek a capital improvement bond to construct our own building, or (3) plan to move into the Highway Department facility. The Highway Department plans to vacate the building in the Spring of 1978 and there would be certain renovations necessary for our occupancy. Thus, it would be the latter part of 1978 or early 1979 before we could occupy the facility. The leasing fees for state buildings are figured on a pooled basis and would run about \$5.50 per square foot annually. General Services wants us to seriously consider use of this facility. There are also numerous parking problems at this location. Dr. Timmerman stated that staff needs a decision from the Commission in order to take action. Constructing our own facility with bonds would require certain lead time based on the 5% limitation on bonds that are issued. Chairman Hudson asked if the staff could proceed on attaining a cost estimate for a new building. He noted that it may be a problem getting the Legislature to approve a capital improvement bond. Dr. Timmerman stated that an architect has been contacted to provide a cost estimate based on 50,000 square feet. Chairman Hudson suggested that such be pursued and discussed with Pat Smith, State Auditor. Dr. Timmerman stated that staff would do so and report at the next Commission Meeting. Commissioner Boykin asked if the staff will make a recommendation concerning this matter. Chairman Hudson noted that such was difficult due to the bonding status, unless revenues picked up considerably. Ned Pendarvis stated that we are talking about three (3) years hence and no one knows what the revenue situation will be at that time. He noted that the state has authorized so many bonds that have accumulated and not been sold. In addition, the 5% limit imposed last year by the Legislature will slow bond sales down further. Chairman Hudson stated that if we desire to construct our own facility, we need to pursue the bond authorization as soon as possible and attain a commitment for the funds by such a date. Dr. Timmerman stated that he will discuss this matter with Pat Smith, Ways and Means, and Senate Finance and report back at the next meeting.



C. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT BOND STATUS: Ned Pendarvis reported that the Lake Long project has been approved and construction is underway. In regard to the Federal Food Technology Facility, Ed Latimer is still negotiating with GSA. Latimer stated that he is expecting a proposal in June from Atlanta. The final certification has not been received from History and Archives. Dr. Timmerman noted that GSA has been slow to respond and we need to assign someone to push this matter from a legal standpoint. Dr. Joseph noted that DOI officials have been to GSA and they say that GSA is dragging their feet. Ned Pendarvis noted that the Budget & Control Board must be convinced that this is a revenue bond and not a capital improvement bond so they will release the funds for such. Dr. Timmerman stated that the staff will further pursue this matter. Construction on the Cooperative Research Facility is nearing completion. The \$652,000 bond authorization for equipment for the lab was approved by the Budget & Control Board and bids will be let shortly. In addition, Ned Pendarvis noted that the new plans for the Dennis Center are near completion and the Department will advertise for bids in two or three weeks. Chairman Hudson stated that if the Department can get a lease signed by GSA, the Governor could assist us in attaining the release of funds for the Food Technology building.

ITEM III: NEW BUSINESS

A. 76-77 GMA HUNTING SEASONS AND REGULATIONS: Jeff Fuller reported on the proposed 76-77 GMA seasons and regulations noting that GMA permit sales increased from 36,000 in 1971 to 58,000 in 1975. The increased pressure has created increased problems in keeping everyone happy. The proposed regulations and seasons mailed to the Commission came as close as possible to compromise the various conflicts that exist. Brock Conrad noted that many special interests exist and they compete for the use of GMA resources. For instance, approximately 200 trappers want to use GMA lands for trapping. Conrad feels that this is in conflict with the GMA program and such should be confined to private lands with owner permission. Another group, rabbit hunters, want to use dogs on GMA lands with a fourteen (14) day season for such. The use of dogs conflicts with still hunting. Commissioners Buchanan noted that he receives complaints from hunters in Edgefield County about deer season opening in Aiken County on August 15th. Conrad stated that the peak of the deer season is from October 1st to January 1st. In August, it is hot and there are numerous problems. Thus, opening the season earlier in some areas may not necessarily make it better. Commissioner Buchanan noted that due to the increased number of GMA permits, we may need to look at the seasons only from a year-to-year basis. Dr. Timmerman stated that he had received a request from a hunt club in GMA II concerning man-drives on private property that is within GMA boundaries. They feel they should be able to man drive whenever they desire. Brock Conrad noted that there are problems in attaining data on man-drives. In the proposed regulations, man-drives would apply to GMA property only. Thus, private clubs could man-drive whenever they desire. Dr. Timmerman stated that some archery hunters in Georgetown County wanted more time for archery hunts. Brock Conrad noted that the archery season at the Santee Reserve would be announced at a later date, after such has been coordinated with the gun club. Chairman Hudson stated that such was the case because the hunts were given little publicity. Conrad stated that the season should be set before the hunting brochure is developed this year. Commissioner Rhame



made a motion to adopt the proposed seasons and regulations, the motion was seconded and passed. Commissioner Harris suggested that the staff contact all groups requesting changes and send the adopted regulations along with what was considered in the development of such.

B. COASTAL ZONE MAPPING PROGRAM: Dr. Laurent stated that his staff had developed the best coastal zone mapping program in the country. Mike Copeland presented an overview of the program. He noted that an information problem existed in developing the coastal program as there was no data on which to base management decisions. Mapping on two different scales was needed. One scale, 1" = 2 miles, for the ten (10) counties in the coastal area was developed in delineate resources in the coast and to assist the COG's in land-use planning. Once these base maps were created, 133 overlays were developed for specific areas to include natural resources, man-made resources, and land-use. This system was useful, but had two shortcomings; (1) the scale was too small, and (2) it was for 1972 only. Thus, a computer based system was devised to allow more specificity in decision making. The information from the 133 overlays is being placed into the computer system which can be called upon for any scale upon which to make decisions. In addition, the computer system can expedite the permitting process and help applicants untie many knots in the process. Decisions, when evaluating a permit, can be supplemented by the computer system. Copeland stated that the response from developers has been very favorable as they have used the information in developing their own maps. In addition, there is interest from attorneys to use the system to resolve court cases.

C. PROPOSED RESOLUTION CONCERNING FISHING TOURNAMENTS IN SOUTH CAROLINA: Joe Logan discussed proposed fishing tournament guidelines that were mailed out to the Commission. Due to the national recognition that BASS tournaments have received, it is felt that the Department should take a position on such. The proposed guidelines do not advocate tournaments, but propose various measures that should be followed for such in the state. Some of these guidelines include: (1) increase the minimum size from 12" to 14"; (2) hold tournaments at a time of the year when water utilization is at a minimum, and (3) advocate live release. Commissioner Harris noted that his Advisory Committee had discussed the proposal and approved this general approach as advisory in nature. Commissioner Rhame noted that the Department will make provisions to provide tanks for the fish. Commissioner Buchanan stated that a BASS club in Greenwood desires to donate some funds to the Department and requests guidelines as to how the funds will be utilized. Commissioner Rhame moved the Commission adopt the guidelines and Commissioner Harris seconded the motion. This was adopted by the Commission.

E. DIVISION REPORTS:

LAW ENFORCEMENT & BOATING: Dr. Timmerman stated that he had met with staff of this Division and discussed various problem areas. One of these problem areas is in Boating where we are seventeenth in the nation in registered boats, but seventh in the number of fatalities. Pat Ryan noted that there will be an intensive enforcement effort on the lakes and reservoirs this year. Special teams will base at Departmental cabins and rotate their locations on the lakes. The Officers will be available to inspect the boats of the public that so desire. ETV



courses have been set up to be broadcast throughout the state. There will be an Officer at each location and an open phone line to Columbia for questions. In addition, there will be a boating safety refresher course in March for all Officers. All newly trained Officers are going through the three-day Coast Guard school on boating enforcement. Commissioner Harris noted that the Public Service Authority needs to undertake efforts to cut down trees and stumps in Santee Cooper at the low water mark. He suggested this as a priority of development with the PSA. After some discussion, Commissioner Harris made a motion that a resolution be drawn up to this effect and presented to the PSA. Commissioner Boykin seconded the motion and it was passed. Commissioner Bennett noted that there are many problems with boaters racing at or near landings and asked if there is a boating speed limit. Mr. Ryan stated that there is not a speed limit, but boaters could be prosecuted for negligent operation. Chairman Hudson recommended that the Department place posters at boat landings to remind boaters that reckless operation will result in prosecution. Commissioner Lumpkin asked if this intensive enforcement effort would apply to the coastal area also. Mr. Ryan stated that it would.

MARINE RESOURCES: Dr. Joseph noted that it now appears that some Federal Regulations will be adopted to protect the loggerhead turtle. Most of the provisions for such regulations will have no adverse effect on marine resources. There is one proposed regulation that exists which could be disastrous to the shrimping industry which deals with incidental catch and restricts shrimping in or near breeding areas. The intent is to protect the nesting grounds but every beach along the coast is used as a nesting ground for loggerheads. Even a reasonable interpretation of the proposed regulation could virtually eliminate the shrimp fishing grounds along the coast. The proposed regulation does not define substantial breeding grounds. Ninety-five percent (95%) of all S. C. shrimp is harvested within the three-mile limit which is within the substantial breeding areas. There will be a public hearing in Washington on February 25th and Dr. Joseph is on the hearing list of the NMFS. He plans to also speak as a representative of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. The major point to address is the impact that such a regulation could have on the shrimping industry and to note that shrimping has been going on a long time and the loggerhead population has held up quite well. Dr. Joseph also plans to point out measures that can be undertaken to enhance nesting success by hatcheries or stopping predation by raccoons. Mr. Von Harten stated that he plans to go to Washington with Dr. Joseph and meet with an attorney concerning the matter. Commissioner Lumpkin made a motion to Dr. Joseph develop a resolution to the effect of the matters discussed and the Commission support it in its entirety. Commissioner Buchanan seconded the motion and it was passed. Dr. Joseph noted that he would mail such to all Commissioners. Dr. Joseph noted that the Commission is not taking a stand against all the regulations, but just this section dealing with nesting grounds.

INFORMATION & PUBLIC AFFAIRS: John Culler stated that his staff is working on a Sportsmen Calendar which would have pictures and information and dates such as seasons. These would come out in September and be sold to the public; a Children's Magazine which would be published on alternate months of the magazine; a Newspaper which has been recommended by the Advisory Boards to be sent to holders of hunting and fishing license; a System of License Sales Promotions; a Construction Project such as the wood duck boxes in the state; and a Public Involvement Program. Commissioner Harris reported that the Advisory Committees had recommended a news



report or a newsletter, not a newspaper, to channel information to the public. Such should be used to explain new developments in the Department. He proposed the newsletter concept be discussed at the next Commission Meeting. Commissioner Rhame noted that a newsletter could be published under no set schedule. Dr. Timmerman noted that Pat Ryan had suggested that such a newsletter be sent to license agents so they can pass information on to the public. Commissioner Harris noted that this should also be distributed to all employees. He expressed reservations about sending to all license holders.

NATURAL AREA ACQUISITION & RESOURCE PLANNING: Dr. Laurent stated that debate on the coastal bill should be resolved shortly. The Heritage Trust legislation should then follow.

F. SALARY REVIEW COMMITTEE: Dr. Timmerman noted that the salary review committee has met and developed a revised format to be followed. Any supervisor that appraises an employee as "marginal" or "outstanding" must provide an in-depth justification for such which will be reviewed by the Committee. This month's review included one employee that was evaluated as "marginal". It was decided to place this employee on ninety (90) days probation for re-review and a decision to retain or let go at that time. Commissioner Rhame asked if any further action had been taken to upgrade those employees in the lower grades, such as biologist aides. Dr. Timmerman noted that he has asked the State Personnel Division to conduct a total review of positions in the Department, except for law enforcement which has been recently completed. This will take about three (3) months to accomplish. If the staff cannot persuade SPD to upgrade these lower positions, we may have to come back to the Commission. Benny Reeves discussed the mechanics of the system being followed. Chairman Hudson attested to the fact that a legitimate effort is being made concerning this matter.

G. ADVISORY BOARD REPORTS:

MARINE RESOURCES: Commissioner Lumpkin reported on the recent Marine Advisory Board meeting. He noted that the seafood port study is continuing, but no conclusions have been developed at this time. He stated that Charlie Boggs of the LCRPC, was at the meeting and reported that EPA had postponed zero (0) discharge until the year 2000. Dr. Joseph noted that at this time, we are not in a position to counter this statement. Commissioner Lumpkin stated that the next meeting would be in McClellanville. Commissioner Rhame asked if the staff is in a position to project the status of the 1976 shrimp crop. Dr. Joseph stated that there are no projections at this time as the staff is still sampling shrimp larvae. Commissioner Bennett asked about the staff's recommendations concerning a shrimp bait bill being considered in the House. Charlie Bearden stated that he would check on the bill and further discuss the matter with Commissioner Bennett.

LAW ENFORCEMENT & BOATING: Commissioner Harris reported that the Law Enforcement and Boating Advisory Board discussed fishing tournament guidelines and the departmental newsletter. He noted that they had no recommendation for a new law enforcement district as there was no requirement for such ever established. The reorganization plan to mesh law enforcement, game and fish districts is to be presented by Dr. Timmerman. Dr. Timmerman noted that he will discuss the plan with the sub-committee appointed by Chairman Hudson and then the Advisory Boards.



Chairman Hudson stated that such would be satisfactory. Commissioner Harris noted his concern about the image of the Department and the attitudes of the people from the areas that Advisory Board members represent. In regard to the Advisory Boards accomplishing their mission, he felt that they were either not getting proper input from the public or matters were in pretty good shape. Commissioner Harris stated that he expressed caution concerning the red wolf. Jeff Fuller noted that he had planned to get a decision on the red wolf from the Advisory Boards and they recommended caution. Chairman Hudson recommended that this matter be discussed at the next Commission Meeting. Mr. Fuller noted that time was a factor as the USFWS can accomplish this next year.

GAME & FRESHWATER FISHERIES: Commissioner Rhame noted that the Commission should see the whole program concerning the red wolf. In regard to the Florida duck, he noted that those in captivity are surviving, but are not laying. One of the nineteen (19) released has been harvested. Commissioner Rhame stated that he wants the program to attain more ducks. Chairman Hudson noted that we have had promises and need to follow up on this matter. Dr. Timmerman noted that officials in Texas and Florida will be contacted next week.

HERITAGE TRUST: Chairman Hudson stated that we are still waiting for the Senate to debate the Heritage Trust bill. There has also been activity as far as contacting people for donations of property is concerned. He reported that the last appraisal on Capers Island was made in the amount of \$2.3 million. The value per acre is higher, by \$200, than the other appraisal, but the number of acres is lower. With the conservation easement on Dewees Island valued at \$610,000, Chairman Hudson stated that this appraisal should resolve the problem.

H. APPOINTMENTS: Dr. Timmerman reported, in addition to the appointments and reappointments mailed to the Commission, he was recommending a commission for Joseph H. Hamer. Mr. Hamer is a Ranger on Capers Island and is paid from manpower funds out of the Governor's Office. The staff has checked out this individual and recommended approval. Commissioner Lumpkin moved that this and those mailed out be approved by the Commission. Commissioner Boykin seconded the motion and it was passed. (A list of the recommendations that were mailed out are attached to the original of these Minutes for the record only.)

There being no further business in the regular session, the Commission adjourned for an Executive Session to discuss personnel matter.

Respectfully submitted,



(Miss) Chris Stapleton,
Commission Secretary

