



Commission on Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks

Minutes of the Meeting

November 19, 2010 – Jackson, Mississippi

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PRESENT: Commissioner Charles Rigdon; Commissioner Bryan Jones; Commissioner Billy Deviney; and Commissioner John C Stanley IV. Commissioner Jerry Munro was present via teleconference.

Among the MDWFP Staff attending were: Executive Director, Dr. Sam Polles; Deputy Director Robert Cook; Deputy Administrator, Don Brazil; Budget Director, Rickie Felder; Director of Technical Programs, Larry Castle; Acting Chief of Wildlife, Ron Seiss; Parks Director, Ramie Ford; Attorney, Doug Mann; and Administrative Assistant, Sally Sutherland.

WELCOME

Chairman Rigdon welcomed everyone to the meeting and Deputy Director Cook opened with prayer.

MINUTES

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Stanley and seconded by Commissioner Jones, the Minutes of October 22, 2010 were unanimously approved as presented.

TODAY'S AGENDA

The agenda was changed by moving "public comments" to after Law Enforcement.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Stanley and seconded by Commissioner Jones, the November 19, 2010 Agenda was unanimously approved as presented with the change.

AGENCY AWARDS/RECOGNITIONS

Acting Chief Ron Seiss presented the following awards from the Wildlife Bureau to:

1. Mr. Lynn McCoy: 2009 WMA Manager of the Year ;
2. Ms. Susan Myers, Wildlife Bureau Administrative Assistant of the Year;
3. Wayne Gordon, 2010 WMA Manager of the Year;
4. Ms. Ashley Gary, 2010 Wildlife Biologist of the Year.

Ricky Flynt presented Alligator Program Awards to the following Agent/Trappers:

1. Woody Reeves
2. Ryan Rawls
3. Corey Hunt



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Commissioner Jones thanked all three of the alligator award recipients and said a special word of thanks to Woody Reeves and Corey Hunt for assistance they had provided him in the past.

Don Brazil presented an award to Kathy Shelton, Conservation Resource Manager Biologist in appreciation for her outstanding work during the Gulf Coast oil spill.

LICENSE SALES REPORT

Mr. Michael Bolden presented the report for the month of October and stated that license sales remain down but compared to previous years the trend tends to be getting better each month. He revealed the total license sales for MDWFP this month are down 2%; last month down 6%; month before that down 20%; in July down 27%. This indicates the gap is closing. For example, already half way into November license sales are increasing and next month's report should be a better indication as to where we stand.

MUSEUM

Ms. Libby Hartfield presented Public Notice of Intent P-001. This revision increases the Museum fees as follows:

Adult Ticket: From \$5.00 to \$6.00
Senior Citizen Ticket: From \$4.00 to \$5.00
Child's Ticket: From \$3.00 to \$4.00

Libby advised that the last time fees were raised was in 2005 and based on last year's attendance it is anticipated these increases will net the Museum approximately \$80,000 in revenue.

Commissioner Jones asked if these increases were competitive with other states and Ms. Hartfield answered yes.

Commissioner Stanley asked if the Museum hours have been cut due to the state of the economy and Ms. Hartfield said they are doing everything they could to prevent that. In fact, she stated that the Museum actually increases revenue with every hour they remain open. On State Holidays when the schools are still in session, the Museum stays open as well as the Gift Shop.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Jones, Public Notice P-001 (Park Fees) (Intent) was unanimously approved as presented.



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LAW ENFORCEMENT

Chief Steve Adcock presented Public Notice of Intent LE-3809 closing the McHenry site that was purchased to build a public shooting range. This Notice closes the site to the public during the planning and construction period.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Stanley, Public Notice of Intent LE-3809 was unanimously approved as presented.

Request for Reinstatement: Charles Simpson and Parker Brocato presented their requests to have their hunting, trapping and fishing privileges reinstated. Chief Adcock advised that each young man had met all requirements and had paid the required fees. It is Staff's recommendation that they be reinstated.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Stanley and seconded by Commissioner Jones, the licenses for Charles Simpson and Parker Brocato were unanimously reinstated as requested.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Jarvis Humphreys representing the Professional Kennel Club (PKC) addressed the Commission regarding the permitting of field trials or coon hunts during spring turkey season (March and April). He stated that there are about 30 clubs in Mississippi that receive permits for field trials. Most of these events are small events – 4 to 20 dogs. The deadline for entry is generally about 7:00 p.m.; then they are in the woods by 8:00 p.m. and finished by 9:00 p.m. Normally they are out of the woods by 10:00 p.m. These small events are the heartbeat of our organization. Mr. Humphreys stated that they have an event in Forest on January 19th that is for puppies. The First Place prize is \$50k. It is an important coon hound event and only forty-eight (48) dogs are eligible to come. Dog owners come from all across the US and some from Canada. They earn the right to come through the smaller events. They also have youth events where 100s of 1000s of dollars for scholarships have been awarded to young hunters. These also take place at the small events. When two months of the field trial season are "lost," Mississippi is way behind the rest of the world in being able to compete at the National level. Mr. Humphreys requested that the Commission allow field trials during March and April which is the height of the competitive season. It would have greatly benefit Mississippi dog hunters/trainers.



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Mr. Humphreys also asked that the Commission consider allowing small clubs to purchase an annual permit rather than individual permits for each hunt.

Ron Seiss presented Public Notice of Intent L4-3792 (Raccoon Field Trials). He stated that based on Mr. Humphrey's request, it was appropriate to contact the Mississippi Chapter of the Wild Turkey Federation and ask them for a response. Seiss presented the response letter from the Wild Turkey Federation and read the following excerpt:

"For the record, the position of the MCNWTF remains unchanged. We would prefer that no dogs be allowed at any time during the spring turkey season. However, with respect to the current proposal change, the MCNWTF will not formally object. However, the MCNWTF does appreciate the opportunity that we were given to be notified of this proposed change."

Mr. Seiss explained that the Public Notice is being modified to allow raccoon dog field trials during spring turkey season after application and approval of the normal field trial process with same restrictions we had on running dogs during turkey season. Along with running of the dogs they can have field trials as long as they apply and get approved for the field trial permit.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Stanley and seconded by Commissioner Jones, Public Notice of Intent LF-3792 was unanimously approved as presented.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ron Seiss introduced the following speakers who gave Power Point Presentations:

- Don McKenzie, NBCI Coordinator -National Bobwhite Quail Initiative
- Dave Godwin, Small Game Program Coordinator - Quail Conservation in Mississippi
- John Gruchy, Private Lands Habitat Biologist

Dr. Polles appreciated the hard work and informative reports and requested that next time he would like more information on public land quail efforts such as on Charles Ray Nix; Copiah County, what we are doing, where we started and are going, etc.

Commissioner Deviney brought up for discussion, the issue of handicap hunters, what steps we are taking to improve access on the WMAs, and otherwise accommodate the handicapped. He would like to challenge our agency to look at this closer. Commissioner Deviney suggested that part of the land should be designated for handicapped access. Dr. Polles advised we are looking at several ways of improving opportunities and addressing access issues in order to have something in place for next season.



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EXECUTIVE SESSION

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Munro, the Commission voted unanimously to close the meeting to determine the need for an Executive Session. It was determined that discussions were needed regarding budget line items affecting the continued employment of persons in specific positions, job performance of specific individuals and related issues. Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Stanley, the Commission voted unanimously to enter Executive Session.

Two (2) personnel actions were addressed:

1. Clark McMinn, North Region, promotion
2. Chris Harris, Central Region, promotion

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Jones, the abovementioned personnel actions were unanimously approved as presented.

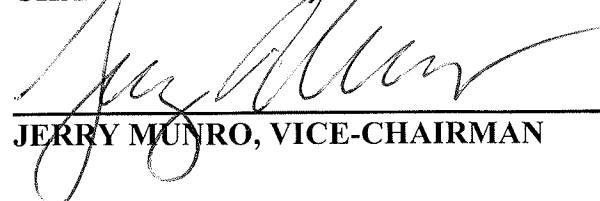
ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Chairman Rigdon gaveled the meeting into adjournment.



CHARLES RIGDON, CHAIRMAN

12/13/10
Date



JERRY MUNRO, VICE-CHAIRMAN

12/13/10
Date