

MINUTES

SOUTH CAROLINA WILDLIFE AND MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING

Room 335, Dennis Building
Columbia, S. C.
January 18, 1985
10:00 A.M.

The regular monthly meeting of the South Carolina Wildlife and Marine Resources Commission was held in Room 335 of the Dennis Building, Columbia, S. C., at 10:00 A.M., January 18, 1985, with Chairman Webster presiding. Notice of the date, time and place of the meeting was mailed to the state's media. Commissioners present included Commissioners Webster, Harrelson, Compton, Owen, Quackenbush, Thomason and Bennett. Directors and staff members present included Dr. Timmerman, Larry Cartee, Jeff Fuller, Benny Reeves, Paul Sandifer, Bill Chastain, Sonny Baines and various other staff and guests.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Webster called the meeting to order at 10:00 A.M., noting that the Commission is praying for a speedy recovery for fellow member Senator Rembert C. Dennis. Chairman Webster welcomed all guests to the meeting.

ITEM I. READING OF THE MINUTES

The Commission adopted a motion to dispense with the reading of the Minutes of the November 16, 1984 Commission Meeting and approve them as submitted.

ITEM II. COMMENTS

Dr. Timmerman noted the Governor's State of the State Address made reference to our new issue of the magazine on "Carolina Waters".

Dr. Timmerman advised the Commission that we recently met with the House Ways and Means Subcommittee to discuss our budget needs for FY 85-86. We requested that they approve the funds recommended by the State Budget and Control Board.

Dr. Timmerman noted that we recently met with the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee and the Senate Fish, Game and Forestry Committee to discuss the Department's activities and programs.

Dr. Timmerman informed the Commission that we are setting up meetings with executives of the various timber companies to discuss the Game Management Area Program. The Land Procurement Committee is continuing its work and activities.

Dr. Timmerman stated that he recently held a Directors' Staff Meeting and notes from that meeting will be sent to the Commissioners.

Dr. Timmerman stated that draft objectives for the Department for 1985 had been sent to the Commission (copy attached to original Commission Minutes). The Commission's input on these objectives is requested and such will be on the February agenda.

Dr. Timmerman distributed a copy of the Six-Month Vehicle Accident Report to the Commission for information (copy attached to original Commission Minutes).

Dr. Timmerman noted the Commission had previously approved for the next Commission Meeting to be held on February 22, 1985.

Betty Spence of the S. C. Wildlife Federation invited the Commission to attend the upcoming Annual Awards Banquet in Myrtle Beach.

Commissioner Compton distributed the Commission's semi-annual check and raffle tickets for a truck to be given away at the Palmetto Sportsmen's Classic.

ITEM III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Draft Alligator Regulations: Tom Kohlsaas advised the Commission that efforts are underway to reclassify the alligator in South Carolina and a change in regulations is needed to control nuisance alligators. Phil Wilkinson discussed the proposed regulations with the Commission (copy attached to original Commission Minutes). Mr. Kohlsaas asked the Commission to review these proposed regulations and to place such on the agenda for the February meeting for approval. The Commission adopted a motion to consider the proposed regulations and for such to be on the agenda for the February meeting.

B. Proposed Regulations Updating Endangered Species List: John Cely distributed two proposed regulations to update various species on the list of endangered species (copy attached to original Commission Minutes). The Commission adopted a motion to approve the regulations as submitted.

C. Division Reports:

1. Administrative Services: Benny Reeves informed the Commission that funds have been secured for the dam repair work at Lake Oak Grove and work should start around the first of March. Mr. Reeves also noted that the Commission Finance Committee will be meeting in the near future.

2. Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries: There was nothing further to report.

3. Law Enforcement and Boating: Lt. Chip Sharpe distributed a copy of the Operation Game Thief Annual Report noting the program has been expanded to include vandalism. Lt. Sharpe proposed that information on the Operation Game Thief Program be included on the back of the

Department's licenses and permits. This could be done at a cost of about \$600. The Commission adopted a motion to include such information on the back of licenses and permits.

4. Information and Public Affairs: Sonny Baines reported that the Project WILD program has been very successful. Over 400 teachers have been trained and 560 guides have been distributed.

5. Marine Resources: There was nothing further to report.

D. Advisory Board Reports:

1. Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries: Commissioner Owen noted the Board met on December 13th. The Board recommends to the Commission that action be taken to extend the grouse season to March 1st to coincide with the quail season. The Commission adopted a motion to approve this recommendation. Commissioner Owen noted the U. S. Forest Service has developed a 50-Year Management Plan for the Sumter National Forest. The Plan as written calls for increased timber production and there are concerns such will have on wildlife programs and habitat. Commissioner Owen stated that the plan needs to be revamped to give equal consideration to wildlife. Commissioner Owen distributed a proposed resolution for the Commission's action (copy attached to original Commission Minutes). Following discussion, the Commission adopted the resolution as presented. Dr. Timmerman noted the Department will be sending specific comments on the Management Plan by February 15th and a copy of these comments will be sent to the Commission.

2. Marine Resources: Commissioner Harrelson stated the Board met in December and discussed problems with the sturgeon fishery. Commissioner Harrelson noted that based upon the rapidly declining catch of sturgeon and the increased pressure upon the number of available fish to be caught, the Board recommends that the sturgeon fishery be closed this year in the ocean waters and that legislation be recommended to close the inshore waters to sturgeon fishing until the fishery can be restocked. Mr. Andy Jordan of the S. C. Bateau Fishermen's Association requested that the sturgeon fishery not be closed this year, but to look at the catch to determine if such should be closed next year. Following extensive discussion, the Commission (by a split vote) adopted the Board's recommendation to close the sturgeon fishery in the ocean waters this year and to seek legislation to close the sturgeon fishery in the inshore waters.

3. Heritage Trust: Tom Kohlsaas reported that the Board met on November 28 - 29 and discussed various acquisition projects. A copy of the new tax check-off poster was distributed to the Commissioners.

4. Magazine Advisory Council: Commissioner Quackenbush noted the Council met recently to discuss various projects and activities. The Council recommends to the Commission that the name of the Division of Information and Affairs be changed to the Division of Conservation Education and Communications. The Commission adopted a motion to approve this recommendation.

E. Appointments: Dr. Timmerman distributed a copy of the recommendations for appointments and re-appointments of Conservation Officers and Deputy Wildlife Conservation Officers (copy attached to original Commission Minutes). Dr. Timmerman asked Bill Chastain to report on several promotions. Mr. Chastain noted that the promotion of three of the divers to Sergeant has been approved by the Commission and he recommended that Officer Ben Moise be promoted to Sergeant to assist in administrative duties in District #9. Dr. Timmerman noted that at the October 19, 1984 Commission Meeting, the Commission approved establishing the position of an Administrative Staff Officer in the Division of Law Enforcement. This position was established through the State Personnel Division and we advertised the position in the Department. Three applications were received and interviews were conducted by Bill Chastain and Bobby Gifford. They have recommended that Mr. Sumter Moore be appointed to the position of Administrative Staff Officer and Dr. Timmerman recommended that the Commission approve this appointment. The Commission adopted motions to approve all appointments, re-appointments and promotions as recommended by Dr. Timmerman and Bill Chastain.

Following this discussion, Commissioner Compton moved for the Commission to hold an Executive Session to discuss a policy matter. Commissioner Thomason seconded the motion and it was adopted by the Commission. Chairman Webster announced that the Commission would recess the regular meeting to hold an Executive Session to discuss a policy matter.

RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION

Following the Executive Session, the regular meeting was resumed and participants were invited into the meeting. Chairman Webster asked Commissioner Harrelson to report on the action taken in Executive Session. Commissioner Harrelson reported that in Executive Session, the Commission adopted a motion to reconsider its previous action to close the sturgeon fishery in the ocean waters in 1985 and amended this action to close the sturgeon fishery in the ocean waters effective April 15, 1985, and for the sturgeon fishery to remain closed until further action by the Commission. Commissioner Harrelson moved for the Commission to approve and ratify this action. Commissioner Compton seconded the motion and it was adopted by the Commission.

F. Other Remarks: There were no further remarks from the Commission.

G. Time and Place of Next Meeting: Chairman Webster announced that the next meeting will be held at 10:00 A.M., February 22, 1985, in Columbia.

ITEM IV. ADJOURN

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