

*MINUTES OF WILDLIFE RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING IN COLUMBIA NOVEMBER 15, 1968

Present were all Commissioners except Dr. Jones, Directors Webb and Lunz, Pat Ryan, Jeff Fuller, Frank Nelson, Roger Seamans, Gene Howell, Jack Bayless, Hilton Phillips and Kirk Stringfellow of the Advisory Committee.

Following a brief prayer by Chairman Eltzroth, the Commission went into executive session, following which Director Webb, Gene Howell, Pat Ryan and Eddie Finlay were invited in to be told what action had been taken during the executive session.

Mr. Eltzroth said that the Commission had been worried for some time over drinking by certain personnel, particularly while in uniform, and that recent developments had brought things to a head. He said the Commission had decided that:

"Any employee of the Department found driving a vehicle belonging to the Department who had had a drink of alcoholic beverage would be suspended summarily by the Director for a period of two weeks without pay and his badge, gun and pistol would be taken from him. (Mr. Eltzroth stressed that he meant "anyone who had had a drink of alcoholic beverage," and not "anyone who was under the influence of liquor.") For a second violation he would be summarily suspended until the next meeting of the Commission, at which time under the law the Commission would have to act upon his discharge."

"Also, any man in uniform who works for this Department, who takes a drink in uniform, will be suspended summarily by the Director for a period of two weeks without pay. For any second offense he will be suspended until the next meeting of the Commission, at which time we will expect to have a recommendation that he be discharged and the Commission is unanimous that he will be discharged."

Mr. Eltzroth said further that it would be the responsibility of the Supervisors to see that this was enforced and also that the supervisors are to be



responsible for seeing that their men work satisfactorily. The chain of command and responsibility will be observed, he added.

The Supervisors are given the power to suspend subject to review by the Director and the Commission.

The question of time off was also discussed and Mr. Eltzroth suggested that each Conservation Officer be given two days a week off, as well as time to attend church if he were on duty on Sunday.

At this point all personnel were invited back into the meeting and Mr. Eltzroth went over with Dr. Lunz the matters that had been discussed regarding drinking by Department personnel while in uniform and while driving state cars.

A number of appointments and reappointments were presented by Mr. Webb. All were approved except that of Alvin Poston, who would be a conservation officer as well as a pilot, which was held up subject to final approval by Mr. Eltzroth.

Mr. Eltzroth said that he had talked with Attorney Billy Goldberg regarding the fish kill in the Pee Dee by the J. P. Stevens Company and that Mr. Goldberg said that he had only received the report Saturday. Therefore, he would like to appear at a later meeting, possibly in December, after officials of the company had had a chance to study the report.

Mr. Cantey asked whether the criminal court indictment could be dismissed and Mr. Eltzroth said that the solicitor could, if he wished, nol prosee it. He added that, personally, he would be willing for the solicitor to nol prosee the indictment, saying that collecting for the damage caused to the fisheries was the principal Commission responsibility.

Mr. Cantey said he had asked his question in view of the possibility of similar situations coming up in the future and Mr. Eltzroth said that in this event it would be possible to point out the action taken by the Commission.



Mr. Seamans was introduced to the Commission as chief of Information and Education, as well as having responsibility for Bear Island. He made a brief statement, saying that one of the main functions of the Division should be letting the men in the field know what the Commission wishes to be done.

Mr. Webb said that the plans for making the Congaree navigable up to Columbia were again being pushed and asked Mr. Ryan to relate recent developments. Mr. Ryan said apparently things were now coming to a head. He said Mr. Hicklin had called him relative to a meeting that had been held at Wampee by persons interested in developing the navigation on the Congaree and had mentioned another meeting scheduled for Charleston. Mr. Ryan said that he had asked Mr. Bayless to attend this meeting and said that Mr. Bayless was ready to report to the Commission so it would know what plans are afoot and possibly take action.

Mr. Bayless said that apparently the Columbia Chamber of Commerce was taking a leading part in reviving the plans for river navigation from Columbia to the sea via the Congaree and Santee-Cooper. He told of a trip taken to Vicksburg, Miss., with Department and Commission officials to see what might be done to alleviate damage to the striped bass.

Mr. Eltzroth said that the persons at Vicksburg did not believe that the planned system of dams would preserve the fishery.

Mr. Bayless said that the organization of the group at Wampee and later at Charleston was ostensibly for watershed development, including abatement of pollution, improving fishing and barely mentioning navigation, although a later proposal was made to make the Wateree to Camden also navigable. He said that he got the definite impression that the meetings were actually aimed at getting navigation to Columbia.

He also said that much misinformation was being spread and someone "was being sold a bill of goods" in saying that the striper fishery would not be hurt.



He also said the group was concerned about the Commission slowing down its plans.

Mr. Eltzroth asked Mr. Ryan what action the Commission should take to counteract the group's plans, and Mr. Ryan said additional copies of the report prepared by Mr. Fuller should be run off and distributed, and it was important to let the people know what was being planned and the probable results if it were achieved.

Mr. Eltzroth said the most needed thing was to get the danger across to the people, and he suggested that Mr. Fuller's booklet might be condensed. He said the people of Berkeley, Calhoun, Orangeburg counties were particularly concerned as a disappearance of the stripers would seriously hurt motels, restaurants, filling stations and other businesses. He added that the real reason behind the move was to bring down freight rates.

A general discussion of the best methods of meeting the danger followed and it was agreed that personnel of the Department get together and present a plan for the December meeting.

Mr. Eltzroth reported on the budget meetings and said that Dr. Lunz had done a very good job with his presentation.

Mr. Eltzroth said that it might be a good idea to send a boat with a fathometer and chart the area for an unlocatable reef off Georgetown, saying that the bouy marking the reef may have moved. He said that before divers go down to locate the reef it might be best to chart the area for a mile around the bouy.

Dr. Lunz brought up the difficulties of using a fathometer and said he would recommend the use of a tickle chain.

Mr. Eltzroth explained the position of Mr. Forrester, who he said had expended quite a bit of his own money in constructing the reef.

Dr. Lunz said that construction of the Beaufort reef was being delayed and



Mr. Glenn said that he would meet with the Beaufort committee next week.

The matter of state-wide legislation to protect porpoises was brought up and Mr. Eltzroth said the proposed legislation did not provide for stiff enough penalties and Dr. Lunz said he would take up Mr. Eltzroth's recommendations with Henry Lake of the Legislative Council.

Two days annual leave for Dr. Lunz were approved.

Mr. Eltzroth said that the Commission was not receiving credit for its part in the construction of the reefs, adding that the Commission was and has been the moving force. Dr. Lunz was asked to contact the News and Courier regarding this.

Dr. Lunz explained delays in purchasing a car and a boat motor.

Mr. Eltzroth said that he had attended a meeting of the committee of consultants at Clemson and that it was drafting its final recommendations, which he hoped would be sent out Monday, November 25, and the Commission should be prepared to meet on November 27 to consider the recommendations. He said the recommendations should be presented to the Budget and Control Board as soon as possible.

Mr. Eltzroth also said that he had been in contact with Washington and believed money for the crab survey should be available.

— Mr. Webb said that it was important that an allout effort be put forth to secure a universal fishing license at the coming session. He said that it would be important that contacts be made with legislators so that commitments might be secured. He assured Mr. Eltzroth that this was strictly a fresh-water proposition and was not concerned with salt water. Mr. Eltzroth said he did not want anything done that would jeopardize the Marine Laboratory.

Mr. Eltzroth suggested that Mr. Webb go to the Ways and Means, Finance, Con-



ervation and Fish, Game and Forestry Committees, and also send a complete list of members from each Congressional District to the Commissioner from that District, Mr. Eppes to handle those of Dr. Jones.

Eddie Finlay

ERF:jmc

