

Minutes
Board of the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
Videoconference Meeting
January 21, 2021 10:00 AM

The regular meeting of the Board of the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources was held by videoconference at 10:00 a.m., January 21, 2021. Notice of the date, time and place of the meeting was posted and mailed to the news media. Chairman Norman Pulliam presided at the meeting. Board members present included Dr. Mark Hartley, Mike Hutchins, Jerry Lee, Carlisle Oxner, Jake Rasor, Jr. and Duane Swygert. Director Boyles and staff members of the Department of Natural Resources were present at the meeting.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Norman Pulliam called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

II. Invocation

Chaplain Kevin Thompson, SC Law Enforcement Assistance Program (SC LEAP), offered the invocation.

III. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Hutchins led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. Chairman's Comments

Chairman Pulliam welcomed and thanked Board members for being present or calling in for this meeting. Chairman Pulliam expressed his appreciation to staff for keeping business going during this difficult time.

V. Introduction of Guests

Angie Cassella, Deputy Director for Administration, introduced Scott Whitaker, Coastal Conservation Association; and Austin Smallwood, SC Realtors Association.

VI. Constituent Comments

Mrs. Casella informed the Board that Scott Whitaker has requested to comment to the Board. Mr. Whitaker's comments were directed toward sinking reefs near McClellanville, S220 – SC 30 by 30 Conservation Act and flounder.

VII. Approval of Minutes

Chairman Pulliam asked if there were any additions, deletions or corrections to the November 19, 2020 meeting minutes. *Mr. Hutchins made a motion that the Board approve the minutes of the November 19, 2020 meeting as presented. Mr. Oxner seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*

VIII. Presentations/Commendations

A. Director Boyles commended Dorchester County PFC Tanner Riley, DNR's State Officer of the Year, on his selection by the National Wild Turkey Federation as their 2021 Wildlife Officer of the Year.

B. Director Boyles commended LCPL Frank Jordan who received a letter of commendation from Lt. Governor Pamela Evette recognizing and expressing her

gratitude for his service on the Governor's Protection Detail Team assigned to her since her election in 2018.

- C. Director Boyles commended CPL Griffin Allison for his life-saving efforts and quick thinking when he helped save a driver's life in Charleston County pulling him from a pickup truck that was ablaze
- D. Director Boyles commended Amanda Stroud and Kristen Coulter of the Division of Administration's Office of Media and Outreach and Shari Tolen and Shannon Bobertz of the Legal Office for their efforts to improve internal communications with the Lunch and Learn series and the Coffee and Conversation with the Director series.
- E. Director Boyles commended MAJ Billy Downer, Chief of Wildlife Billy Dukes, Assistant Chief of Wildlife Will Dillman and Lottery Hunt Coordinator Emily Kearse who were commended in a letter from John P. Evans, President of the South Carolina Wildlife Partnership "for all of their hard work and successful acquisition of the 2018 Farm Bill grant and the 2020/2021 second chance partnership waterfowl draw." He noted that "the SCDNR/SCWP partnership will host 500 additional waterfowl applicants on private lands this season."
- F. Director Boyles commended Law Enforcement's MAJ Billy Downer and Range Officer Ted Mikkelsen who were selected by the US Forest Service Regional Forester to receive their Honor Award in the category for Delivering Benefits to the Public (Group Award) Twin Ponds Rifle Range, Francis Marion-Sumter National Forests in recognition of their good work and continued partnership with the Forest Service.

IX. Advisory Committee Reports

A. Governor's Cup Billfishing Series

Phil Maier, Deputy Director for Marine Resources, reported that the Governor's Cup Billfishing Series Advisory Board met virtually on December 1, 2020. Staff reviewed the progress of the SC Memorial Reef/Highway 21 Project. The Advisory Board approved the appointment of one member and the reappointment of two members that are on the agenda for Board consideration.

B. Law Enforcement

COL Chisolm Frampton reported that the Law Enforcement Advisory Committee met in-person and virtually on December 9, 2020. The Advisory Committee received a hiring update. The Advisory committee discussed the DLEO policy and deer tags. The Advisory Committee received a report on waterfowl totals.

C. Marine

Mr. Swygert reported that the Marine Advisory Committee met virtually on December 11, 2020. The Advisory Committee received reports on external funding in research and outreach and on flounder outreach efforts.

X. Items for Board Information

A. Climate Update

Melissa Griffin, Land, Water and Conservation Division, provided an overview of weather in 2020 which included tornadoes, flood events and above normal precipitation. Ms. Griffin provided a La Niña update and rainfall totals, precipitation percentiles, streamflow, lake levels, ground-water monitoring wells around the state, precipitation forecast and temperature forecast.

XI. Director's Briefings

Director Boyles informed the Board that Law Enforcement has been assisting with vaccination transport and Statehouse security during the past month.

Director Boyles reminded Board members that the Statement of Economic Interest form is due by March 30.

Director Boyles distributed and reviewed the summary of DNR's FY 22 budget request and Governor McMaster's Executive Budget recommendations. The House Ways and Means Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Subcommittee hearing was held on January 12.

Director Boyles participated in a conference with Fitch Rating for a discussion about resiliency and climate change in South Carolina.

Director Boyles attended the SC Law Enforcement Hall of Fame Meritorious Service Induction Ceremony and presented the late DNR CPT Joe McIntyre for induction.

Director Boyles attended the ACE Basin Task Force meeting in Beaufort.

Director Boyles reported that 40 – 70% of staff are reporting to their work site, 18 – 32% of staff are telecommuting and to date 71 staff have tested positive for COVID-19.

Director Boyles informed the Board that after discussions with the Hampton Wildlife Fund the Palmetto Sportsmen's Classic has been cancelled for 2021. This decision was based on the high percent positivity rate and the slow roll out of vaccinations.

XII. Legislative Report

Kevin Ryan, Director of Government Affairs, reported on the following bills: S2 – DHEC restructuring, S182 Non-resident flounder permit, S220 – SC 30 by 30 Conservation Act, H3103 – Boating Safety and Education, and H3694 – allows for the use of bait when bear hunting in four counties in Game Zone 4.

XIII. Environmental Report

Lorianne Riffin, Director, Office of Environmental Programs, reviewed the Horry County rezoning request for a parcel adjacent to Lewis Ocean Bay Heritage Preserve, the Dewees Island POA in Charleston County, and the New Savannah Bluff Lock and Dam.

XIV. Deputy Directors' Reports

A. Administration

Nothing further reported.

B. Land, Water and Conservation

Nothing further reported.

C. Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries

Emily Cope, Deputy Director for Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries, showed a video and provided an update on Category 1 waterfowl hunts.

D. Law Enforcement

COL Frampton gave the Board a brief update on Law Enforcement Activities. COL Frampton informed the Board that the first round of interviews have been completed for the new class of officers.

E. Marine Resources

Nothing further reported.

XV. Items for Board Action

A. Yawkey Center – Acceptance of South Island Road Easement

Ms. Cope reviewed the proposal for the South Island Road Easement, as included in the meeting packet. *Mr. Lee made a motion that, upon the recommendation of staff, the DNR Board approve accepting from Georgetown County the Assignment of the right-of-way for that portion of South Island Road designated as the Swing Bridge Terminal, as presented. Mr. Oxner seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*

B. Approval of Proposed Regulations for Nonnative Wildlife

Will Dillman, Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division, briefly reviewed the Proposed Regulations for Nonnative Wildlife 123-152, as included in the meeting packet. Mr. Dillman, Ms. Cope and Director Boyles answered questions posed by Board members. After a lengthy discussion, the Board directed staff to redraft the proposed regulations to include the ban of Black and White Tegu and to remove the grandfather clause.

C. Update of Policy 300.01 Deputy Law Enforcement Officer Policy

Shannon Bobertz, General Counsel, briefly reviewed the proposed updates to Policy 300.01 – Deputy Law Enforcement Officer Policy, as included in the meeting packet. *Mr. Hutchins made a motion that upon the recommendation of DNR staff, the DNR Board approve the Update of Policy 300.01 (Deputy Law Enforcement Officer Policy), as presented. Mr. Lee seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*

XVI. Executive Session

Mr. Hutchins made a motion that the DNR Board go into executive session pursuant to SC Code Section 30-4-70(A)(1) to discuss appointments to advisory committees and conservation district commissioners related to Items for Board Action (D and E). Dr. Hartley seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

XVII. Open Session

Mr. Hutchins made a motion that the DNR Board return to open session, noting that no action was taken during executive session. Mr. Oxner seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

XVIII. Item for Board Action

D. Governor's Cup Billfishing Series Advisory Board Appointments/Reappointments

Mr. Oxner made a motion that upon the approval and recommendation of the Governor's Cup Billfishing Series Advisory Board, the DNR Board approve the following reappointments: Chairman Steve Mungo, Charleston, SC; Stokely Holder, Greenville, SC; and John Hill, Wadmalaw Island, SC, terms being 1/01/2021 – 12/31/2023. Mr. Swygert seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Oxner made a motion that upon the approval and recommendation of the Governor's Cup Billfishing Series Advisory Board, the DNR Board approve the following appointments: Wesley Frierson, Easley, SC and Douglas Jennings, Sullivan's Island, SC, terms being 1/01/2021 – 12/31/2023. Mr. Hutchins seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

E. Conservation District Commissioner Appointments/Reappointments

Mr. Hutchins made a motion that upon the approval and recommendation of the Land, Water and Conservation Advisory Committee, the DNR Board approve the following Conservation District Commissioner reappointments:

Bob Edmonds, McCormick - 11/23/20 – 11/23/24, Larry Nates, Lexington – 9/13/20 – 9/13/24, David Coggins, Laurens – 11/1/20 – 11/1/24, Ray Crapse, Hampton – 4/29/21 – 4/29/25, Landis Hiers, Bamberg – 9/1/20 – 9/1/24, Roddy Gettys III, Pickens – 7/5/20 – 7/5/24 and Dwight Johnson, Chesterfield – 10/13/20 – 10/13/24.

Mr. Swygert seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Rasor made a motion that upon the approval and recommendation of the Land, Water and Conservation Advisory Committee, the DNR Board approve the following Conservation District Commissioner Emeritus appointment:

E. Tolman Salisbury

Dr. Hartley seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Lee made a motion that upon the approval and recommendation of the Land, Water and Conservation Advisory Committee, the DNR Board approve the following Conservation District Commissioner appointments:

James Fender, Dorchester – 9/18/20 – 9/18/24 and Patricia Clark, Dorchester – 1/21/21 – 1/31/23

Mr. Swygert seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

XIX. Time and Location of Next Board Meeting

The meeting is scheduled for February 18, 2021.

XX. Adjournment

Mr. Oxner made a motion that the meeting be adjourned. Mr. Hutchins seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.