

MINUTES OF MEETING OF WILDLIFE RESOURCES COMMISSION IN COLUMBIA JANUARY 19, 1968

Present were all Commissioners, as well as Directors Webb and Lunz, Pat Ryan, Jeff Fuller, Fred Ramage, Frank Nelson, Ed Latimer, Gene Howell, and Kirk Stringfellow of the Advisory Committee.

Dr. Lunz presented a proposed oyster harvesting bill designed to cut down on persons taking more than the two bushels allowed individuals under the present law. The bill would provide that each person having in his possession more than two bushels of oysters have an identification card, costing \$1 annually, which must be carried on the person when harvesting, handling or transporting oysters in the shell. (This, of course, would not apply to persons properly licensed under the present laws). He said passage of the bill would stop oyster poaching to some extent.

Mr. Eltzroth reported on his appearance before the Budget and Control Board on January 8 to present the merit system for the Division of Game and said the Board had accepted it and given authorization to make salary changes. Everyone in the Division of Game is now classified, he said.

Mr. Webb was asked to have the necessary information given to Dr. Lunz for setting up classifications for the Division of Commercial Fisheries and for Bears Bluff and Dr. Lunz was asked to make recommendations as soon as possible.

The annual report to the General Assembly was then discussed briefly, Mr. Eltzroth asking whether it was possible to determine the amounts coming into the various divisions and how it was expended. Mr. Webb pointed out where this was carried in the annual report for the Division of Game.

Dr. Lunz said that the appropriations for both his Divisions were carried out but not the exact breakdown of expenses such as salaries, car expense, etc. He said these figures were easily available and Mr. Eltzroth said that he would like the figures for the past fiscal year, and for the future, so that he would be in position to answer questions.



Some special legislation for Jasper county bordering on the Savannah river was discussed briefly but it was agreed that it was not feasible to try and change it.

The preliminary report of the committee of Consultants for Marine Science was then taken up, Mr. Eltzroth saying the group had met for three days at Clemson. He said that the Committee had recommended that an expanded research and service groups be organized as soon as practical, which would need \$200,000 for annual maintenance and operations, in addition to present expenditures. The Committee had also said that the present marine science facilities are not adequate to accomplish the job that is required and the minimum sum needed to acquire suitable facilities--including laboratories, piers, storage facilities, workshop and vessels--would be approximately \$600,000.

Mr. Eltzroth said the austerity program recommended by the Governor must be considered and the Commission was faced with the practical problem of requesting the General Assembly for \$600,000 for establishment and \$200,000 for operation of the laboratory.

Mr. Eltzroth praised the work that has been done by the Division of Commercial Fisheries over the years but said the time has now come to make the Division self-supporting, and also to establish a marine laboratory. This can be done only through having a fishing license that encompasses salt water, he said.

He said that it might be possible to consolidate the licensing of fresh and salt water fishing, not necessarily with complete autonomy. It would be desirable to have one license to be required of all persons over 12 years of age, and make it apply to three miles at sea and all inland waters of the state.

He said he had discussed the plan at some length with Mr. Webb in efforts to reach a plan fair to both Divisions and there was no intention of robbing the Division of Game. Drafts of the proposed bill were then distributed.



Mr. Eltzroth added that he believed passage of the measure would mean more revenue for both Divisions and would also provide funds for a marine laboratory. He said that it would cover persons over 65, those who fished only in salt water and canepole anglers. He said some opposition could be expected.

Mr. Mishoe asked what would be the effect if the canepole provision were knocked out, adding that he believed money would be lost if the bill were passed with the canepolers exempted.

Mr. Webb stated that revenue would be lost if the canepolers were exempted including the reservoirs where permits are now required for canepole fishermen but if these reservoirs were not exempt from licenses there would be an increase in revenue.

Mr. Eltzroth said he believed Mr. Webb was too conservative in his estimates of revenue that would be brought in and also he did not think Mr. Webb was correct in his disagreement with the figures provided by Richard Stroud of the Sport Fishing Institute.

Mr. Webb said that the Institute estimated that 329,000 persons fish in salt water in South Carolina, which he thought was a high estimate. He said that the Sport Fishing Institute set a figure of 600,000 for North Carolina and the figures as estimated by the statistical division of N. C. State University were only 416,000; and he thought the South Carolina estimate might also be one-third too high.

Mr. Eltzroth said he did not think just because the North Carolina figures might not be correct that the same would automatically be true for South Carolina. He added that he thought the estimate of \$500,000 additional revenue was conservative.

Mr. Webb then answered some questions as to how the reservoir revenues would be affected by the proposed bill.



A general discussion followed and Mr. Webb suggested a provision that there be no reduction in the revenue of the Division of Game.

Dr. Jones said he was opposed to anything that would take away money from the fresh water anglers.

Mr. Mishoe said he favored the bill as drawn but that if the canepole exemption were knocked out he would not want it; and several other members agreed.

Mr. Glenn asked if anyone had a substitute recommendation to make that would bring in the desired revenue. He also said that the whole thing was so big that no one should take a sectional attitude.

After some further discussion a motion of Mr. Mishoe was adopted that: "The bill be presented and if it should be changed in any way so that the Chairman believed its passage would be harmful to the Department, the Chairman and the Director should do all in their power to kill or block the bill." Dr. Jones seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

A series of photos taken by Gordon Brown under the direction of Jeff Fuller were then shown the Commission. They depicted fish kills and stream pollution in several areas.

Mr. Eltzroth said it was the responsibility of the Commission to seek a stop to the pollution, adding that if South Carolina does not take some action the federal government will. He said the Commission would have to decide what action it should take.

He said that he would arrange a meeting with the Governor to discuss the matter and a brochure should probably be prepared. He added that he hoped the Governor and the new Pollution Commission could do something.

A motion of Mr. Eppes was adopted that the Chairman be instructed to see what could be done and to do whatever he deemed fit in putting the pictures and their findings before the proper persons.



Mr. Glenn asked whether the Commission had injunctive powers and Mr. Latimer explained the law, saying that anything would have to be worked through the Attorney General's office.

Mr. Eltzroth brought up the invitation of the Southern Railway for the Commission to meet at Pregnull in February and said there was a little confusion over the dates. The Secretary was instructed to find out from Walter Brown the exact dates. (I called Walter Brown's office and his secretary said the dates were Monday and Tuesday, February 12-13). To arrive after lunch on Monday and leave after hunts late Tuesday.

Mr. Webb said a letter of resignation had been received from Biologist Tom Gaylord and it was accepted.

The question of educational requirements for new game wardens was brought up, Mr. Glenn saying that in the new job classifications approved by the Budget and Control Board it provided that applicants must have a high school diploma.

Mr. Webb presented a proposed rule and regulation regarding the size mesh for catfish in Santee-Cooper, which would be not less than 1 1-2 inch. He said the majority of the delegations around the lake would have to approved. The Commission approved his recommendation.

Mr. Webb brought up some meetings that would be held starting in March to consider the federal regulations for next season, saying the Commission should be in a position to make recommendations.

Mr. Glenn, Mr. Eppes and Major Cantey were appointed to the dove committee and Mr. Mishoe, Mr. Oliphant and Mr. Eltzroth to the duck committee. The committees will call such meetings as are necessary.

Mr. Webb said the Flyway Council was meeting in Charleston August 7-8 and the Commission should pass on its recommendations to the Council.

Mr. Fuller said that meetings had been held with Cherokee county officials on



the Thicketty Creek fishing lake and plans had been completed. He said the project would have 300 acres, including the 100-acre lake. He said the Department would own and operate the lake after it was completed. He said the Commission had been asked originally to pay up to \$20,000 but this amount had since been increased to approximately \$50,000.

The Commission voted to have the Department participate own and operate the lake.

A number of appointments for Conservation Officers were approved.

Mr. Webb stated that further investigation of the matter involving damage to the car driven by Conservation Officer Murphy revealed that Burnside Motors had not given a correct estimate of the cause of the damage. A motion of Mr. Mishoe was adopted that Officer Murphy not be charged with responsibility for damage to the car and the Commission rescind its previous action.

Mr. Webb brought up the special project for training Department personnel made possible through a grant of \$2,600 from the Sauer Foundation to start the project. He said quite a few of the law enforcement personnel had less than a high school diploma.

The Commission authorized Mr. Webb to assign officers to the school after Mr. Webb had recommended that all conservation officers 55 years of age or under attend night school and complete their education, with the understanding that they did not have to go but if they didn't make some progress toward furthering their education they would not be eligible for raises in the future. The age was set at 55.

Mr. Glenn said that he had found that quite often citizens did not know the names or addresses of their county conservation officers and suggested that these might be carried in the yellow pages of telephone books. The Director was authorized to work this out and put it into effect.



Mr. Eltzroth said that Mr. Ryan and John Spinks have an educational TV program to bring up at a future meeting, which will involve instruction to conservation officers. Mr. Ryan discussed the program and said cost to the Department would be around \$1,000 - \$1,500.

The question of codifying the game laws was brought up and it was agreed nothing should be done until after the legislative session.

Eddie Finlay

