

MISSISSIPPI COMMISSION ON WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, & PARKS

Wednesday, August 19, 2015

2:30 p.m.

MDWFP Main Office, 1505 Eastover Drive, Jackson, MS. 39211

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

PRESENT: Commission Chairman Charles Rigdon, Commissioners William "Billy" Deviney, Clay Wagner, Bill F. Cossar, and Scott Coopwood.

Among the MDWFP staff attending were: Dr. Sam Polles, Executive Director; Robert Cook, Executive Deputy Director; Larry Castle, Michael Bolden, Jennifer Head, Chris McDonald, Colonel Steve Adcock, Jason Thompson, Ed Penny, and counsel, Doug Mann and Drew Malone, Special Assistant Attorneys General.

Chairman Rigdon gavelled the meeting to order and welcomed House Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks Committee Chairman Scott Bounds, Secretary of State Delbert Hosemann (who was *en route* to the meeting) and members of Secretary Hosemann's staff (Doug Davis, Chief of Staff; David Weems, Gerald McWhorter, Kelly McMullan, and Bill Cheney, Public Lands Division), and Justin Moore, Farm Bureau.

OPENING PRAYER

Larry Castle, Director of Technical Programs, opened the meeting with prayer.

MINUTES

ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Wagner, the minutes for the July 23, 2015 Commission meeting were unanimously approved.

AGENDA

ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Wagner and seconded by Commissioner Cossar, the agenda was unanimously approved as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No comments were brought forward by the public.

LICENSE SALES REPORT

Jason Thompson, Director of License/Boat Registration, presented the License Sales Report for the month of July 2015. He stated that revenue for July was up \$150,000.

Highlights of Thompson's report are listed below:

- Resident Sales are down 5%
- Non-resident Sales are down \$8,000
- Permit sales are up \$178,000, mainly due to Alligator License permits
- Lifetime License down \$2,000

To boost license sales, Thompson presented a mailout marketing plan. Two sample postcards were presented to the Commission. One postcard would encourage senior citizens to buy a Resident Senior Exempt Lifetime License. The second would remind residents with expired hunting and fishing licenses to renew or upgrade to a Sportsman's License.

WILDLIFE

Chris McDonald, Wildlife Bureau Assistant Director, requested Scott Baker to come forward and report on timber management on state WMAs.

WMA Management Report

Scott Baker, WMA Habitat Coordinator, gave a PowerPoint presentation on timber management plans for the Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs). He also explained the different tools used to manage the 105,000 acres of timberland; including fire, mechanical disturbance, and herbicides.

FISHERIES

PROPOSED Rule Changes: 40 Miss Admin. Code Part 3:

- Rule 3.2 Paddlefish Harvest Regulations**
- Rule 3.4 Paddlefish Seasons and Zones**
- Rule 3.5 Paddlefish Application Permits**

Larry Pugh, Fisheries Bureau Director, explained that the only changes made were to clarify language, correct minor grammatical errors, and to establish new zones, quotas, and dates.

ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Wagner and seconded by Commissioner Cossar, Proposed Rules 3.2, 3.4, 3.5 were unanimously approved as presented.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

FINAL Rule Change: 40 Miss. Admin. Code Part 4, Rule 6.1:

Rule 6.1 – Rules and Fees for MDWFP Public Shooting Ranges

Capt. Scottie Jones, LE Programs/Planning, stated that no comments were received and requested approval.

ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Cossar and seconded by Commissioner Wagner, FINAL Rule 6.1 was unanimously approved as presented.

LE Update

Colonel Steve Adcock, Chief of Law Enforcement, began by recognizing six MDWFP conservation officers who recently competed with 125 other officers from around the country in the 2015 National LawFit Competition and earned first place overall in the competition. Private Justin Adams, SMG Marcus Christon, Private Justin Gates, Private Derrick Scott, SGM Ron McMillan, and Lt. Chris Reed came forward as Col. Adcock presented each officer to the Commission. The individual and team achievements listed below were recognized.

- Four Man Team – 1st place with 1597 points for a new National Record (Chris Reed, Derrick Scott, Marcus Christon, and Justin Gates)
- Two Man Team – 1st place with 817 points for a new National Record (Marcus Christon and Justin Gates)
- Two Man Team – 3rd place with 779 points (Derrick Scott and Chris Reed)
- Overall Top Male – 1st place with 417 points for a new National Record (Marcus Christon)
- Overall Top Male – 2nd place with 400 points tying 2014's National Record (Justin Gates)
- Overall Top Male – 4th place with 390 points (Derrick Scott)
- Overall Top Male – 5th place with 389 points (Chris Reed)
- Bench Press – 1st place lifting 221% of his body weight for a new National Record (Justin Gates)
- Pull-Ups – 1st place with 67 pull-ups for a new National Record (Marcus Christon)
- Pull-Ups-2nd place with 59 pull-ups breaking his own National Record of 51 set in 2014 (Justin Gates)
- Sit-Ups – 3rd place with 63 sit-ups in 1 minute time frame (Marcus Christon)

Col. Adcock bestowed a token of appreciation to each member of the team on behalf of the MDWFP Foundation and the Executive Director was presented a framed remembrance of the team who left their mark on the competition by winning five categories and setting five new LawFit National Records. Col. Adcock concluded, "We have shown the rest of the state and country, the caliber officers our agency produces; and the training program we have and implement within our ranks is second to no one."

Col. Adcock gave a PowerPoint overview of Law Enforcement activities this past year, including training details for two cadet classes, citations issued, Special Response Team manhunts, Wounded Warrior events, Fishing Rodeos, 4H events, and school programs.

OTHER BUSINESS

PROPOSED Rule: 40 Miss. Admin. Code Part 2, Chapter 4: White-tailed Deer

- **Rule 2.4 Supplemental Feeding of Wild Animals Outside of Wildlife Enclosures**

The Executive Director brought this item before the Commission for consideration. It was noted that the supplemental feeding rule had been the topic of several surveys in the past and had been discussed in prior meetings. Based upon the Commission's direction, a proposed rule was prepared which removed the language in the current regulation prohibiting active feeders within the line of sight while hunting. The feeder no longer has to be hidden and can remain in plain view as long as it is 100 yards (or more) away from the hunter.

ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Wagner and seconded by Commissioner Cossar, Proposed Rule 2.4 was unanimously approved.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Next Commission meeting date was set for Wednesday, September 16, 2015 at 2:00 p.m., at the Jackson office, 1505 Eastover Drive.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Secretary of State Delbert Hosemann arrived as the Executive Session was about to begin.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Wagner, the Commission voted unanimously to close the meeting to determine the need for Executive Session. The Commission determined that Executive Session was needed for discussions regarding transactions in real property. Upon motion made by Commissioner Cossar and seconded by Commissioner Deviney, the Commission voted unanimously to enter into Executive Session.

The Honorable Delbert Hosemann, Secretary of State for the State of Mississippi, came before the Commission with a request. Secretary Hosemann has been approached by landowners in Leflore County who wish to donate some lands to the State of Mississippi, to become a waterfowl refuge. The lands are on either side of Six Mile Lake. Secretary Hosemann explained that the donated lands would then become part of a NAWCA grant-funded project to construct a weir on nearby lands that would prevent the excessive loss of water from this general area. The Secretary pointed out that this would mean higher water levels in the McIntyre Scatters and furthermore higher water in Malmaison WMA.

Discussion followed with many questions about the surrounding areas and the attitude of local hunters regarding such a designation. The Secretary stated that surrounding landowners and hunting clubs were in favor of the weir construction and the proposed refuge area would provide a roosting area for migratory waterfowl. Dr. Polles noted for the record that the MDWFP would have no management responsibilities or control over the donated lands, other than regular Law Enforcement duties.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Wagner and seconded by Commissioner Cossar, the Commission voted unanimously to support declaring the donated lands a waterfowl refuge. The Chairman directed staff and counsel to work with the Secretary to develop an appropriate and lawful designating document.

Staff and counsel were directed to prepare a suitable instrument to effect the declaration, and research any other necessary actions required of the Commission to designate the lands as a refuge.

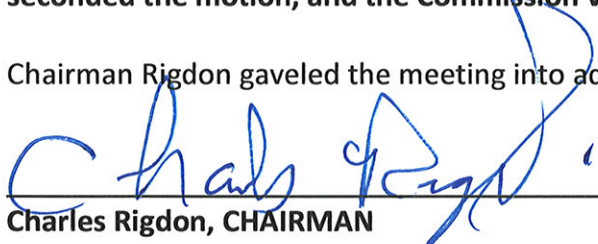
There was no other business for discussion in Executive Session.

Upon motion made by Commissioner Cossar and seconded by Commissioner Coopwood, the Commission voted unanimously to end Executive Session and open the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting being open, Commissioner Cossar made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Wagner seconded the motion, and the Commission voted unanimously to adjourn.

Chairman Rigdon gaveled the meeting into adjournment.



Charles Rigdon, CHAIRMAN

Date



Clay Wagner, VICE CHAIRMAN

Date