

121st Meeting of the South Carolina Aquatic Plant Management Council

Attendance:

Council Members: Chris Page, Stan Hutto, Jeannie Eidson, Tammy Lognion, Dave Wannamaker, Bob Perry, Larry McCord, Stan Hutto, Bill Marshall

Guests: Daniel Hood, Matt Puckhaber, Casey Moorer, John Morrison, John Grant

Location: Camp Buckhorn Conference Building, Paris Mountain State Park, Greenville, SC

Call to Order: 10:19am 1/20/16

Minutes:

Chairman Chris Page called to order the 121st Meeting of the South Carolina Aquatic Plant Management Council (APMC). Mr. Page asked the council for their review of the 119th APMC meeting minutes. Mr. Page asked Mr. McCord for an overview of his recommendations which were emailed to Mr. Page. Mr. McCord stated that he mostly wanted adequate time to review the minutes. Mr. McCord stated that he felt all that was said and occurred was properly recorded without omissions. Mr. McCord stated that he felt everything was accurately recorded and would surely be reviewed in the future. Mr. Page stated that APMC records detailed minutes so that events can be reviewed after long periods between sessions. Mr. Page stated that all current minutes are linked online as soon as they are approved by the council. Mr. Page briefly overviewed the process of transcribing council minutes. Mr. Marshall expressed his surprise that the Aquatic Nuisance Species Program records all of the minutes "in house". Mr. Page discussed the possibility of using transcription software to record future meetings. Mr. McCord stated his concern for the wording of Mrs. Eidson's conversation with Representative Lowe. Mrs. Eidson informed Mr. McCord that that conversation occurred during the 120th meeting. Mr. Page called for any amendments to the 119th APMC meeting minutes. Mrs. Eidson moved to accept the 119th APMC meeting minutes. Mr. Perry seconded Mrs. Eidson's motion. Mr. Page called for further discussion of the motion. No discussion was brought before the board. Mr. Page called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Page called for a review of the 120th meeting minutes. Mrs. Eidson asked Mr. McCord if he believes that the minutes indicate she had misrepresented Mr. Lowe's understanding of the Santee Cooper (SC) Lakes. Mr. McCord stated that he believed the information was correct, but the wording was confusing. Mr. McCord stated that the word "reportedly" was used to reference statements made to Mrs. Eidson by Mr. Lowe. Mr. Hood stated that he used the word "reportedly" in the 120th minutes due to the fact

that Mrs. Eidson was stating comments made by Mr. Lowe during a previous telephone conversation. Mr. Hood likened the use of Mrs. Eidson's statements to that of hearsay. Mr. McCord stated that he was comfortable with the use of verbiage as long as it were consistent throughout the minutes. Mrs. Eidson stated that the conversation could be found on page 12. Mr. McCord requested page numbers on future copies of minutes. Mr. Page stated that the official minutes will have page numbers, however, he sent the copies out as quickly as possible to give council members time to review. Mrs. Eidson stated that she agrees with the verbiage "reportedly" in the context in which it was used. She defended the decision stating that it was appropriate since Mr. Lowe was not present to defend himself during her account of the conversation. Mr. Hood stated that he did not remember using "reportedly" for any of the other accounts in the 120th minutes. Mr. McCord stated that if Mrs. Eidson was comfortable with the verbiage, then he saw no fault. Mrs. Eidson joking stated that she preferred it to "hearsay". Mr. McCord stated that he did not believe Mrs. Eidson's statements to fall into the category of hearsay. He stated that he had full faith in Mrs. Eidson's reporting of the outside conversation. Mr. McCord stated that he did not see the use of "reportedly" in the rest of the 120th minutes. Mrs. Eidson stated that she believed she was the only person that reported an account of a conversation which occurred outside of the council. Mrs. Eidson stated that she agrees with the verbiage.

Mr. Perry stated that if the council members had reached an agreement on the verbiage used on page 12 of the minutes, then he would like to move on to a related topic of discussion. Mr. Perry stated that he would like to open a discussion concerning OCRM's lack of participation in the APMC. Mr. Perry acknowledged that Mr. Page had Alvin Taylor (SCDNR Director) send a letter to OCRM requesting participation on the council. Mr. Perry asked Mrs. Eidson if she had previously expressed an interest to conduct a discussion with OCRM concerning participation. Mrs. Eidson stated that "Rita" with OCRM had indicated that Mrs. Eidson could serve as the OCRM proxy if she would like. Mrs. Eidson stated that she responded that she could not serve as a proxy as well as represent SCDHEC on the council. Mrs. Eidson reported that the OCRM assigned representative stated that he was too busy to have attended previous meetings. Mrs. Eidson stated that she believed the representative of an agency should make time for the council meetings. Mrs. Eidson stated that she felt the OCRM representative currently in place would be a great candidate, but that he would have to begin attending APMC meetings. Mr. Perry stated that he believed that there are other staff at OCRM which would be equally competent when compared to the current representative. Mr. Perry stated that he believed the current representative has been absent for so long that he could not likely be up to date on the actions of the council. Mr. McCord stated that he believed that all of the council members have busy schedules but that they do not let that fact excuse them from attending meetings. Mr. McCord stated that he believed the lack of attendance from the OCRM representative is indicative to his disinterest in participation

on the APMC. Mr. McCord justified his statement by stating that he has an extremely busy schedule but is able to make time for the APMC. Mr. McCord stated that he feels his participation in the APMC is very important. Mr. McCord stated that the council was created to ensure that several agencies across South Carolina are able input their vote as to the actions of aquatic plant management measures. Mr. McCord stated that he believes that if OCRM is interested in having their opinion heard, then they need to appoint a representative that will attend council meetings. Mrs. Eidson stated that she hoped OCRM would appoint a representative who was willing to attend meetings in the near future. Mrs. Eidson mirrored Mr. Perry's statement that OCRM has many employees with adequate knowledge of aquatics to serve on the council. Mr. McCord stated that he does not believe a member of another agency should serve as proxy for OCRM. He stated that an employee of one agency serving as proxy for another would effectively create an unbalanced council.

Mr. McCord stated that the council is still in need of addressing the balance of the council as it presently stands. Mr. McCord returned to his previous statement that OCRM should be responsible for providing a representative for their seat on the council. Mr. Perry stated that he agrees with Mr. McCord and will continue to do so until the statute is changed.

Mrs. Eidson addressed the council to ask whether the Governor's Office (GO) had appointed a member to serve on the council. Mr. Page responded that Director Taylor had sent a letter to the GO and had received a response indicating that they do not currently have an environment staff member. Mr. Page reported that the GO had offered two people to serve as the GO APMC member. Mr. Page stated that he has copied the two people on all email correspondence concerning meetings but has not received a response. Mr. Perry stated that he was concerned that the member of the GO that may attend would not likely be versed in the current issues of the council. Mr. Perry stated that he feels that the council is neither gaining nor losing anything from the lack of GO participation. Mr. Perry stated that he would like to see OCRM participation on the council. Mr. Perry asked Mrs. Eidson if she felt it would be appropriate for him to reach out to OCRM staff as well. Mrs. Eidson responded that she was in agreement with Mr. Perry's proposal.

Mr. Page stated that most of DNR's aquatic plant management field work is performed in the same area of the state that is focused on by OCRM. Mr. Page listed several treatment sites near the freshwater/saltwater dividing line along the coastal plain of South Carolina. Mr. McCord stated that he had concerns with SCDNR having input on which employee of SCDHEC (OCRM) is chosen to serve on the council. Mr. Perry stated that his intention was not select a member of OCRM, but rather to encourage their participation. Mr. McCord stated that he agreed with Mr. Perry's stated intentions. Mr. McCord stated that he felt that a request from Mr. Page, the council Chairman, should

have been adequate to represent the council's request. Mr. McCord stated that he did not feel that additional effort should be necessary in order to illicit a response.

Mr. McCord stated that he felt that the participation of the GO is as important as any seat. Mr. McCord stated that each seat is assigned to an agency as per the bylaws. He stated that he could not recall if the last member of the GO to attend council meetings had an environmental background. Mr. Page stated that he believed that last GO member was Hank Stallworth. Mr. Perry agreed with Mr. Page that the member had been Mr. Stallworth. Mr. Page reminded the council that during Mr. Stallworth's time with the GO he had a proxy from his staff sit in his place at APMC meetings. Mr. Page stated that the proxy for Mr. Stallworth did not have an environmental background. Mr. McCord reiterated that he would not like to eliminate any of the current chairs on the council as it may affect the overall balance of the council. Mr. Wannamaker stated that though he does not possess a great deal of previous knowledge concerning aquatic plant management, he has relied on his understanding of scientific data to form his opinions. Mr. Wannamaker stated that agencies with representation on the APMC should all attend.

Mrs. Eidson stated that the only way to change the statute of the APMC is to have the proposed changes approved by legislation. She reminded members of the council that seeking changes to the bylaws could result in the total dissolution of the APMC altogether. Mrs. Eidson stated that OCRM could be reached in a strategic manner to avoid any bias from any single agency. Mr. McCord stated that if Mr. Perry would like to reach out to OCRM, then he would have no quarrel with that action. Mr. McCord stated that his only concern is that SCDNR does not have an influence on who is ultimately selected to represent OCRM. Mr. Page stated that there is a possibility that the letter from Director Taylor to the Director of DHEC may have not reached OCRM's representative. Mrs. Eidson stated that whether the letter had reached or not, she had personally spoken with the representative's supervisor. Mrs. Eidson stated that she would contact the supervisor at OCRM and ensure that she had received SCDNR's letter.

Mrs. Eidson stated that OCRM and the GO could allow proxies to fill the vacant council positions. Mrs. Eidson addressed Mr. Marshall to inquire whether the GO had an intern program or something of that nature which could provide an environmental based candidate. Mr. Marshall stated that he had served on the APMC from 1984-1988 while working at the GO. Mr. Wannamaker asked Mr. Marshall what his position had been with the GO at that time. Mr. Marshall stated that he was one of the staff for the Natural Resources and Environment office. Mr. Marshall stated that when he began serving the APMC in 1984 the statute had been passed only a couple of years before. He stated that aquatic plant management was a relatively new field for South Carolina at that time. Mrs. Eidson stated that she had worked with Mr. Marshall during graduate school. Mr. Perry requested that the council enter into executive session in order to further discuss council personnel attendance. Mr. Page stated that the council would enter into executive

session at 10:53am. The council continued the meeting by exiting executive session at 11:12am.

Mr. Marshall said that he was not aware of the current makeup of the GO Offices. Mr. McCord stated that the issues of representation need to be visited based on recent events within the council. Mr. McCord stated that a problem arose when several agencies on the council were merged into one, resulting in an unbalanced council. Mr. McCord stated that since the council dictates what management strategies can be used on the SC Lakes, it is of large concern that the agencies are not equally represented. Mr. McCord outlined the current restriction SC faces concerning water quality and treatment measures which were not in place when the council was formed.

Mr. Wannamaker asked as to the ownership of the SCDNR Wildlife Management Areas (WMA's) on the SC Lakes. Mr. McCord stated that the SC Lakes WMA's consist of property owned by Santee Cooper. He stated that funds are provided by Santee Cooper to SCDNR for management of said WMA's. Mr. Page stated that the funds provided for SC WMA's are a separate agreement between SC and DNR's Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries division. Mr. McCord stated that in the past SC and DNR have agreed on management strategies within the SC WMA's. Mr. McCord stated that SCDNR Aquatic Nuisance Species Program (ANSP) has agreed to offer contracted treatment to SC WMA's in lieu of cost share. Mr. Wannamaker asked Mr. McCord if SC was satisfied with DNR's management of said WMA's. Mr. McCord stated that they were satisfied with some of the WMA's and dissatisfied with others. Mr. McCord stated that a recent meeting between SCDNR staff and SC staff had recently taken place to discuss SCDNR's past and future management of the SC WMA's.

Mr. Page called that discussion be redirected to the approval of the 120th meeting minutes. Mr. McCord stated that the only correction that he would recommend was to change the expiration date of the "agreement" on page 15 to "March 2015". Mr. Perry stated that he would ask that the record clarify an expiration date of March 2015 as opposed to March 2016.

Mrs. Eidson stated that she wanted to briefly state that as a part of "committee" reports, she would like to state that other than pursuing legislation to get the statute changed there was no other option for restructuring the council. She stated that this was her reason for not having a committee meeting. Mr. Page stated that Mrs. Eidson had performed the duties intended by the initiation of the committee, and that she may be asked to pursue further action in the future. Mr. McCord stated that, as a member of the committee, if they feel the need to meet to plan an action, they will do so and report to the council. Mr. Page stated that the council may also request that the committee meet again if the need arises.

Mr. Page called for any other discussion of the 120th APMC meeting minutes. No further discussion was brought before the council. Mrs. Eidson moved that the 120th APMC meeting minutes be approved with the inclusion of the suggested changes. Mrs. Lognion seconded Mrs. Eidson's motion. Mr. Page called for a vote. The motion to approve the 120th APMC meeting minutes as amended passed unanimously.

Mr. Page called for any public comments. No public comments were brought before the council. Mr. Page stated that due notice was given via the SCDNR website as well as notice sent to local media outlets.

Mr. Page called for any further committee reports from Mrs. Eidson or Mr. Perry. Mr. Perry stated that the meeting between SCDNR and SC staff to discuss the "agreement" had not yet occurred. Mr. Perry stated that he felt the minutes were accurate in their discussion of the meeting concerning the agreement. He stated that Mrs. Cope was waiting to receive feedback from her staff concerning the agreement before the meeting takes place. Mr. McCord stated that the agreement was very briefly discussed at the recent meeting between SC staff and Wildlife Freshwater Fisheries staff. Mr. McCord stated that the agreement discussion will need a dedicated meeting in order to discuss of its terms. Mr. McCord stated that the previous minutes stated that he and Mr. Perry would agree upon a meeting date once all of the input from staff was collected.

Mr. Page stated that there was a meeting between Santee Cooper staff and DNR Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries staff to discuss management practices on the Santee Cooper WMA's. Mr. Page stated that the management practices were discussed with staff from both agencies and the importance of the input was stressed. Mr. Page stated that the meeting was very productive. He stated that habitat enhancement practices for the benefit of waterfowl and fish populations were discussed. Mr. Page stated that specific areas were discussed and planned to expand enhancement areas for waterfowl and fisheries. Mr. Page stated that Mr. Simmons was working with his biologist to gather a list of areas to expand habitat enhancement within. Mr. Page reported that Santee Cooper stated they would assist DNR staff with treatment measures if DNR found themselves in need of assistance. Mr. Page briefly overviewed the past two years with regards to SC, DNR meeting and why he feels this year's meeting was more productive. Mr. Page stated that he feels meetings with middle level management employees are the most effective and productive. He stated that these managers are the employees directly involved with specific target areas and as such are the most important individuals to contact concerning planning.

Mr. McCord stated that he would like to briefly discuss the SC WMA's for the benefit of increasing new council member's understanding. Mr. McCord stated that many of the SC WMA's are very expansive and consist of several thousand acres. He stated that some of the WMA's have large areas which go for many years without receiving any

management practices. Mr. McCord stated that while natural areas can have great benefits, when the objective is to maximize fish and waterfowl habitat manipulation is necessary. Mr. McCord stated that there are many opportunities to increase waterfowl populations on the SC WMA's. He stated that during the SC, DNR meeting waterfowl enhancement management practices were discussed between SC staff and DNR Wildlife and Fisheries staff. Mr. McCord reported that Mr. Lamprecht stated that many of the waterfowl enhancement management practices would likely increase fish populations and fishing opportunities. Mr. McCord stated that enhancing the recreational opportunities on these SC WMA's not only benefits SCDNR but also falls within the regulations required by SC's FERC license.

Mr. Wannamaker asked if the cooperation between SC and DNR in managing the SC WMA's was adequate to meet the agreement between the two agencies. Mr. Page stated that the council does not modify many of the requests for management practices on the SC Lakes. Mr. Page stated that the item that is sometimes debated is the planned stocking number of triploid grass carp. Mr. Page stated that in terms of fiscal budget, the Santee Cooper program spends much more money on management of aquatic species than SCDNR. Mr. Page briefly overviewed a list of practices that SC Staff is required to do that SCDNR staff relies on other agencies to perform. (ie: water quality sampling) Mr. McCord also overviewed many of SC's management practices. Mr. McCord stated that if their staff were to fail to perform said management practices, then the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) would dictate every specific task in which SC was required to do in order to maintain their license. Mr. McCord stated that FERC's mandates are always more costly than the routine monitoring and management the SC conducts based on "good science". Mr. Page stated that all of the state environmental agencies as well as Federal agencies submit their recommendations for management practices when developing a FERC license. Mr. McCord stated that the license term general extends from 30-50 years. He stated that the upcoming license renewal has been in process for over 17 years and is still not complete.

Mr. McCord stated that the Santee Cooper portion of the plan seems to attract more conflict from public interest. He stated several reasons that could be the cause of the public disagreement. Mr. Wannamaker stated that during his time on the council, the majority of the discussions have dealt with management of the Santee Cooper Lakes. Mr. Page stated that other water bodies have caused debate in the past over issues such as grass carp stocking. Mr. Page provided the stocking of triploid grass carp into Lake Murray as an example.

Mr. Page moved the discussion back to the meeting between SC and DNR. Mr. Page stated that the main topic which could not be fully resolved during the meeting was a determination of what affect the October flooding had on the grass carp population in the SC Lakes. Mr. McCord stated that the biologists of both agencies stated that they did

not know what affect the flooding had on the grass carp population, the movement of vegetation, or the removal on vegetation. Mr. Page stated that the SC system is still in a state of high water, and has had to continue spilling from the flood gates. Mr. McCord stated that he agreed with Mr. Page's assessment. Mr. McCord compared the current state of the SC Lakes to that of a river more so than a lake. He stated that the turbidity levels in Lake Moultrie are elevated as well. He also mentioned that the generating stations on the Lakes are running in order to take advantage of the high water levels while power demands are also elevated. Mr. McCord stated that surveys will be impossible until the Lakes reach a point at which they are not so turbid. He extended this point to especially include aerial surveying. Mr. McCord stated that boat surveys are possible but very limited due to the overall size of the system. He stated that aerial surveys as well as boat surveys had begun in early October but were cut short by the historic flooding.

Mr. Page turned the attention of the council to the 2016 APMC Annual Plan. Mr. Page reviewed pages 2 and 3 to conclude that he changed the previous list to the current table format. Mr. Page stated that most of the prescriptions for the listed sites do not change from year to year in the plan. He also stated that a prescription's listing in the plan does not necessarily indicate something that will be performed. Mr. Page stated that many of the sites listed in the plan are listed as a precaution in case DNR should find that they are in need of treatment. Mr. McCord stated that the key word is "plan" rather than "mandate". Mr. Page agreed with Mr. McCord's statement. Mr. Page continued by stating that he also sends SCDHEC a list of planned control measures on all water bodies which are drinking water sources.

Mr. Page directed the attention of the council to page 26 section: Lake Bowen. Mr. Page stated that an additional site, Reservoir 1, was added to the Lake Bowen section. He stated that Reservoir 1 has developed a bladderwort infestation as well as an ongoing problem with MIB's. Mr. Page stated that DNR staff have only offered logistical advice for the contractor treating the MIB issue. Mr. Page stated that Clemson University is also assisting with the MIB treatment. Mr. McCord asked Mr. Page to briefly explain MIB's to the council. Mr. Page stated that they are an alga like species which cause water quality issues in the form of "off" smell and taste in drinking water supplies. Mr. Page stated that Jasper and Anderson counties have both dealt with MIB's recently. Mr. Page stated that a planned stocking of grass carp had been added in order to deal with the Chara in Lake Bowen. Mr. Page stated that Lake Bowen was originally stocked with grass carp due to the presence of Hydrilla. Mr. Page stated that the Hydrilla was eliminated and has not re-sprouted since the introduction of grass carp into Lake Bowen.

Mr. Page stated that Lake Murray and Lake Greenwood sections were left the same as they were in the 2015 Plan. Mr. Page stated that he has been researching in order to find what possible impacts may have affected the grass carp population in Lake Murray during the October flooding. Mr. Page stated that so far his search has not led to

any scientific findings. Mr. Page stated that the current plan for Lake Murray is a maintenance stocking level in order to control the grass carp population at a rate of 1 carp per 10 surface acres. Mr. Page briefly overviewed the difference in carp rate for the SC Lakes compared to Fall Line and Upstate Lakes. Mr. Page stated that these differences are based on research by Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University which indicated a lower mortality rate for lakes at or above the Fall Line. Mr. Marshall asked Mr. Page why he did not feel comfortable leaving the stocking rate the same for Lakes Murray and Greenwood. Mr. Page responded that he feels that the mortality rate was most likely increased by the October 2015 flooding. Mr. Page stated that he does not have adequate scientific evidence that the flooding increased mortality, so he cannot act on his feeling alone. Mr. Page stated that DNR fisheries staff found hundreds of dead carp along the Saluda River below the Lake Murray Dam after the flooding resulted in emergency spilling. Mr. McCord asked if revisiting the plan would be possible if adequate scientific evidence of increased mortality were to become available. Mr. Page stated that revisiting stocking would be possible if new scientific information became available.

Mr. Page stated that a similar situation exists on the SC Lakes due to flooding. Mr. Page indicated that Mr. Lamprecht was currently working to collect mortality data for grass carp within the SC system. Mr. Marshall asked Mr. Page as to what system is used to estimate grass carp population within a given water body. Mr. Page responded that there is a formula that uses a scientifically verified, expected mortality rate. Mr. Page gave the example of 22% mortality rate for the Lake Murray system. Mr. Page overviewed several factors that affect the mortality rate. Mr. Page stated that Phil Quirke performed the surveys and modeling used to arrive at the mortality factor used for the Santee Cooper Lakes. Mr. Page suggested that DNR should fund further collections by Dr. Quirke and his team in the coming years on the SC Lakes. Mr. McCord stated that Dr. Quirke is now retired. He went on to state that whoever is chosen should possess the proper equipment to perform age and growth analysis. Mr. McCord stated the importance of current, quality information in determining grass carp population estimates. Mr. McCord stated that Mr. Lamprecht will continue with his collections in the near future.

Mr. Page stated that he asked Mr. McCord and Mr. Lamprecht to work together in order to form a priority list of collection parameters so that SC and DNR can work in conjunction to collect the necessary data. Mr. Page stressed the importance of using knowledgeable staff in the collection of said data. Mr. McCord reiterated that he would like to accept help from anyone at DNR. Mr. Page stated that the general premise was for general staff to inform Mr. McCord or Mr. Lamprecht if they came upon an area of interest while on the SC system. Mr. Page stressed the importance of communication within and between state agencies. Mr. McCord agreed with Mr. Page, citing past reports

which have differed among personnel from separate agencies. Mr. McCord stated that this was an area with room for improvement. Mr. McCord stated that any reports or assistance with boat surveys would aid SC staff with their regular job requirements.

Mr. Page brought the Santee Cooper section of the 2016 plan to the attention of the council. Mr. Page stated that Mr. Davis suggested an acreage of "to be determined" on page 54. Mr. Page stated that he would like to keep the acreage the same as it was in 2015. Mr. McCord stated that he had no issue with keeping the numbers the same as 2015, as long as it is clear that the numbers do not represent exact acreages. Mr. McCord stated that the status of many of the aquatic plant species are unknown after the October flooding. Mr. McCord stated that he anticipates considerably less water hyacinth issues due to the flooding. Mrs. Eidson stated that she would suggest that the wording in the plan state that estimates are based on surveys conducted prior to the October flooding and are subject to change. Mr. McCord stated that he would be ok with Mrs. Eidson's wording. Mr. McCord stated that since the document is public, the qualifying word "estimates" would be helpful. Mr. Page stated that he would include the change. Mr. Page stated that the outline of estimates are also included on page 55. Mr. Page turned the attention of the council to pg. 55. He stated that this section had been reviewed and amended by Mr. McCord and Mr. Lamprecht. The council began to review the section on page 55.

Mr. Page asked for any proposed changes to the Santee Cooper section of the plan. Mrs. Eidson stated that she would like to clearly state that plant acreages for the 2016 Santee Cooper section were based on estimates obtained prior to the flood events. Mr. Page stated that he would include the change as well as the current wording, in order to emphasize the fact that decisions in the plan are based on the most current data available. Mr. Page stated that since the flooding was historically unprecedented, we will have to rely on estimates for the 2016 plan until conditions allow for detailed surveys. Mr. Page discussed that the plan states "the council will convene at a later set date when conditions allow for surveys to be conducted". He stated that the set date is not yet established and depends on future weather events. Mr. Page stressed the importance of this future meeting. Mr. Page stated that the next meeting will occur after a 30-day public comment period has elapsed. Mr. Page stated that the proposed budget for the Santee Cooper yearly Aquatic Plant Management remained the same as 2015.

Mr. Page stated that on pg.57 he had added the WMA's that SCDNR is managing within the Santee Cooper watershed. Mr. Page addressed the small, enclosed area of the Hatchery WMA which is infested with hydrilla. Mr. Page stated that the most simple solution would be to stock a small number of grass carp into the enclosure. Mr. Page stated that he would need to include a stocking rate in the plan. Mr. Perry asked if the area would be considered a sub-impoundment. Mr. Page stated that he would agree with the term "sub-impoundment". Mr. Page stated that it was listed as "pond 1" in the

Hatchery subsection of the plan. Mr. McCord stated that the area was a former access canal to the main lake but has now formed a sediment dike and is no longer usable for boating access to the main lake. Mr. McCord stated that while it is not a major use area for fish and waterfowl, it does pose the threat of containing hydrilla that could be spread to the main lake. Mr. Page stated that he would most likely include a proposed rate of 15 grass carp per acre for the sub-impoundment. SCDNR and SC staff agreed that the sub-impoundment was approximately 4 acres.

Mr. Page called the attention of the council to Hickory Top WMA. Mr. Page stated that efforts to improve hunter access and waterfowl usage within the green tree reservoir would continue in 2016. He stated that SCDNR staff have plans to expand some of the enhancement efforts to areas outside of the green tree reservoir. Mr. McCord stated that SC staff planned to work on outer areas of Hickory Top to remove giant cutgrass and scrub trees in an effort to increase wildlife usage. Mr. Page stated SCDNR Wildlife staff were planning to work with Mr. Lamprecht in order to develop a management plan with prioritized zones for treatment.

Mr. Page called the attention of the council to the Potato Creek WMA section of the Plan. Mr. Page stated that Potato creek is connected to the main lake by a small canal. Mr. Page stated that the canal has water control structures which used to contain gates. Mr. Page stated that Santee Cooper has agreed to replace and assist with maintenance of the gates in order to secure the area for stocking of triploid carp. Mr. Page stated that the area will be treated for hydrilla control using carp as opposed to a \$60,000/treatment dose of Sonar. Mr. Page stated that the carp will be contained by screens within the water control structures of the canal. Mr. Page stated that Mr. Simmons and Mr. McCord are planning to set a schedule for monitoring and maintenance of the screens in order to assure their operation. Mr. Page stated that the budget for Potato Creek currently remains the same in case SCDNR needs to treat the hydrilla before carp are introduced to increased their efficacy.

Mr. Page called the attention of the council to the Sandy Beach WMA section. Mr. Page stated that the Sandy Beach operations will remain the same as in 2015 with the addition of some canal treatments. Mr. Page stated that there is a need for canal/ditch treatment in order to facilitate water flow. Mr. Page stated that the canal work was added to the section at the request of the Sandy Beach Manager.

Mr. Page called the attention of the council to the Santee Cooper WMA (Orangeburg County) section. Mr. Page stated that the same treatments are planned for 2016 as were in 2015. Mr. Page stated that the only change was that Santee Cooper WMA is now a separate subsection in the Plan. Mr. Page stated that goal for the Santee Cooper WMA water bodies over the past few years has been to increase waterfowl usage by opening landing areas in sections which were previously inundated with vegetation.

Mr. Page stated that vegetation control measures within Santee Cooper WMA also increase boating access for fishermen.

Mr. Page called the attention of the council to the State Parks Section of the Plan. He stated that no major changes were made from 2015 to 2016. Mr. Page stated that he did not expect amendments to the State Parks section. Mr. Hutto stated that he is planning to treat the parks in need of work as his budget will allow.

Mr. Page made notes of a few of the funding sources which can be found in a complete table form within the Plan. Mr. Page stated that the table could be found on page 106 of the Plan. Mr. Page stated that some of the tables were removed and the public comments from years past were also removed. Mr. Page stated that after a 30-day period for public comments has elapsed the comments for the 2016 Plan will be included. Mr. Page called for any further questions on the 2016 draft Plan. No questions or comments were brought before the council. Mr. Perry moved that the 2016 draft Plan be approved as the council has amended. Mr. Wannamaker seconded Mr. Perry's motion. Mr. Page called for any discussion on the motion and none was brought before the council. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Page called for any new items for council action. No new items were brought before the council. Mr. Page asked the members of the council what dates in March would work for the next APMC meeting. Mr. McCord asked what the agenda for the next meeting will include. Mr. Page stated that the public comments on the plan will be reviewed and the final 2016 plan will be approved. Mr. McCord asked what the Plan will say pertaining to grass carp stocking in the SC Lakes. Mr. Page stated that the Plan will state the members of the council will be meeting at a later date to determine whether or not grass carp stocking will be necessary in 2016.

Mr. Perry requested that the date of March 1st be considered for the next meeting. Mr. McCord stated that he would request a tentative date for the meeting and that a poll be sent to council members for the determination of the meeting date. Mr. Page stated that he will send a notice when the date nears. Mr. Wannamaker moved that the 121st meeting of the APMC be adjourned. Mrs. Eidson seconded Mr. Wannamaker's motion. No further discussion was brought before the council. The 121st meeting of the APMC was adjourned at 12:29.