

# MISSISSIPPI COMMISSION ON WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, & PARKS

Monday, July 14, 2014

2:30 p.m.

1505 Eastover Drive, Jackson, MS



## MINUTES OF THE MEETING

**PRESENT:** Chairman Bryan Jones, Commissioners Charles Rigdon, William "Billy" Deviney, Clay Wagner, and Bill F. Cossar.

Among the MDWFP staff attending were: Dr. Sam Polles, Executive Director; Robert Cook, Deputy Executive Director; Larry Castle, Michael Bolden, Libby Hartfield, Chad Dacus, Col. Steve Adcock, Jason Thompson, Jim Walker, and Doug Mann, Special Assistant Attorney General.

Chairman Jones welcomed House WFP Committee Chairman Scott Bounds, and Commissioner Cossar introduced family members and friends: Carson Hughes, John Cossar, Connie Cossar, Pepper Cossar, and Angela Cossar.

## OATH OF OFFICE

Bill F. Cossar, having been appointed by Governor Phil Bryant to serve a five year term beginning July 1, 2014 and ending June 30, 2019, was sworn into office by Notary Sharon Polzin.

## MINUTES

**ACTION:** Upon motion made by Commissioner Wagner and seconded by Commissioner Rigdon, the minutes of June 17, 2014 were unanimously approved as presented.

## TODAY'S AGENDA

**ACTION:** Upon motion by Commissioner Rigdon and seconded by Commissioner Deviney, today's agenda was unanimously approved as presented.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

No comments were brought forward by the public.

## LICENSE SALES REPORT

### License Sales Report

Mr. Jason Thompson, License/Boat Registration Division Director, presented the License Sales Report for the month of June, 2014. He stated that FY14 ended as one of the best years in total revenue in a long time.

He reported the following cumulative sales (comparing June, 2014 to June, 2013):

- Resident category - down 2%
- Sportsman License - down 1%
- Non-resident category up 3% except for All Game
- Over 1,600 Shooting Range Permits sold totaling \$63,000
- 4,672 Youth Exempt licenses sold in FY14 (90% purchased by the Foundation)
- Alligator licenses up \$8,000 (600 more licenses sold than last year)
- Lifetime – 97 fewer licenses sold compared to one of our best years
- Overall – 489,749 licenses were sold. Total revenue \$16,277,031.45

## MUSEUM OF NATURAL SCIENCE

Mr. Charles Knight, Director of Mississippi Museum of Natural Science (MMNS), announced that *Mississippi Magazine* had named MMNS as “BEST MUSEUM” in their “2014 Best of Mississippi” July/August issue. He then proceeded to introduce Megan Fedrick, MMNS Outreach Coordinator.

Ms. Fedrick gave a PowerPoint overview of the educational programs conducted by MMNS over the past year. Many people do not realize that MMNS is an educational facility, as well as a museum. Their outreach programming in FY14 connected with 79 of the 82 counties in Mississippi with a total of 992 presentations and almost 77,000 participants. Hinds, Madison, and Rankin Counties are not included in the outreach program due to their close proximity to the museum. Other educational programs highlighted by Ms. Fedrick were teacher workshops, in-house programs, special events, and summer camps. MMNS expressed their gratitude for the volunteers who donated 914 service hours making these programs a success last year.

## WILD TURKEY FEDERATION

Mr. Gene Davis, representing the Mississippi Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf), presented the “Save the Habitat. Save the Hunt” initiative which supports tagging and mandatory harvest reporting of wild turkey. The MS Chapter of the NWTf stands ready to support and contribute financially to the implementation of this project. He distributed several handouts to the Commission for their review.

The Commission thanked Mr. Davis for coming. No action was taken by the Commission.

**PARKS****PROPOSED Rule - 40 Miss. Admin. Code Pt. 6, Chapter 1 (Compilation) General Regulations for MS State Parks**

Ms. Libby Hartfield, Director of Parks, withdrew the PROPOSED Rule on Part 6, Chapter 1 approved at the June meeting and submitted a new version of the same rule. Changes were made on pages 1, 6, and 7 dictating fees charged at state parks to be rounded off to the closest dollar which would facilitate change-making and eliminate the magnitude of coin maintenance.

**ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Wagner and seconded by Commissioner Rigdon, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the PROPOSED Park Rule as amended.**

**WILDLIFE****PROPOSED RULE - 40 MS Admin. Code, Part 2, Rule 2.4 Supplemental Feeding of Wild Animals Outside of Wildlife Enclosures**

Chad Dacus, Wildlife Bureau Director, presented PROPOSED Rule 2.4 by request of the Commission, which included the following changes:

- Allow any type of feed or food product to be used in above ground feeders or stationary spin cast feeders at any time of the year.
- From the opening day of deer archery season to the close of the spring turkey season, hunters must be both 100 yards away from, and not within the line of sight of feed or a feeder which contains feed.
- Removes the exemption for feeders within the curtilage of the home or business.

**ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Wagner and seconded by Commissioner Rigdon, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the PROPOSED Rule 2.4 as presented.**

**PROPOSED RULE - 40 MS Admin. Code, Part 2, Rule 7.1 – Nuisance Animals**

Chad Dacus, Wildlife Bureau Director, presented PROPOSED Rule 7.1 by request of the Commission, which included the following changes:

- A violation of this section was changed from a Class III to a Class II violation.
- Fines were increased to no less than One Hundred Dollars nor more than Five Hundred Dollars or imprisonment in the county jail for not less than six (6) months, or by both such fine and imprisonment. Upon conviction, the violator shall forfeit all hunting, trapping, and fishing privileges for a period of one (1) year from the date of conviction.
- Feed/bait may be used to take wild hogs. Any food or food products may be used year round for the purpose of taking wild hogs. From the day after the spring turkey season to the day prior to the opening of deer archery season, grain or grain products may be used,

but may only be provided from above ground covered feeders or stationary spin cast feeders. Feeders may be placed in plain sight with no distance restriction. Areas must be clear of all bait for 10 days prior to hunting game animals.

- Additional requirements were added for Live Wild Hog Transportation Permits and Animal Control Permits for Hogs.

**ACTION:** Upon motion made by Commissioner Wagner and seconded by Commissioner Rigdon, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the PROPOSED Rule 7.1 as presented.

### Early Migratory Game Bird Seasons

Ed Penny, Director of Conservation Programs, presented the 2014-15 early hunting season calendar for migratory game birds; namely, resident Canada geese, early teal, snipe, woodcock, dove, and rails. The most significant change was the addition of 20 days to dove season allowing Mississippians 90 days of hunting mourning and white-winged doves. The proposed Mississippi early hunting season dates are:

- **North Dove Zone** (defined as that portion of the State north and west of a line extending west from the Alabama state line along U.S. Highway 84 to its junction with State Highway 35, then south along State Highway 35 to the Louisiana State Line) - Sept. 1 - 21; Oct. 4 - Nov. 9; and Dec. 15, 2014 - Jan.15, 2015. Bag Limit 15; Possession 45.
- **South Dove Zone** (defined as the remainder of Mississippi) - Sept. 13 - 21; Oct. 4 - Nov. 9; and Dec. 3, 2014 - Jan.15, 2015. Bag Limit 15; Possession 45
- **Canada Geese** – September 1 – 15. Bag Limit 5; Possession 15.
- **Teal** – September 13 – 28. Bag Limit 6; Possession 18.
- **Rails (Sora and Virginia)** – September 13 – November 21. Bag Limit 25; Possession 75.
- **Rails (Clapper and King)** – September 13 – November 21. Bag Limit 15; Possession 45.
- **Gallinules (Common and Purple)** – September 13 – November 21. Bag Limit 15; Possession 45.
- **Snipe** – November 14, 2014 – February 28, 2015. Bag Limit 8; Possession 24.
- **Woodcock** – December 18, 2014 – January 31, 2015. Bag Limit 3; Possession 9.

**ACTION:** Upon motion made by Commissioner Wagner and seconded by Commissioner Cossar, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the Early Migratory Bird Season calendar as presented. Dove Season dates were previously approved at the April Commission Meeting.

### Late Migratory Game Bird Seasons

Mr. Penny presented the following recommendations for the 2014-15 late migratory game bird season:

- **Ducks, Mergansers, and Coots** – ~~November 22 – 23; November 27 – 30; December 3, 2014 – January 25, 2015.~~ Bag Limits: 6 ducks, including no more than 4 mallards which only 2 of which

may be females, 3 wood ducks, 2 redheads, 3 scaup, 2 pintail, 1 canvasback, 1 mottled duck, and 1 black duck. Merganser daily bag limit is a total of 5 mergansers, only 2 of which may be hooded mergansers. Coots have a 15-bird daily bag limit. Possession limit: 3 times the daily bag limit.

**ACTION:** Discussion followed concerning changing the recommended dates and adding more hunting time later in the season. By motion of Commissioner Wagner and seconded by Commissioner Deviney, the Commission voted unanimously to delete November 22-23 and run the season continuously from November 27, 2014 – January 25, 2015.

- **2 Youth Waterfowl Days** – ~~November 15, 2014~~ and January 31, 2015. Bag Limits and Possession are the same as listed above for Ducks, Mergansers, and Coots.

**ACTION:** Discussion followed concerning the November 15 Youth Waterfowl opening date. By motion of Commissioner Wagner and seconded by Commissioner Deviney, the Commission voted unanimously to change the date from November 15 to November 22. No change was made to the January 31 date.

- **Geese: Canada, Snow, Blue, Ross', White-fronted, and Brant** – November 13, 2014 – January 25, 2015. Canada Goose Bag Limit 3; Possession 9. Snow, Blue, and Ross' Bag Limit 20; No Possession Limit. White-front Goose Bag Limit 2; Possession 6. Brant Bag Limit 1; Possession 3.

**ACTION:** Upon motion made by Commissioner Wagner and seconded by Commissioner Cossar, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the Late Migratory Bird Season calendar above with the amended changes to Youth Waterfowl and Ducks, Mergansers, and Coots.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT

### Citation Report

Col. Steve Adcock, Chief of Law Enforcement, briefed the Commission on 383 License/Compliance citations issued statewide between June 6 and July 3, 2014. Also eighty officers participated in Operation Dry Water issuing 54 citations and four BUI's on the Fourth of July holiday. Over the past 45 days Turcotte Shooting Range received 1,461 customers while the newest range, McHenry, saw 574 patrons. This difference was attributed to Turcotte being the facilitator of several tournaments. McHenry is currently involved with 4-H groups and is hopeful that future 4-H tournaments will be hosted through them. Conservation Officers were busy during June conducting hunter/boater education workshops and recovering a drowning victim at Dumas Lake in Tippah County. This was the tenth drowning incident this year. Copies of the citation report were distributed to the Commissioners.

Seven MDWFP Conservation Officers competed in the 2014 National LawFit Challenge. Team members included Chris Reed, Ron McMillan, Marcus Christon, Justin Gates, Bob Oliveri, Don Fairley, and Caleb Miller. LawFit is held annually and measures physical fitness among law enforcement officers from state agencies, police departments, and sheriff departments across the nation.

MDWFP competed extremely well bringing home awards in six categories:

- Two-man Team Event – 1<sup>st</sup> Place
- Four-man Team Event – 2<sup>nd</sup> Place
- Overall Male Competitor: 2<sup>nd</sup> Place – Justin Gates; 4<sup>th</sup> Place - Marcus Christon
- Overall Individual Bench Press: Justin Gates
- Overall Individual Pull-ups: Justin Gates
- Trooper “Bubba” Wells Award: Bob Oliveri

Col. Adcock will present the team to the Commission at the August meeting.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

No other business was presented.

#### **NEXT MEETING DATE**

Wednesday, August 20, 2014 @ 2:30 p.m., 1505 Eastover Drive, Jackson

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**ACTION:** Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Rigdon, 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 the purchase of real property. Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Wagner, the Commission voted unanimously to enter into Executive Session.

Chad Dacus and Dr. Polles presented the results of two appraisals of a tract of land adjacent to Black Prairie WMA that was available for purchase. The Commission considered the prices reasonable.

Upon motion made by Commissioner Rigdon and seconded by Commissioner Wagner, the Commission voted unanimously to authorize the Executive Director to make an offer to purchase the property, at a price not to exceed the per acre price of the two appraisals, when averaged together.

There was no other business for discussion in Executive Session.

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

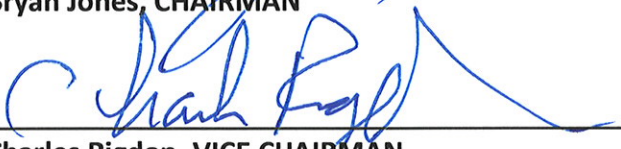


**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to discuss, Chairman Jones gave the meeting into adjournment.

  
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Bryan Jones, CHAIRMAN

  
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Date

  
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Charles Rigdon, VICE CHAIRMAN

  
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Date