

MISSISSIPPI COMMISSION ON WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, & PARKS

Monday, February 22, 2016

9:30 a.m.

Quail Ridge Conference Center, Louisville, MS

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; Larry Castle, Jennifer Head, Larry Pugh, Chad Dacus, Colonel Steve Adcock, Jason Thompson, and counsel, Doug Mann and Drew Malone, Special Assistant Attorneys General.

Chairman Rigdon gavelled the meeting to order and announced that due to the scheduling needs of some of those in attendance at the meeting, and the inability to close/secure the large meeting room, the chair would entertain a motion to close the meeting to determine the need for Executive Session. Should the Motion pass, the Commission would recess to a smaller anteroom where they could have privacy while the public remained in the larger meeting room with the amenities available there.

ACTION: Commissioner Wagner made a motion to close the meeting to determine the need for an Executive Session. Commissioner Cossar seconded the motion, and the Commission voted unanimously to close the meeting.

The Commission recessed to the anteroom to determine the need for an Executive Session.

Upon being apprised of the items for discussion, Commissioner Cossar made a motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss budget line items that could affect the continued employment of individuals in specific positions, and job performance of specific employees in specific positions. Commissioner Wagner seconded the motion and the Commission voted unanimously to enter Executive Session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The announcement was made to those in the larger meeting room that the Commission had entered Executive Session to discuss budget line items that could affect the continued employment of individuals in specific positions, and job performance of specific employees in specific positions.

Dr. Polles presented information regarding the agency budget request and other matters regarding staffing, recruitment, and funding that are currently before the Legislature. The Chairmen of the Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks committees of the Senate and House of Representatives, Senator Philip Moran and Representative Scott Bounds, offered additional information and insight to the legislative process.

No action was required of the Commission.

There being no further business for Executive Session, Commissioner Cossar made a motion to leave Executive Session and re-open the meeting. Commissioner Deviney seconded the motion and the Commission voted unanimously to re-open the meeting.

OPEN MEETING

Chairman Rigdon gaveled the meeting into Open Session and welcomed Senate Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks Committee Chairman Philip Moran, and House Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks Committee Chairman Scott Bounds.

OPENING PRAYER

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

MINUTES

ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Cossar and seconded by Commissioner Deviney, the January 20, 2016 Commission meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

AGENDA

Larry Castle, Director of Technical Programs, announced that a Wounded Warrior license exemption request for three non-resident hunters had been received. Castle requested permission to add this request to the agenda under Other Business.

Doug Mann, Special Assistant Attorney General, stated for the record that the minutes will reflect that the Executive Session was taken up at the beginning of the meeting and would be considered an amendment to the proposed agenda.

ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Cossar and seconded by Commissioner Coopwood, the agenda for February 22, 2016 was unanimously approved as amended.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. James Vickers came forward and sought guidance from the Commission concerning Choctaw WMA at Tombigbee National Forest. Mr. Vickers' property line runs along the non-WMA portion of Tombigbee National Forest. Mr. Vickers has had numerous issues with hunters running dogs across his property while hunting in Tombigbee National Forest. He requested that the Commission expand the WMA to include the area adjacent to his property, and then adopt permitting of dog hunting as has been done in the Homochitto National Forest. MDWFP staff informed Vickers that neither the Commission nor the agency had the authority to arbitrarily expand the boundaries of a WMA. Mr.

Vickers was advised to make his request to the US Department of Agriculture, National Forest Service. Mr. Vickers thanked the Commission for their time.

Chairman Rigdon thanked Mr. Vickers for coming.

LICENSE SALES REPORT

Jason Thompson, Director of License/Boat Registration, presented the License Sales Report for the month of January 2016. Total revenues improved and were only down less than one percent.

Highlights of Thompson's report are listed below:

- Resident License Sales - down over 2%.
- Senior Exempt License Sales – up over 2%
- Range Permit – up over 8%
- Commercial Fishing License – up over 9%
- Non-resident License Sales - down over 1%.
- Permit category – up \$106,000 or 61% increase.
- Lifetime License category – down 2%. Native Son license sales - up 29%.

FISHERIES

PROPOSED 40 Miss. Admin. Code Part 3, Chapter 2 – State Fishing Lakes and Community Assistance Program Lakes

- **Rule 2.1 – Regulations Regarding State Fishing Lakes**

Larry Pugh, Director of Fisheries Bureau, presented the annual update with two small changes: addition of Holmes County State Park Lake and removal of language to reopen Lake Lamar Bruce with special creel limits.

ACTION: By motion of Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Cossar, Rule 2.1 was approved unanimously by the Commission as presented.

WILDLIFE

PROPOSED 40 Miss. Admin. Code Part 2, Chapter 8 – Regulations Regarding Animals in Captivity and Enclosures

- **Rule 8.5 – Decommission of Enclosures containing White-tailed Deer**

Chad Dacus, Director of Wildlife Bureau, reminded the Commission of the discussion in a prior meeting concerning what dimensions a fence may have, not to be considered as preventing the free ingress and egress of wild animals. Mr. Dacus stated that the only change being made to

Rule 8.5 is to reduce the height of the fence from six and one-half feet to four feet or less, over 25% of the linear length of fencing.

ACTION: By motion of Commissioner Cossar and seconded by Commissioner Wagner, Rule 8.5 was approved unanimously by the Commission as presented.

PARKS

PROPOSED 40 Miss. Admin. Code Part 6, Chapter 1 – Regulations for the Mississippi State Parks

- Rule 1.1 – State Park Fees

Jennifer Head, Director of State Parks, stated that several annual permits were added to the rules--three for the Museum and one for Parks as noted below.

- Museum Annual Permits - \$45.00 per person; \$70.00 per family; 50% off with purchase of 200 or more permits
- Parks (Recreational Facilities) – Tennis/Entrance Annual Permit \$75.00 per person

ACTION: By motion of Commissioner Cossar and seconded by Commissioner Deviney, Rule 1.1 was approved unanimously by the Commission as presented.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Citation Report

Colonel Steve Adcock, Chief of Law Enforcement, presented a handout which highlighted violations, shooting range attendance, and flood details along the Mississippi River.

OTHER BUSINESS

Wounded Warrior

Larry Castle presented a request for hunting license exemptions for three non-resident hunters participating in the Second Annual Sullivan Outdoor Adventures for Wounded Warriors. Ten Mississippi Veterans will be participating in the hunt as well.

ACTION: Commissioner Wagner made a motion to approve the license exemption requests. Commissioner Deviney seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously by the Commission.

NEXT MEETING DATE

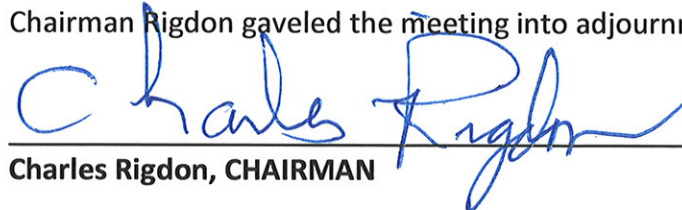
Next Commission meeting date was set for Wednesday, March 16, 2016 at 2 p.m. in the Commission Conference Room located at 1505 Eastover Drive, Jackson, Mississippi 39211.

The Commission thanked Robert Taylor for the use of Quail Ridge Conference Center for the Commission meeting today and for the sponsors.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Commission, Commissioner Wagner made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Cossar 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