

MINUTES
BOARD OF THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Rembert C. Dennis Building, Room 335

Columbia, South Carolina

Friday, May 16, 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, May 16 1997, Rembert C. Dennis Building, Room 335, 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, Marion Burnside, Campbell Coxe, Mary Pope Waring, 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 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 prior to the beginning of the meeting.

III. Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting

Board adopted a motion to approve the minutes of the April 18, 1997, Board meeting as submitted.

IV. Presentations/Commendations

There were no presentations/commendations to be made at this time.

V. Constituency Comments

- A. S.C. Hospitality Association - Dr. Graham recognized Tom Sponsellar of the S.C. Hospitality Association, who spoke in favor of the sale of farm raised non-native venison in South Carolina restaurants. He introduced Kirk Holprin from Atlanta, Georgia, of the Buckhead Beef Company, who stated that there was a large demand for the sale of venison in restaurants and expressed the opinion that a bill could be written to allow this, and still protect wild herds of deer. He stated that his company handles a farm raised venison product from New Zealand and demonstrated how the paper trail worked, claiming that it would ensure that only farmed raised products were being handled in the market place. Mr. Sponsellar then called on Mike Kestler, Executive Chef of the Richland Memorial Hospital, who was representing the American Culinary Institute. Mr. Kestler stated that the product in question was low in fat and low in cholesterol and was in high



demand in restaurants. He delivered a petition from chefs and food service workers supporting the opportunity to prepare and serve farm raised non-native venison in restaurants and health service institutions.

Mr. Sponsellar then submitted a draft statute for consideration, stating that a survey of 41 wildlife departments across the states indicated that only three prohibited the sale of venison. He then introduced Dr. Lee Brooks, Georgia State Veterinarian, who thanked Chairman Graham and Commissioner Tindal for the opportunity to address the Board. She then addressed the issue of farm raised venison in Georgia, explaining how they had resolved several of the issues that had been raised here in South Carolina. She then discussed tuberculosis and brucellosis in cervidae, stating that new standard methods of monitoring, treating, quarantining and eradicating these diseases minimized any risk to public health or domestic livestock.

In response to questions, Mr. Holprin indicated that his firm would only be interested in handling the non-native farm-raised venison from New Zealand and would not be interested in buying or distributing any domestically grown venison.

Chairman Graham thanked them for addressing the Board, and referred the Board to a letter from Col. Huguley on DNA testing and also to a memo from Lt. Sharpe to Col. Huguley on sanitation issues. Chairman Graham stated that they would continue to receive staff input on the issues of sale of venison and the farming of venison for sale in South Carolina, and would work toward getting these back on the Board agenda in July. He stated that these issues would also be deliberated at a joint Law Enforcement and Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries Advisory Committees meeting prior to the Board meeting in July, and he asked the staff to be prepared to respond in detail at the advisory committees meeting and at the subsequent Board meeting.

VI. Items for Board Action

- A. Sale of Venison and Deer Enclosures - No action taken.
- B. Proposed Dove Season for 1997-98 - Brock Conrad spoke on the proposed season, a detailed description of which had been sent to the Board prior to the meeting. He stated that it was basically the same season for 1996-97. After a brief discussion, Mr. Burnside made a motion that the proposed season be accepted, Mr. Coxe seconded, and the motion was approved.



- C. Discussion of Francis Marion Wildlife Management Area - Brock Conrad submitted a recommendation which had been developed by staff of the Law Enforcement and Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries Divisions concerning continuing problems with dog hunting of deer, along with a draft letter to be sent to constituents in the area. The letter would point out the problems being experienced in the area as a result of dog hunting and how the Department planned to deal with them in the future. Ms. Waring thanked Mr. Mahan, Mr. Baumann and other staff that had worked on this from both divisions. Mr. Burnside made the motion that the Board approve staff recommendations, stating that if this approach did not work, the Board would take more drastic action on dog hunting through Wildlife Management Area regulations in the future. Mr. Coxe seconded the motion, and the motion was approved.

- D. Garth H. McMasters' Game Sanctuary - Michael Thompson distributed a copy of H-3610, Concurrent Resolution requesting the Board to name a game sanctuary in Clarendon County the "Garth H. McMasters' Game Sanctuary". After a brief discussion, Ms. Waring made the motion that the Board do so, Mr. Lee seconded the motion, and the motion was approved.

VII. Advisory Committee Reports

- A. Marine Resources - Ms. Waring reported on the May 8th meeting and discussed many of the items that were dealt with at that meeting. She stated the Advisory Committee did endorse the Board's position on the Maritime Center in Charleston, and that the Charleston Recreation Commission had sent out a RFP for additional bids.
- B. Conservation Education and Communications - Mr. Burnside reported on the May 2nd meeting, stating that most of the meeting dealt with the new magazine business plan. He distributed copies of the minutes of the meeting and thanked Mr. Oxner for his participation and assistance.
- C. Marine Recreational Fisheries - John Miglarese reported on the May 1st meeting, stating that there was no action to be brought before the Board at this time.
- D. Heritage Trust - Mr. Lee reported on the May 15th meeting and discussed several issues that were dealt with by the committee at that time.

At this time, Chairman Graham stated that he wanted to discuss an issue that had been brought to his attention by the members of the public, that of Department personnel and Board members exceeding speed limits on our state highways. He stated that all in the room and all Department personnel need to be



reminded that when driving in a state vehicle or a private automobile with a special license tag, we are representing the Department and it reflects on the Department when we exceed the speed limit or drive aggressively. He asked that everyone to please take that to heart.

VIII. Director's Briefings

A. Executive Office

1. Director - Dr. Timmerman distributed copies of the most recent Director's Staff Meeting minutes, as well as a copy of an article in the *Charlotte Observer* criticizing North Carolina for not moving forward with their version of the Jocassee Gorges project.

Dr. Timmerman then called on Benny Reeves, who gave the Board a briefing on the budget status. Dr. Timmerman commended Benny Reeves for the work he did getting three items put back into the Senate version of the budget through floor amendments. He stated that this was unheard of and was an extraordinary effort on the part of Mr. Reeves. He asked each of the Board members to do everything they could to influence the conferees to approve the House version of the Bill.

Dr. Timmerman stated that he continues to be concerned about the establishment of youth programs for the agency and stated that he would be devoting a great deal of his personal time and money to this effort. He stated that John Frampton and Mike Willis would be working with him on this and he called on John Frampton who gave a detailed background on the issue and the need for such program.

Dr. Timmerman then distributed a document detailing the properties that had been acquired by the Department since 1972, pointing out the importance of these lands and what they will mean to the future of our state.

Dr. Timmerman then distributed a copy of a Goals and Objectives document that he had prepared when he first took over the Department in 1974, stating that he was presenting this as information to the Board thinking they may find it interesting.

2. Deputy Director's Committee - Dr. Sandifer stated that he had no report.



3. Legal - Buford Mabry referred to a package of information dealing with the current status of the Richard B. Russell litigation.
4. Legislative - Michael Thompson introduced Ms. Lisa Sox, Research Director for the Senate Fish, Game and Forestry Committee. Mr. Thompson gave a report on two recently passed pieces of legislation, the Blue Crab legislation and an Act allowing photographs to be used as evidence in wildlife and natural resources cases. Ms. Waring asked about the legislation dealing with the moratorium on trawling licenses, Mr. Thompson stated that this would be discussed in Committee next week.
5. Human Resources - Jean Cowell stated that she was happy to be with the agency and was looking forward to meeting and working with each of the Board members. She stated that she had spent the last two weeks acclimating herself to the culture of the agency and that she is really enjoying that process.
6. Environmental - There was nothing further to report to the Board at this time.

B. Deputy Directors

1. Water Resources - Freddy Vang reported that the U.S. Geological Survey will locate a meteorologist at the Southeastern Climate Center. He reported that June is River Month and distributed a list of activities. Ms. Waring asked about the State Water Plan and Mr. Vang reported that the Board sub-committee had met and that the draft plan had been sent out to a great many individuals and organizations seeking input.
2. Land Resources and Conservation Districts - Cary Chamblee reported on the first Envirothon which will be held tomorrow and invited the Board to attend. He stated that fifty-five teams had registered and that this is the most any state has every had in the first year.
3. Administrative Services - Chairman Graham called on Benny Reeves who introduced his staff and then gave a detailed briefing to the Board describing their division's activities and areas of involvement. Following that briefing, Chairman Graham congratulated Mr. Reeves and his staff for a fine presentation, stating that Marine would make a presentation in June, Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries in July, Law Enforcement in August, and CEC in September.
4. Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries - Brock Conrad noted that he had attended the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies



Spring Director's Meeting and that they had unanimously presented a resolution recognizing Dr. Timmerman and his contribution to the conservation field throughout his career. He distributed copies to the Board. Ms. Waring asked if there was anything we could do to assist dove hunters who are complaining about low harvest. Mr. Conrad stated that we have developed a planting guide, workshops and press releases to inform dove hunters on how they can best prepare their fields. He stated that South Carolina has one of the highest harvest rates on doves per hunter in the country but that our dove population has been declining over the last several years. Ms. Waring recommended any positive action possible to demonstrate that we are responsive to this constituency.

5. Natural Resources Enforcement - Mark Huguley reported that he had just had a press conference that morning announcing Boating Safety Week and stated that the Personal Watercraft and Boating Safety Act went into effect this month and enforcement of that Act appears to be going smoothly. He stated that a Bill had been introduced that would allow the use of personal watercraft at night and that a sub-committee in the Senate recently tabled that legislation. He reported that a lot had been done on the written directive systems and that many of his staff had participated in that process and will present the Board with the results of their deliberations at a later meeting. He also reported that the Lake Wylie Marine Commission had requested that zoning requests on Lake Wylie be processed through their organization and he discussed this at the advisory committee meeting.
6. Conservation Education and Communications - Sonny Baines distributed copies of the new Rules and Regulations brochure and expressed appreciation to all the staff that had assisted in the preparation.
7. Marine Resources - Dr. Sandifer reported on staff recommendations for minor technical changes to the protocol for importation of shrimp post-larvae and asked for the Board's consideration. Ms. Waring moved acceptance of the changes and incorporation of them into the previous Board action, Mr. Miller seconded, and the motion was approved. Dr. Sandifer reported on the opening of shrimp trawling season on Wednesday morning and stated that he expected a reasonable season.



At this time, Dr. Graham recognized Mr. David Cannon who had asked to address the Board. Mr. Cannon distributed a written copy of his remarks and asked that the Board give consideration to his request that the importation permit requirements be relaxed (copy attached to original Board minutes). There then ensued a lengthy discussion of Mr. Cannon's request among the Board and staff. The Board declined to take any action at this time.

IX. Missions, Goals, & Strategic Planning

Dr. Graham reported that Larry Cartee was in Spartanburg taking care of matters for the Harry Hampton Banquet to be held that evening and invited Board and staff to attend.

X. Policy Review

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

XI. Comments

There were no comments to be presented to the Board at this time.

XII. Executive Session

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

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RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION

Following the Executive Session, the regular meeting was resumed and participants were invited into the meeting.

Chairman Graham reported that there was no Board action to report at this time.

XIII. Time and Location of Next Board Meeting

Dr. Graham stated that the Board would hold its next meeting on Friday, June 20th at 10:00 a.m. at the Marine Center in Charleston and that on the evening of June 19th there would be a special celebration of the 25th Anniversary of the Marine Center, and everyone was urged to attend.

XIV. Adjournment

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

