

MINUTES OF MEETING OF WILDLIFE RESOURCES COMMISSION IN COLUMBIA NOVEMBER 14, 1963

Present were all Commissioners and Director Webb, Pat Ryan and Tommy Welch.

Mr. Johnson said that the Andersen Company, which conducted the Department audit, was to meet with Auditor Jim Smith November 22 and copies of the audit report will be sent to the individual Commissioners for study.

Mr. Cox said that the Commission would probably approve some of the Andersen company recommendations and disapprove others but there must be coordination with the practices of the State Auditor.

Mr. Johnson stated that the whole matter boiled down to the question of "are we operating efficiently?" He said the report of the auditors covered one level only but could go down to other levels if asked and if it were thought that closer internal controls were needed.

Mr. Johnson said he had received a letter from Attorney Calhoun Thomas asking that a hearing on the Atlantic Shellfish Company matter be carried over from December 12 as he had business in court on that date. (The matter involves pending injunctions against the Commission in connection with oyster lease cancellations).

A motion of Mr. Tison was adopted that this be done and the hearing was tentatively set to coincide with the January meeting.

Mr. Cox said that he would render a decision on the matter before the next meeting.

The question of better publicizing Department activities came up and Mr. Johnson suggested a message on the envelopes and letterhead. He also showed highway maps of Maryland and West Virginia that have the reverse side devoted to wildlife conservation activities by the state agency.

The secretary was instructed to check with the Highway Department as to the feasibility of something similar, as well as having a conservation message imprinted on envelopes and letterheads.

Mr. Johnson brought up the possibility of better publicizing the public deer hunt program through letters to the editors of weekly papers in the counties involved.

The question of ownership of the marshes was brought up by Mr. Cantey and all agreed it was a big question, but one for which there was no simple solution.



Mr. Cox said he had talked with the Attorney General about the matter and the Attorney General was quite concerned about the vital interests of the State being abused.

Mr. Welch was questioned about liability insurance on the Department boat. He said he had contacted several companies and quoted their figures.

Mr. Johnson said that whatever company was chosen that it should be spelled out that the Department immunity would not be used as a defense unless the Commission requested.

It was agreed to raise property damage liability from \$50,000 to \$100,000 if this could be arranged.

Mr. Johnson brought up the question of employment of relatives, which had been held over from the previous meeting.

Mr. Cox said that the law refers only to Department heads employing relatives and one question was: "What is a Department head?"

Mr. Johnson then read the Code section regarding employment of relatives and after brief discussion a motion of Mr. Cox was adopted that: "The Commission does not disapprove the employment of Mr. Wolling's daughter (Mrs. Bradford) in another Division of the Department."

No action was taken on the matter of a maintenance contract with Com-Tec Laboratories on Department car radios.

Mr. Webb said that the position at the Lancaster fish hatchery, which had been discussed at the previous meeting, had not been filled.

Mr. Johnson said that he had written a letter to the Governor regarding the reappointment of Warden Langston and that although the reappointment had not been approved, Langston was holding his position and would continue to do so until a formal hearing was asked.

Mr. Heyward brought up the question of wardens retired for age continuing to wear their uniforms and after a brief discussion a motion of Mr. Heyward was adopted that



"In the future it be made clear to wardens that the uniforms are furnished to them only so long as they are employed by the Department and when this employment is terminated it will all be turned in, except for shoes, sox and tie."

Mr. Welch mentioned some publicity regarding access areas in the Outboard Boating Club magazine and Mr. Johnson said that a letter should be written thanking the OBC, and that something on the letter be considered for the Department magazine.

Mr. Webb presented some appointments and reappointments, all of which were approved.

A telephone for Bamberg Warden Utsey was approved from county funds after Mr. Webb said that Utsey was on an eight-party line and was hard to contact, and also that listeners-in could keep up with his activities.

Mr. Webb then brought up a claim for tools missing from a car confiscated for deer hunting in Williamsburg county, for which a claim had been filed for \$193.76. He said there was no question that tools had been in the car when it was seized but their value was less than that claimed. He said that the car operator had been convicted and the car sold at auction, being bought back by the violator.

Mr. Ryan said the car had been turned over to the Berkeley supervisor and then brought to the Styx hatchery. He said that he had written all supervisors that all items in confiscated vehicles must be inventoried and the arresting officers would be held responsible.

Mr. Johnson said the Department was definitely obligated to pay and Mr. Webb and Mr. Ryan were instructed to see what could be worked out, being authorized to pay "up to" the amount asked.

The proposed legislative program was then brought up and Mr. Johnson suggested that the Commission might appear before the legislative committees.

(At this point Mr. Cox brought in the minutes of the July 1960 meeting which cited Commission action to be taken regarding oyster leases. The Secretary was instructed to make two copies and send them to Chairman Johnson, who would send them to Calhoun Thomas and Brantley Harvey).



Mr. Tison asked Mr. Johnson about his appearance before the Budget and Control Board with Mr. Cantey, Mr. Cox and Director Webb.

Mr. Webb explained some confusion that had arisen over listing of secretaries as a result of shifting the Administration Division over to the Division of Game.

Mr. Cox mentioned that the meeting had been interrupted by an urgent phone call to the Governor and that he had written the Governor a letter later explaining that Federal Aid would be lost if Department money were diverted.

A contract between the Department, the Fish and Wildlife Service and two State agencies regarding predator control was approved, as was an agreement with the International Paper Company for the leasing of 20,000 acres of land for game management.

The question of the garage apartment at Eutawville, which had been destroyed in a storm, being rebuilt was brought up by Mr. Webb. He said that \$2,300 has been collected on the insurance and that federal aid could be used to build a more suitable building. A motion of Mr. Heyward that Mr. Webb be authorized to spend up to \$12,000 on the new building was adopted.

Mr. Heyward also asked about Belmont and the \$25,000 that had been approved for repair and renovation, inquiring how much was left. After some discussion a motion of Mr. Tison was adopted that at the next meeting Mr. Webb present an outline of what was needed, including the installation of shower stalls and a hot water system.

A letter was read from Ducks Unlimited thanking the Department for the contribution through the sale of non-resident licenses.

Mr. Tison asked whether it would be practical to entertain some editors of weeklies at Belmont and how could the expense be handled.

Mr. Johnson agreed to draw up an appropriate resolution governing the use of Belmont by the Department, the Commission and guests for the benefit of the Department and various activities.



A motion was adopted that: "Reasonable and necessary expenses incurred at Belmont be borne by the Department but that these specifically should not include alcoholic beverages."

Mr. Cox stated that a group from Edgefield was planning to use Belmont next week and invited Commissioners and others to come down and join them.

Mr. Tison stated that he had some contact with the Dillon senator regarding charges against the Dillon warden, who had been reappointed, and that he had shown him every courtesy.

Mr. Johnson said that Frank Baldwin has offered to sell 700 acres of landing adjoining Bear Island, and might possibly agree to sell additional land. Mr. Webb said the land is adjacent to the Department land and would be important if expansion were ever needed.

Mr. Johnson asked that Mr. Wolling get up the figures on how many acres of duck land the State owned, Mr. Heyward suggested that this request be expanded to include a map of all lands owned, leased or controlled by the Department. The suggestion was also made that it should include what the land had cost and development and maintenance costs, also dates when acquired.

Mr. Johnson also asked for the duck stamp figures for the past years', and also how many ducks had been killed at Bear Island and how many persons had shot there. He said too much money was being spent on ducks and not enough on other game.

He cited the possible use of some land near Spartanburg, owned by the Forestry Department, which could be used as a demonstration area.

Mr. Tison said something similar to Belmont was needed for the up-state.

Mr. Johnson said the Department was missing the boat on publicity and ducks were not the vehicle for putting over the Department program.

Mr. Cantey suggested Styx as a showplace and demonstration area for the mid-state and Mr. Webb was asked to find out how much land was left around Styx.

The question of free magazine circulation came up and the secretary was requested to send a copy of Gordon Brown's letter to all Commissioners.

Mr. Johnson said the magazine should have articles about prominent state sportsmen.

*Eddie Finlan*

