MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WILDLIFE RESOURCES COMMISSION

IN COLUMBIA JANUARY 7, 1953.

All members were present except Mr. Oliphant and Mr. Smith. Also present were Director Richardson, Director Seabrook and Charlie Brice, legislative chairman of the South Carolina Wildlife Federation.

Mr. Warren brought up the report of the Wildlife Management Institute and said the Commission should decide whether the report should be publicized in full, in view of the criticism of certain individuals, and whether action should be taken on it at the present meeting.

Mr. Warren then invited the views of Mr. Brice, who stated the the Commission and the Federation had the same general aims and should agree upon what would be asked of the Legislature.

The Chairman then asked for the views of the Commission on what to do with the report and the ideas of Mr. Seabrook and Mr. Richardson.

Mr. Seabrook said he agreed with the recommendations of the report except for the one that would place the Division of Commercial Fisheries under the Director of the Department. This recommendation was discussed without any action being taken, the Chairman pointing out that it would have to be done by the Legislature.

Mr. Richardson stated that he went along with the report generally but believed it put too much emphasis on paper work and not enough on enforcement, which he said was the backbone of any program. He also declared that certain criticism of the fish hatchery program was unjustified and based on misinformation, particularly in regard to the Berry's Mill, Cheraw and Pickens hatcheries.

In regard to recommendations on administrative changes, Mr. Richardson said he believed the qualifications had been set too high to fill from South Carolina and should be reduced so as to promote men already in the Department.

He also said he believed the paper work in making the suggested reports would take too much time. Mr. Warren said it was the Commission's idea that more reports were needed.

Asked whether funds were available to carry out the suggested recommendations, Mr. Richardson said the Department had sufficient funds.

In regard to placing the Division of Fisheries under the Director of the Department, Mr. Seabrook pointed out that at present the money from Commercial Fisheries goes into the state treasury and is appropriated out while the game money goes into a special fund.

It was agreed that the report be printed in full with an accompanying letter pointing out that it was the report of the Institute and the Commission was not necessarily bound to follow all the recommendations or endorse all its findings.

At the suggestion of Mr. McKeithan the Commission took up the recommendations dealing with changes in the game laws starting on page 82 of the report.

Under the first section on Basic Laws it approved A, B. and F, passed over C. and D, and disapproved E. It approved, with minor changes, all recommendations under #898. It approved all recommendations under Commercial Fishing. All these, subject to final approval, would be contained in a legislative program.

The Commission decided to pass over until a later meeting the administrative recommendations as they could largely be handled under the present powers of the Commission.

The question of the state taking over Bears Bluff Laboratories, as was suggested in the report, was discussed and the Secretary was authorized to ascertain the attitude of the trustees and conduct negotiations toward possible acquisition.

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The Commission then took up the letter of transmittal that would accompany the printed Institute report, as well as the distribution of the report. It was decided to have 1,000 copies printed and give them to members of the Legislature, directors and chapters of the Wildlife Federation, interested state officials and others. The Secretary was authorized to make certain minor changes and to take care of the printing and distribution.

The Chairman and other members then drafted a rough letter of transmittal which would be written by the Chairman, pointing out that certain game laws were inadvertently misquoted; the findings concerning the Berry's Mill, Pickens and Cheraw hatcheries were in error in certain particulars, and the suggested districts were not necessarily in conformity with the ideas of the Commission.

The difficulty of getting fish from state hatcheries in the past was brought up by Mr. Johnson and Mr. Richardson stated that up to the time the Commission took office all hatcheries were county owned and the fish were distributed in the county where located. This condition is now corrected, he said, and the fish can go to any county.

The question of new game laws was discussed and Mr. Richardson pointed out the need of a pamphlet containing all the laws. It was agreed that Mr. Richardson would work with General Merritt in drawing up a new set of laws, since the 1952 Code has now been printed.

Director Seabrook was granted authority to put on a man temporarily for February, March and April during the shad season in Colleton, Dorchester and Hampton counties.

The possibility of cooperation in putting out the Federation paper was discussed with Mr. Brice and Mr. Cantey suggested that the Commission might furnish financial support to the paper, with a certain amount of space allotted to the Department.

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The Secretary was authorized to discuss this with the Federation.

The Secretary was also authorized to visit Raleigh and study the North Carolina information and education setup and also learn the costs and distribution method for the North Carolina magazine.

Mr. Richardson was authorized to pay mileage to Inspector Barwick while he was working with the wardens in Georgetown county.

The Chesterfield warden situation was discussed briefly and the Chairman stated that the matter would have to be settled.

At the suggestion of Mr. Richardson, the Secretary was authorized to process the appointments of wardens after they had been recommended by Mr. Richardson and approved by the Commission.

The question of employing over-age wardens in emergencies was discussed and the Commission approved the appointment of C. H. Sanders of Fairfax as an Allendale warden and authorized the appointment in Georgetown of an over-age warden agreeable to Mr. Richardson and Mr. McKeithan.

Mr. Hopkins brought up the possibility of having Santee-Cooper permits placed at certain designated places in Greenville and other counties. Mr. Richardson was asked to study this matter and authorized to place the permits if the agents paid in advance or furnished bond equal to the amount of the licenses.

The Commission authorized the purchase of a boat, motor and trailer.

Eddie Finlay