

MINUTES
BOARD OF THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Land Resources and Conservation Districts Division Office
2221 Devine Street, Suite 222
March 21, 1997
10:00 A.M.

The regular meeting of the Board of the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources was held at 10:00 A.M. on Friday, March 21, 1997, at the Land Resources and Conservation Districts Division Office in Columbia, South Carolina. Notice of the date, time and place of the meeting was mailed to the State's media. Dr. George Graham presided at the meeting. Board Members that were present included Tommy Miller, Mary Pope Waring, Marion Burnside, Campbell Coxe, Ted Oxner and Corky Lee. Dr. James A. Timmerman, Jr. and staff members of the Department of Natural Resources were present at the meeting as were various guests.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Dr. George Graham called the meeting to order at 10:00 A.M. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

II. Meditation

The Board held a moment of silent meditation.

III. Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting

Board adopted a motion to approve the minutes of the February 13, 1997, Board meeting as presented.

IV. Presentations and Accommodations

- A. Dr. Timmerman recognized the Natural Resources Conservation Service for their work in South Carolina. Dr. Timmerman introduced Cary Chamblee who called on Mark Berkland, State Conservationist with the National Resources Conservation Service and presented him with a plaque commemorating their outstanding achievements through the Wetlands Reserve Program.
- B. Chairman Graham then recognized Captain Bobby Rowe and other representatives of the Newberry Fire Department. Captain Rowe reported on the activities of the Newberry Fire Department, working in conjunction with the Harry Hampton Wildlife Fund, to fund the "Hooked On Fishing Not On Drugs" program and presented the Harry Hampton Wildlife Fund with a \$5,000.00 check. Chairman Graham and the Board thanked Mr. Rowe and other members of the Newberry Fire Department.

Chairman Graham then called on Colonel Huguley who presented Mr. Eric Skidmore, who has been working on the Law Enforcement Chaplaincy Program in South Carolina.

V. Constituency Comments

- A. Chairman Graham reported that Danny Wyndham had requested to be present but was unable to attend.
- B. Mike Willis stated that there were representatives of the South Carolina B.A.S.S. Federation present who would be working with the Department at the Palmetto Sportsmen's Classic on the kids casting demonstration. He then introduced Tony Bennett, South Carolina B.A.S.S. Federation President, Tommy Hubble, the State Environmental Conservation Director, and Mrs. Peggy Hubble, their Treasurer.

VI. Items for Board Action

- A. Written Policy and Directives: Colonel Huguley stated that the material had been mailed to the Board and asked if there were any questions. After a brief discussion, Mr. Lee made a motion that they be approved as submitted, Mr. Miller seconded the motion and the motion was passed. (The approved version of this policy is attached to the original Board minutes.) Colonel Huguley then distributed a draft document dealing with revision of policies that relate to selection and promotion issues, not asking for any Board action at this time.
- B. Boat Ramp Policy: Dr. Sandifer distributed copies of the Boat Ramp Policy, as well as operating procedures to go along with the policies. There was a brief discussion of the procedure to close a boat ramp, and Ms. Waring suggested that the Board may want to receive a briefing on our ramps and their conditions at a separate meeting. Mr. Oxner asked if there was a budget item in the Department's budget for the maintenance of ramps, and Mr. Reeves replied that this is usually handled out of the Water Recreation Fund. Dr. Timmerman then discussed in some detail the Water Recreation Fund and pointed out that some Delegations occasionally wished to use those funds for other than water-related activities allowed under law. He stated that there were often projects that are not allowed under the existing law, but which were made legal by the General Assembly via budget provisos in annual appropriations bill. Chairman Graham and Ms. Waring recommended three amendments, and following that, Mr. Lee made the motion that the policy be adopted as amended, Mr. Miller seconded and the motion was passed. (The approved version of this policy is attached to the original Board minutes.)

Amend

- C. State Water Plan: Chairman Graham stated that the Board had received a copy of the draft State Water Plan and introduced Lynn Youmans, Chairman of the Water Resources Advisory Committee, who provided the Board with a briefing on the final draft of the plan. Chairman Graham stated that the State Water Plan is an enormously important document and commended Chairman Youmans' Advisory Committee and the Water Resources Division staff for the excellent job they had done. He asked Chairman Youmans if he would chair a subcommittee, consisting of himself, Mr. Lee and Mr. Coxe, to ensure that the Board has a complete understanding of the ramifications of the Plan before it goes to the General Assembly.

At this time, Dr. Sandifer distributed a redraft of the Boat Ramp Policy with the amendments suggested by the Board previously. After a brief discussion, the Board accepted this redraft of the Boat Ramp Policy. (The approved version of this policy is attached to the original Board minutes.)

- D. Proposed Heritage Trust Acquisitions in Aiken and Beaufort Counties: Chris Judge then briefed the Board on proposed Heritage Trust acquisitions in Aiken and Beaufort Counties. Chairman Graham stated that this would be carried over into the Executive Session.

VII. Advisory Committee Reports

- A. Heritage Trust: Mr. Lee reported on the Heritage Trust Advisory Board meeting held on February 20th in Columbia and gave a briefing on the activities at that meeting. He also distributed a report on the Heritage Trust Fund activity during 1996. There were no other items for Board action.
- B. Conservation Education and Communications: Mr. Burnside reported on February 28th meeting held in Columbia and stated that a good portion of the meeting was taken up with discussions of the Division's Marketing Program, which had been very successful last year. He and staff also discussed in detail the SCMAPS Program and the Press Fishing Tournament. There were no items for Board action.
- C. Marine Resources: Ms. Waring reported on the Marine Advisory Committee meeting held on March 7th in Charleston, and gave a briefing on the items discussed. She then introduced Rob Westendorf, President of the South Carolina Shrimpers Association, which has proposed a two year moratorium on the sale of shrimp trawling licenses in South Carolina. She stated that her Advisory Committee had studied this matter in great detail and had voted to support the Association in their proposal. She stated that this two year moratorium would allow a window to study whether limited entry should

be sought in South Carolina. After brief further discussion, Ms. Waring made a motion that the DNR Board support the South Carolina Shrimpers Association resolution as presented in the package, Mr. Lee seconded and the motion was approved unanimously. She also reported that the Committee had presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Mr. Marion Sams for his service on the Committee, and that the Committee had endorsed Mr. Micah LaRoche as an appointment from the DNR Board to the Advisory Committee.

- D. Natural Resources Law Enforcement: Mr. Miller reported on the March 12th meeting in District 7 at the Chester State Park, and gave a brief report of the items taken up during the meeting. Mr. Miller then called upon John Miglarese and Mel Bell to give a briefing on the locating of the Winyah Bay Rescue Squad aircraft that was lost during the search and rescue mission on December 7, 1996. He stated that the Department's efforts in this regard were nothing short of extraordinary and congratulated both the Law Enforcement and Marine Divisions' staff for a job well done. Col. Huguley and John Miglarese then gave a detailed briefing of the events that lead up to the crash, and the effort made by the Department to locate the aircraft. Mr. Miglarese praised the work done by Mel Bell and his team to fine tune the search site and to everyone involved in the effort. Ms. Waring praised the effort and the cooperation and coordination that took place between the two divisions. She stated that the entire operation was a top rate job and congratulated everyone concerned. She stated that it helped bring closure to the families who survived the two rescue workers killed in the crash.

VIII. Director's Briefings

A. Executive Office

1. Director - Dr. Timmerman reported that the budget had passed the House and has been sent to the Senate to be deliberated by the Senate Finance Committee. Benny Reeves then gave a detailed briefing on the budget activity as it moved through the General Assembly. Dr. Timmerman stated that he thought it was critical that we receive additional recurring funds for the Heritage Trust Program and stated that, unless instructed otherwise by the Board, he would pursue this diligently in the Senate.

Dr. Timmerman passed out his itinerary and calendar for the months of March and April. He also stated that he had recently been honored by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Foundation and received the Chuck

Yeager Award, which was accompanied by a check for \$15,000. He stated that he intended to donate \$10,000 of this award to the Jocassee Gorges Project and \$5,000 to the Youth Programs that are being planned.

Dr. Timmerman stated that there was some interest in revising the format through which the staff reports to the Board on certain items and recommended that Dr. Sandifer and Mr. Reeves meet with the Board's Finance Committee to determine the best way to deal with this issue.

Dr. Timmerman stated that he was concerned about the condition of our facilities across the state and suggested that we determine our renovation needs and request funds in subsequent budgets to renovate these facilities. He also recommended that we look into a regional facilities concept for the agency across the state.

2. Deputy Director's Committee - Dr. Sandifer reported that the Deputy Director's Committee had been very active and gave a detailed report of the areas covered at the last meeting. He reported that they had received a very detailed report from Mike Willis on the activities of the Awareness Committee and that they unanimously support the recommendations. The Deputy Directors are now considering the costs associated with that program, trying to determine how best to raise the necessary funds for the Awareness Committee budget.
3. Legal - Buford Mabry reported that the Legal Section will be able to hire a new attorney next month. He also reported on two recent cases of significance, both of which had been successfully prosecuted by Paul League of the Legal Office.
4. Legislative - Michael Thompson reported that the Board's Chapter 9 legislation will be debated in a Senate Sub-Committee next week. He stated that he had personally met with all the Sub-Committee members and all but one had agreed to support the legislation. He expressed gratitude to Chairman Graham who had been working on the legislation with the Governor's Office, as well as the House of Representatives. He asked that the issue of legislation dealing with the sale of venison be placed on the agenda for the next Board meeting.

5. Human Resources - Dr. Timmerman gave a brief report on the process being used to fill the Human Resources Director's position.
6. Environmental - There was nothing further to report to the Board at this time.

B. Deputy Directors

1. Administrative Services - There was nothing further to report to the Board at this time.
2. Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries - Brock Conrad distributed a report on deer entitled "Information on Importation of Cervids in South Carolina", and asked that the recommendations be placed on the agenda for the next meeting. He stated that these recommendations have the support of his entire biological staff.

He stated that there were three public hearings scheduled for this month dealing with game zone restructuring and deer season changes. He stated that he would be coming back to the Board with these recommendations once these public hearings were completed.

He reported that at the next Board meeting, his staff will present the final Focus Area briefing, that being on the ACE Basin.

Mr. Conrad then reported that the General Assembly had recently held hearings on the Waccamaw Refuge and that our staff had been present to express the Board's position and the Department's support. After a brief discussion, Ms. Waring recommended that we continue to reiterate the Board's position at every opportunity and urge that people keep an open-mind until the complete plan for the refuge is finalized.

3. Natural Resources Enforcement - Mark Huguley reported on the implementation of the Boating Safety Act this year, stating we are working with the Department of Public Safety to have them administer the testing program. He stated that he felt this would be in place very soon. Col. Huguley then went into a brief discussion of the use of pagers, cell phones, and computers in Law Enforcement.
4. Conservation Education and Communications - There was nothing further to report to the Board at this time.

5. Marine Resources - Paul Sandifer stated that the Board had received recommendations for appointment to the Governor's Billfish Tournament Board and Chairman Graham indicated that this would be taken up in Executive Session.

Ms. Waring asked for the status of the dredging operation on Bird Key Stono, and Ed Duncan stated that he thought that the dredge should be on the site and in operation next week.

6. Water Resources - There was nothing further to report to the Board at this time.
7. Land Resources and Conservation Districts - Cary Chamblee welcomed the Board to the Land Resources and Conservation Districts Division offices, introduced key staff members present and gave a brief overview of the programs in the division. Members of Mr. Chamblee's staff then provided a detailed briefing on the division's operations and activities. Following the presentation, Chairman Graham stated that the four remaining divisions would be given an opportunity to brief the Board on their activities in subsequent meetings, beginning with Administration in April, then followed by Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries, Natural Resources Enforcement, and the Conservation Education and Communications Division.

X. Missions, Goals, & Strategic Planning

There was nothing further to report to the Board at this time.

Chairman Graham stated that Larry Cartee was at the Palmetto Sportsmen's Classic and that he and the Board appreciated his dedicated involvement in that area.

XI. Policy Review

There was nothing further to report to the Board at this time.

XII. Comments

Ms. Waring suggested that staff, including Ed Duncan, Phil Wilkinson, and others develop a long range plan for dredging material placement to maximum the benefits for natural resources functions.

XIII. Executive Session

Mr. Miller moved for the Board to hold an Executive Session to discuss property acquisition, legal and personnel matters. Mr. Lee seconded the motion and it was adopted by the Board. Chairman Graham announced that, at this time, the Board would hold an Executive Session to discuss property acquisition, legal and personnel matters.

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RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION

The regular meeting was resumed and participants were invited into the meeting.

Mr. Miller made a motion that the Board approve the acquisition of the Bear Branch Site, Mr. Burnside seconded, and the motion was passed.

Mr. Lee made a motion that the Heritage Trust staff be instructed to inform the Department of the Navy that the Board is interested in acquiring the Beaufort property, but that we will meet with them at a later date. Mr. Cox seconded, and the motion passed.

Mr. Miller made a motion that the Board appoint Micah J. LaRoche, III, to the Marine Advisory Board to fill the seat formerly held by Marion Sams. Mr. Burnside seconded and the motion passed.

Mr. Miller made a motion that the Board reappoint to the Governor's Cup Billfish Series Board Messrs. Bert Poozer, Tommy Byrd, James Benton, and J. Egerton Burroughs. Mr. Burnside seconded and the motion passed.

Chairman Graham stated that the items dealing with deer pen enclosure in the state and the Department's position on the legislation providing for the sale of venison will be on next month's agenda. He stated that Dr. Timmerman would be working with Senator Thurmond's office to get the Corps of Engineers to reopen the matter of the pumpback storage project at Richard B. Russell.

XIV. Time and Location of Next Board Meeting

Chairman Graham stated that the Board would meet next at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 17, at a Board Retreat at Millaree. The Board meeting will be held at 10:00 a.m., Friday, April 18, at Millaree Hunt Club. Chairman Graham stated that the May Board meeting will be held in Columbia on May 16th. He also reminded the Board that Dr. Timmerman's retirement party would be May 28th in the Moore Building at the State Fairgrounds. He stated that on June 19th, the Marine Resources Division will have its anniversary celebration, and the Board will meet at Ft. Johnson on June 20th.

XV. Adjournment

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