MINUTES OF SOUTH CAROLINA WILDLIFE RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING IN COLUMBIA

NOVEMBER 8, 1956

All members of the Commission were present, along with Director Richardson, Bob Lunz, Jim Webb and Jeff Fuller.

Senator Warren stated that the Budget and Control Board had set aside $5,000 from the contingent fund for the purchase of a boat for the Commercial Fisheries Division, to be used for patrol and inspection work and for collecting statistical data. He said that he had seen a boat at Charleston on sale for $7,500 but Mr. Seabrook said he did not consider that the Division needed a boat of the type being considered. (Mr. Warren said that he subsequently bought the boat personally and would be glad to make it available to Commissioners).

The question of turning the money back to the Budget and Control Board was discussed, Mr. Johnson suggesting that before turning it back the advisability of securing a light plane might be considered, if the Board approved. He added that the plane would be used both for commercial fisheries and inland game and fish work.

A motion of Mr. Cox was approved that: "Senator Warren be requested to remove the Budget and Control Board from the responsibility of turning the $5,000 over to the Division of Commercial Fisheries and that a committee be appointed to study the feasibility of the Commission buying a plane." Senator Warren appointed Mr. Cox, Mr. Huggins and Mr. Johnson to the committee.

A letter was read from Director Seabrook suggesting that metal tags for shad be used to replace the present paper tags. Mr. Huggins said that he believed that if the metal tags were used, and suitable changes were made in the laws, there would be an increase in revenue, even though the metal tags cost more. He said that not more than one-fifth of the shad sold in the State paid the tax.

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A motion was adopted that Director Seabrook find out the cost of the metal tags, what changes would have to be made in the law as to putting on the tags and raising the amount charged for the tags. It was also voted that recommendations should be made by Mr. Lunz.

Mr. Lunz suggested that setting up license and tax figures was a complicated subject and should be studied carefully, preferably by a tax expert. He pointed out the inequities in some of the commercial fisheries taxes, which ranged from 24 per cent to one per cent of revenue among different industries.

A motion was adopted that Mr. Johnson take up with President Donald Russell of the University the matter of a comprehensive survey of the tax situation in regard to commercial fisheries, with recommendations, to be made by someone at the University. Mr. Webb suggested that North Carolina State might be called upon in the matter.

The matter of the revocation of the commission of a non-pay warden in Horry county was discussed and Mr. Huggins explained the background of the case and his subsequent discussion with the Governor. It was agreed that the matter was now settled and nothing more could be done.

Senator Warren read a letter from the Governor setting up requirements for the commissioning of non-pay wardens. Director Richardson was authorized to prepare such application forms as would meet the requirements outlined by the Governor.

The status of the Union county warden, elected by the people of the county, was discussed and Director Richardson read a letter from the Attorney General regarding the act providing for the warden and his status in regard to the Department. Director Richardson pointed out that the warden is responsible only to the people of Union county.

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A motion of Mr. Cantey was adopted that: "The Department be guided by the Attorney General's opinion with the understanding that warden is subject to the control of Union county and the county is to provide all instructions and expenses."

Mr. Richardson was authorized to use his own judgement in the matter of reappointing non-pay game wardens.

The Secretary was instructed to write Federation President Alex Quattlebaum regarding legislation favored by the Commission. Mr. Johnson said that he was preparing a bill on night hunting that he would send to Mr. Webb.

Mr. Webb said that he had been going over the existing laws, eliminating contradictory provisions, and that the revised and completed body of laws would be presented to the General Assembly. He added that controversial matters would be submitted as separate legislation.

Mr. Hopkins read a letter from a Dr. Watson of Greenville praising Department personnel for their conduct of the Francis Marion hunts and Mr. Johnson joined him in mentioning the favorable reports he had received. Mr. Hopkins also complimented Mr. Fuller on the recent fish moving project and said it had resulted in much favorable publicity and good will.

Mr. Warren pointed out that Mr. Cox and Mr. Huggins had not named members to the Advisory Committee from their districts and they said that they would take care of this and notify the Secretary of their choices.

The question of turning over a 40-foot boat of Bears Bluff to Supervisor Mac Flood for Santee-Cooper was disapproved by Director Richardson.

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The question of additional raises for wardens was brought up by Mr. Cantey and Director Richardson said funds were not available.

Mr. Webb said that the Flat Lake impoundment was being handled as a P-R project was now subject to approval by the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Mr. Lunz brought up current plans for further diversion of fresh water from the Edisto river. He said that this might have an extremely adverse affect on salt water fisheries. Mr. Webb added that it would also cut off fresh water for Bear Island and that he was concerned about the problem.

Mr. Fuller discussed the transfer of small Santee-Cooper rockfish to Arkansas and said the operation was successful, in so far as getting the fish was concerned. He added that small rockfish were to be placed in Lake Murray and Lake Greenwood.

Eddie Finlay