

MINUTES

SOUTH CAROLINA WILDLIFE AND MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING

Room 335, Dennis Building
Columbia, S. C.
September 5, 1985
1:00 P. M.

The regular monthly meeting of the South Carolina Wildlife and Marine Resources Commission was held at the Dennis Building, Columbia, S. C., Room 335, at 1:00 p.m., September 5, 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, Compton, Harrelson, Owen, Stokes, Thomason, and Bennett. Directors and staff present included Dr. Timmerman, Larry Cartee, Sonny Baines, Bill Chastain, Paul Sandifer, Benny Reeves, Brock Conrad and various other staff and guests.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Webster called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and 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 August 9, 1985 Commission Meeting and approve them as submitted.

ITEM II. COMMENTS

Dr. Timmerman expressed thanks to the Commissioners for attending the budget hearing before the State Budget and Control Board. Dr. Timmerman noted that Senator Dennis had brought up the issue of dog hunting and to clear up any misunderstanding on this matter, Dr. Timmerman recommended that the Commission take action on the following statement: "By action of the South Carolina Wildlife and Marine Resources Commission on September 5, 1985, this is to advise the general public that in traditional dog hunting areas of the state, the Commission has not taken any action nor adopted any policy to prohibit dog hunting in South Carolina." The Commission adopted a motion to approve this recommendation as submitted.

Dr. Timmerman introduced Mr. Jim Quinn who is a new attorney on our staff.

Dr. Timmerman informed the Commission that we have received certification from the Land Resources Commission stating that the Lake Oak Grove dam has been approved and is no longer a danger to the community.

Dr. Timmerman noted that the National Wildlife Federation has filed suit on the use of steel shot in areas where bald eagles nest and range. Through a recent ruling, the federal court has ruled in favor of the National Wildlife Federation.

Dr. Timmerman noted that he recently met with Southeastern regional meeting of the Wild Turkey Federation. Meetings on D-J funding have been held as well as the Waterfowl Symposium. Dr. Timmerman stated that he would leave this weekend to go to the IAFWA meeting in Idaho.

Dr. Timmerman noted that a legal briefing is needed on various matters. Commissioner Compton moved for the Commission to hold an Executive Session following the regular meeting to discuss legal matters. Commissioner Harrelson seconded the motion and it was adopted by the Commission. Chairman Webster announced that the Commission would hold an Executive Session following the regular meeting to discuss legal matters.

ITEM IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. Discussion - Sumter National Forest Plan: Dr. Timmerman noted that it is our desire to maintain a cooperative spirit and working relationship with the U. S. Forest Service, but we do have a responsibility to the general public and sportsmen of the state to express concerns that we may have. Dr. Timmerman stated that we have various concerns with the Sumter National Forest Plan and guidance on this matter is being sought from the Commission. Larry Cartee went over the resolution adopted by the Commission earlier this year on the Plan whereby the Commission had requested that the Plan provide equal consideration for wildlife with other resource interests. Brock Conrad distributed a draft copy of our concerns with the Sumter Plan (copy attached to original Commission Minutes). Mr. Conrad noted that we feel there will be a decrease in both deer and turkey populations during this period of time. Mr. Conrad discussed other concerns and points of possible appeal noting that we feel the Plan needs to be more balanced. Jim Quinn discussed the procedures for filing an appeal noting that an appeal must be filed by September 17, 1985. Following discussion by the Commission, Commissioner Harrelson moved for the Commission to file an appeal on the Sumter National Forest Plan and urge the Department to do everything necessary to protect our rights in this process. Commissioner Compton seconded the motion and it was adopted by the Commission. Dr. Timmerman noted that we will try to resolve this matter in every way possible and meetings will be held with the U. S. Forest Service to try to resolve this issue before we would have to take such to court.

ITEM V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Proposed 1985 Fall Turkey Season: Brock Conrad distributed a copy of the proposed Fall Turkey Season and recommendations to the Commission (copy attached to original Commission Minutes). These recommendations were discussed with the Commission and a motion was adopted to approve the seasons and recommendations as submitted.

B. Discussion - Shrimping in Sounds and Bays: Paul Sandifer noted that the fall shrimp season was opened September 3, 1985, after polling the Commission. A packet of information on the shrimp situation in coastal sounds and bays was sent to the Commission (copy attached to original Commission Minutes). Dr. Sandifer noted that once the season is opened, the staff feels that different management schemes need to be considered based upon the size of shrimp and other considerations. As such, Dr. Sandifer asked the Commission for approval to poll the Commission on different management options after the season is opened. The Commission adopted a motion to approve the request as submitted by Dr. Sandifer.

C. Division Reports:

1. Administrative Services: There was nothing further to report.

2. Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries: Brock Conrad noted that the Commission was sent guidelines for investigating fish kills which have been modified to include notification of major fish kills to the Commissioners by telephone. Mr. Conrad noted the blind spacing regulations adopted by the Commission will be implemented, but we do not have authority to regulate the use of airboats in the upper Santee Swamp so this item cannot be implemented. Following discussion, the Commission asked the staff to seek a legislative remedy concerning this matter.

3. Law Enforcement & Boating: There was nothing further to report.

4. Conservation, Education & Communications: There was nothing further to report.

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

D. Advisory Board Reports:

1. Marine Resources: Commissioner Harrelson noted that the Board met recently and he went over the various items discussed by the Board. Commissioner Harrelson recommended that Billy Silcox be re-appointed to the Marine Advisory Board. The Commission adopted a motion to approve this recommendation.

Commissioner Compton noted that Commissioner Quackenbush has asked that the Commission approve the appointment of John Jernigan to the Law Enforcement and Boating Advisory Board to replace Charles L. Hutto. The Commission adopted a motion to approve this appointment. In addition, it is recommended that the Commission recommend to the Governor the appointment of Thomas J. Thompson to the Law Enforcement and Boating Advisory Board. The Commission adopted a motion to approve this recommendation.

Commissioner Owen recommended that the Commission appoint Jeff Fuller to the Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Advisory Board to replace C. Wofford Josey and to recommend to the Governor the re-appointment of Joe Chapman. The Commission adopted a motion to approve these as recommended.

There being no further discussion, the Commission recessed the regular meeting to hold an Executive Session as previously approved.

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 actions taken in Executive Session. Commissioner Harrelson reported that the Commission took the following actions in Executive Session:

1. A motion was approved by a majority vote to adopt all appointments, re-appointments and promotions of Conservation Officers and Deputy Wildlife Conservation Officers (copy attached to original Commission Minutes).
2. A motion was adopted to authorize the Department's General Counsel to proceed to collect damages for the fish kill on the Saluda River in July, either by litigation, administrative action or negotiated settlement.
3. A motion was adopted to advise the Santee Cooper Public Service Authority and the U. S. Forest Service that the Department must secure an easement and license to pump water out of the reservoir and protect the Department's interest at the Dennis Wildlife Center.
4. A motion was adopted to not grant an extension of permission to use the Santee Reserve Boat Ramp to various individuals that have been granted such permission in the past.

Commissioner Owen moved for the Commission to adopt and ratify these actions. Commissioner Compton seconded the motion and it was adopted by the Commission.

E. Other Remarks: There were no further remarks from the Commissioners.

F. Time and Place of Next Meeting: The Commission agreed to meet at Edisto Beach on October 18, 1985, at 9:00 a.m., at 3742 Dockside Road. Commissioner Harrelson noted that overnight accommodations will be available for those wishing to spend the night.

ITEM VI. ADJOURN

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