

# MISSISSIPPI COMMISSION ON WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, & PARKS

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

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, Chris McDonald, Larry Pugh, Col. Steve Adcock, Jason Thompson, Paul Collins, Mike Taggart, and counsel, Doug Mann and Drew Malone, Special Assistant Attorneys General.

Chairman Jones gaveled the meeting to order.

## OPENING PRAYER

Robert Cook, Deputy Executive Director, opened the meeting with a prayer.

## MINUTES

**ACTION:** Upon motion made by Commissioner Rigdon and seconded by Commissioner Wagner, the minutes of February 9, 2015 were unanimously approved as presented.

## TODAY'S AGENDA

Dr. Sam Polles, Executive Director, requested the following two changes to the agenda:

- Changing PARKS category presenter from Libby Hartfield to Paul Collins
- Adding "Decommissioning High Fence Enclosures" item to OTHER BUSINESS category

**ACTION:** Upon motion by Commissioner Cossar and seconded by Commissioner Wagner, today's agenda was unanimously approved as amended.

## LICENSE SALES REPORT

### License Sales Report

Jason Thompson, License/Boat Registration Division Director, presented the License Sales Report for the month of February, 2015. He informed the Commission that total revenue for February was down less than 1% from last year.

His report included the following cumulative sales (comparing February, 2015 to February, 2014):

- Resident License sales down \$2,000. Annual Range Permits up \$25,000. Waterfowl Stamps up \$15,000.
- Non-resident Licenses up \$21,000. Three-day All Game License up \$45,000 and Seven-day All Game up \$19,000.
- Other Licenses reported revenue up. Paddlefish permits down.
- Lifetime Licenses – The total number of lifetime licenses sold are down 4% from last year.

On April 1st the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation will be sending an email blast to promote fishing license sales. The MDWFP License/Boat Registration Division will be keeping track of these responses.

### License Exemption Request

Jason Thompson received a request to waive license fees for 16 veterans who plan to participate in a Wounded Warrior hunting event to be held Friday, April 21 through Saturday, April 22, 2015 in Copiah County.

**ACTION:** Upon motion by Commissioner Wagner and seconded by Commissioner Cossar, this request was unanimously approved as presented.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

No comments were received from the public.

## FISHERIES

Larry Pugh, Fisheries Bureau Director, presented the following proposed rule.

### PROPOSED 40 MS Administrative Code Part 3, Chapter 2:

- **Rule 2.1 – Regulations Regarding State Fishing Lakes**
  - Reopening of Lake Lamar Bruce after a three-year closure period.
  - Open to skiing Thursday, Sunday, Memorial Day, July 4<sup>th</sup>, & Labor Day.
  - Open May 2 (Youth Day only) and May 6 to general public for all activities.
  - Recommended creel and bag limits.

Regulations which are provided in the Parks' rules and regulations were added.

- No fires other than in designated campground areas.
- Disabled/Senior citizens may not rent for others who are not eligible.
- Clarified skiing on state lakes.
- No person shall construct or erect any building or structure.
- No explosive substance, fireworks, etc. on lake property.

**ACTION:** Upon motion by Commissioner Rigdon and seconded by Commissioner Deviney, the Commission voted unanimously to approve Rule 2.1 as presented.

**COMMENT:** Commissioner Cossar brought up for comment that MDWFP may want to increase out-of-state fishing licenses at a future date.

### WILDLIFE

Chad Dacus, Wildlife Bureau Director, presented the following alligator rule changes. In previous years applications were accepted during the first week of June. The Permit purchasing process will be delayed until the second week of July to allow for public awareness of changes. These new procedures will be posted on the MDWFP website immediately after Commission approval.

#### **PROPOSED 40 MS Administrative Code Part 2, Chapter 5:**

- **Rule 5.2 – Private Lands Alligator Season**
  - Season opens 12:00 noon August 28 and ends 6 a.m. September 21, 2015
  - Change mandatory training course to a voluntary training course.
  - Change the mandatory harvest report from a mail-in card to an on-line report completed via MDWFP website no later than September 30.
- **Rule 5.3 – Public Waters Alligator Season**
  - Season opens 12:00 noon August 28 and ends 12:00 noon September 7, 2015
  - Clarify Northeast Zone and Pearl River/Ross Barnett Zone
  - Remove the drawing for permits and provides a web-based “first-come-first-serve” permit purchase process beginning the second Tuesday in July each year with immediate payment made on-line to secure permit.
  - Change mandatory training course to a voluntary training course.

**ACTION:** Upon motion by Commissioner Cossar and seconded by Commissioner Rigdon, the Commission voted unanimously to approve Rules 5.2 and 5.3 as presented.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT

### Citation Report

Col. Steve Adcock, Chief of Law Enforcement, briefed the Commission on 298 citations issued statewide between January 30, 2015 and March 13, 2015. Top five violations were No License, Baiting and Supplemental Feeding, Trespassing, PFD violation, and Headlighting. Col. Adcock commented that annual range permit revenue has increased from \$40,000 to \$63,000 since the opening of the second firing range.

### Reinstatement Requests

Col. Adcock brought before the Commission three requests for reinstatement. Each violator was asked to come forward and state why his license had been revoked.

- Dallas McCullough, Coldwater, MS

A friend shot a deer after dark with his gun. They both pleaded guilty.

**ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Wagner and seconded by Commissioner Cossar, the Commission voted unanimously to reinstate Mr. McCullough's license.**

- Nickolas and Benjamin Brown, Hernando, MS

Brothers were at their grandmother's home and saw several deer in her backyard. A friend was visiting with them and shot two deer on her property after dark. They all went to jail and pleaded guilty. The worst part was losing a whole year of hunting.

**ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Wagner, the Commission voted unanimously to reinstate the licenses of Mr. Nicolas Brown and Mr. Benjamin Brown.**

## PARKS

Paul Collins, Director of Park Operations, presented the following proposed rule.

### PROPOSED 40 MS Administrative Code Part 6, Chapter 1:

- **Rule 1.1 – State Park Fees**

Questions on fee increases at Quail Hollow, LeFleur's Bluff Golf, and Mallard Point Golf Courses were directed to Michael Taggart, Recreation Coordinator. Mr. Taggart stated that each round at Quail Hollow and LeFleur's Bluff were increased by one dollar. Mallard Point's fee increases were changed to be consistent with the area.

- **Rule 1.2 – General Rules and Regulations for State Parks**

Changes made in pet, horse, and firearm regulations.

**ACTION:** Upon motion by Commissioner Wagner and seconded by Commissioner Cossar, the Commission voted unanimously to approve Rules 1.1 and 1.2 as presented.

### OTHER BUSINESS

#### Golf Update

Mike Taggart provided further details on the following golf courses:

- Quail Hollow – Rounds and revenue are up. Fourteen events are scheduled over the next three months.
- Mallard Point – The greens were covered the first 58 days due to inclement weather. They are now uncovered.
- LeFleur’s Bluff – All is well.

No action was required of the Commission.

#### Decommissioning High Fence Enclosures

Chris McDonald, Wildlife Bureau Assistant Director, presented the following proposed rule.

##### PROPOSED 40 MS Administrative Code Part 2, Chapter 8:

- **Rule 8.5 - Decommission of Enclosures Containing White-tailed Deer**

A copy of the rule was provided to the Commission for their review prior to the meeting. The Commission asked for a rule that would allow an existing, permitted enclosure to remove its fence or otherwise cease to prevent free ingress and egress of wild animals. The original rule regarding such facilities did not provide a method for an enclosure to stop being an enclosure. No discussion followed.

**ACTION:** Upon motion by Commissioner Rigdon and seconded by Commissioner Cossar, the Commission voted unanimously to approve proposed Rule 8.5 as presented.

### NEXT MEETING DATE

Wednesday, April 22 at 1:30 p.m. at MDWFP Main Office, 1505 Eastover Drive, Jackson, MS 39211

### 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 transactions in real property. Upon motion made by Commissioner Cossar and seconded by Commissioner Wagner, the Commission voted unanimously to enter into Executive Session.

Art Kennard presented the Commission information regarding two (2) 40 acre tracts adjacent to the Indianola WMA which are available for purchase. Discussion followed. Of the two tracts, one is

farmland and includes a new water well and other improvements which are expected to drive the price above what it will be worth to the agency when turned into wildlife habitat. The other tract is half cropland and half forested making it more suitable for wildlife.

**ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Wagner and seconded by Commissioner Deviney, the Commission voted unanimously to authorize the Executive Director to pursue the purchase of the tract represented in blue on the plat, to include obtaining appraisals of the property.**

Dr. Polles updated the Commission on efforts to purchase the tract in Montgomery County and a tract thought to be off the market, which may be available again, in Bolivar County. No action was required of the Commission as they had authorized pursuing these tracts in the past. The Commission indicated that staff should keep trying to obtain these tracts.

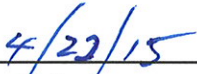
There was no other business for discussion in Executive Session.

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

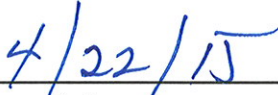
**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to discuss, Chairman Jones gavelled 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