

MISSISSIPPI COMMISSION ON WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, & PARKS

Wednesday, June 10, 2015

2:30 p.m.

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

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

PRESENT: Commission 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, Executive Deputy Director; Larry Castle, Michael Bolden, Jennifer Head, Chad Dacus, Larry Pugh, Colonel Steve Adcock, Ed Penny, and counsel, Doug Mann and Drew Malone, Special Assistant Attorneys General.

Chairman Jones gavelled the meeting to order and welcomed House Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks Committee Chairman Scott Bounds, Former Commissioner John Stanley, and newly-appointed Commissioner Scott Coopwood.

OPENING PRAYER

Scott Edwards, the newly-appointed Chaplain for our Conservation Area (Central Region), opened the meeting with a prayer.

MINUTES/AGENDA

ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Bill Cossar and seconded by Commissioner Clay Wagner, the minutes for May 20, 2015, and the agenda for today's meeting were unanimously approved.

LICENSE SALES REPORT

Jason Thompson, Director of License/Boat Registration, presented the License Sales Report for the month of May 2015.

Jason's report indicated the total revenue for the month of May is comparable to last year.

- License sales are currently down less than 2% from last month.
- Resident License sales are down less than one percent (1%) from FY 14.
- The Annual Range Permit is up \$30,000.00 from last year, a total of \$76,000 this year.
- Waterfowl Stamps are up \$12,000.00.
- Non-resident Sales are up \$5,000.00.
- Seven Day/All Game License sales are up \$8,000.00

- 3 Day /All Game License sales are up \$46,000.00.
- Louisiana License sales are up \$25,000 from last year.
- In the "Other License" Category, revenue is up .3% from FY'14.
- Lifetime License quantity sold is down 2% from last year.

Dr. Polles asked Jason about whether there were any new marketing ideas for promoting license sales beginning July 1, 2015. Jason indicated everything should be similar to last year and that we are currently sending out mailers to "All Game" (license) purchasers, and renewal notices to "Exempt" customers.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

John Brashears – Addressed his concerns to the Commission on Crappie Fishing/Pole Limits.

- Losing poles in the lake, decreases opportunity for fishermen with only a 3 pole limit.
- Most boats (hardware) are set up for 4 poles instead of three.
- Trolling with only three poles is difficult, and limits a man trying to catch enough fish for a family.
- There needs to be a limit on poles per boat (excursion boats).
- There should be a 4 pole per boat, per man, and a total boat limit of 8 poles.
- Enid Lake allows anglers to use 5 poles.

FISHERIES

Larry Pugh, Director of Fisheries Division, presented two rules for consideration today.

FINAL 40 Miss. Admin. Code, Part 3, Chapter 1, General FISHERIES Rules

- Rule 1.3 Regulations concerning Sport Fishing/ received no public comments
Larry recommends we precede with staff recommendations on rule.
- Rule 1.4 Statewide Creel 39 various comments all over the board
Larry recommends we proceed with staff recommendation for the proposed rule.

ACTION: Commissioner Clay Wagner made a motion to approve 40 Miss. Admin. Code, Part 3, Rule 1.3 as presented, and 40 Miss. Admin. Code, Part 3, Rule 1.4 as presented, provided no further negative comment is received prior to the date the rule may be filed. Commissioner Bill Cossar seconded the motion, and 40 Miss. Admin. Code, Part 3, Rules 1.3 & 1.4 (FINAL) were unanimously approved as presented.

PARKS

Jennifer Head, Director of Parks, presented the following rule for final passage for State Park Fees.

Final Rule 40 MS. Admin. Code Part 6, Rule 1.1: State Park Fees

- Rule 1.1/ No comments received

ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Billy Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Clay Wagner, Final Rule 40 MS. Admin. Code Part 3, Chapter 1, Rule 1.1 was unanimously approved as presented.

Commissioner Cossar praised the recent renovation work done at George Payne Cossar State Park, including new furniture, construction, and remodeling. He commended the MDWFP personnel for making all the renovations themselves.

Commissioner Cossar also indicated the new work at Mallard Pointe Golf Course has made the fairways more inviting and the greens more attractive.

WILDLIFE

Chad Dacus, Wildlife Bureau Director, presented the following Dove Season proposals for this year:

- The USFWS Framework will not be completed until the first week of July; however, staff does not expect any significant changes (in the framework) from last year. A few comments were made on last year's season Framework One. Staff recommendations for Framework One are:
- North Zone
 - Noon Friday, September 4th - October 7th
 - October 10th - 31st
 - December 13th - January 15th
- South Zone
 - Noon Friday, September 4th - 13th
 - October 10th - November 15th
 - December 4th - January 15th
- The season will open statewide on September 4, 2015, at noon. Regular shooting hours will commence after opening day.

ACTION: Motion made by Commissioner Clay Wagner to accept these changes, contingent upon the frameworks that are presented by the USFWS being consistent with past frameworks as predicted by staff. Commissioner Charles Rigdon seconded the motion. The Motion passed unanimously. Chairman Bryan Jones reiterated that the motion is subject to the proposed framework, which should be ready July 1st.

Rule 8.5 Decommissioning of Enclosures Containing White-Tailed Deer

Commissioner Billy Deviney requested that the minutes reflect his abstention from the discussion and vote on this proposed rule. The Chairman directed that the minutes so note Commissioner Deviney's abstention.

Chad Dacus and Chris McDonald, Wildlife Bureau Assistant Director, presented the proposed rule and discussion thereof.

This rule has been brought forward at the request of the Commission, and in consultation with the State Veterinarian, Board of Animal Health, and the Department of Agriculture.

- Highlights
 - Enclosures requesting to be decommissioned must submit an application for decommissioning at which time the enclosure will be inspected and classified as high or low risk;
 - Disease sampling must be overseen by MDWFP biologists in concert with the State Veterinarian;
 - All costs will be the responsibility of the enclosure owner;
 - After all requirements are met, the fence or gates may be removed or the fence lowered to no more than 6.5 feet;
 - If feral hogs are present, the fence may not be lowered less than 4 ft.;
 - If exotics are present, they must be depopulated as determined by the Board of Animal Health

ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Bill Cossar and seconded by Commissioner Clay Wagner, the Commission voted to approve 40 Miss. Admin. Code, Part 2, Rule 8.5 (Proposed), as presented.

The Commission requested that Chad Dacus also present the proposed change in the Duck Season, subject to the pending USFWS framework recommendations.

Chad presented the following staff recommendation for Duck Season.

- Split Youth Days
 - November 21st and February 6th
- Regular Season
 - November 27th - 29th
 - December 4th - 6th
 - December 9th - January 31st

ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Wagner, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the framework options as presented.

Mr. Dacus introduced Houston Havens, State Waterfowl Program Coordinator, to give a presentation on Waterfowl Habitat Management on Wildlife Management Areas. The presentation included information on harvest numbers, long term data, and comparisons with prior years' data.

The Commission requested that Chad Dacus also present any proposed change for Goose Season, subject to the pending USFWS framework recommendations.

Chad Dacus presented the Goose Season recommendations as follows:

- Conservation Goose Order
 - October 1st – November 18th
 - February 1st – 5th
 - February 7th March 31
- Goose Season
 - November 19-January 31

ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Clay Wagner and seconded by Commissioner Charles Rigdon the Commission voted unanimously to approve staff Goose Season recommendations.

CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

Ed Penny, Director of Conservation Programs, introduced Waldo Cleveland, Director of Archery in the Schools. Highlights of his presentation on Archery in the Schools is listed below.

Archery Update – Presented by Waldo Cleveland

- AIMS is one of the largest youth programs in the state, surpassing both Little League, Dixie League, and Mississippi High School Activities Association Track and Field.
- The first state championship tournament took place in 2011 with a total number of 400 students participating.
- In April 2015 the State Tournament had a total of 3,681 participants, and was preceded by both North and South State Championship qualifying events, totaling over 7,800 student participants.
- 418 schools actively participate in the program, with 52,000 students participating in 2014, and over 60,000 student participants projected for 2015.
- A recent study in Kentucky shows that 36% of the students participating in archery will buy a hunting/fishing license by or before age 16.
- By the spring of 2017, all colleges should have an Archery Program. Mr. Cleveland presented a growth rate chart to the Commissioners depicting these projections.
- Schools that offer an Archery Program do so through the Physical Education program.
- The City of Gautier will host the State Tournament in 2016.
- Nationally, Mississippi ranks in the top 4 states for participation; however, Mississippi is ranked Number 1 in *per capita* participants.

Collegiate Archery Programs have been launched at the following colleges:

- William Carey College
- Ole Miss (University of Mississippi)
- Mississippi State University
- Mississippi Valley State University
- Southwest Mississippi Community College
- Mississippi College
- Copiah-Lincoln Community College (Co-Lin)

The Commission thanked Mr. Cleveland for his presentation and for his tireless efforts in promoting Archery in the Schools.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Col. Steve Adcock, Chief of Law Enforcement, presented the following personnel for promotion, at which time Commissioner Bryan Jones and Dr. Sam Polles presented their new rank and pin:

- Lt. Tommy Russell to Captain
- MSgt. John McFerrin to Lieutenant
- MSgt. Greg Walters to Lieutenant
- MSgt. Byron Davis to Lieutenant

Citation Report

Col. Steve Adcock, Chief of Law Enforcement, briefed the Commission on citations and compliance checks.

Shooting Range numbers are continuing to grow.

Reinstatement Requests (2)

- Zachary Cuevas, Poplarville, MS. Colonel Adcock informed the Commission that Mr. Cuevas had retaken Hunter Education and had paid all fines. Mr. Cuevas then told the Commission the circumstances of his arrest and conviction for headlighting.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Clay Wagner to reinstate the privileges of Mr. Cuevas and seconded by Commissioner Bill Cossar, the motion unanimously carried.

- Gary Bryce McNair, Philadelphia, MS. Colonel Adcock informed the Commission that Mr. McNair had also retaken Hunter Education and had paid all fines. Mr. McNair told the Commission the story of his arrest and conviction.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Charles Rigdon to reinstate the privileges of Mr. McNair and seconded by Commissioner Billy Deviney, the motion unanimously carried.

OTHER BUSINESS

Commissioner Bryan Jones called for nominations for Commission officers for the coming year.

ACTION: Commissioner Billy Deviney nominated Commissioner Charles Rigdon as the new Commission Chairman, and Commissioner Clay Wagner as Vice Chairman. Commissioner Bill Cossar seconded the nominations. There were no other nominations. The Commission voted unanimously to approve Charles Rigdon as Chairman and Clay Wagner as Vice Chairman, beginning July 1, 2015.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Next Commission date set as July 23, 2015 at 2:00 p.m., at the Jackson office.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Executive Director reported that there was no need for an Executive Session.

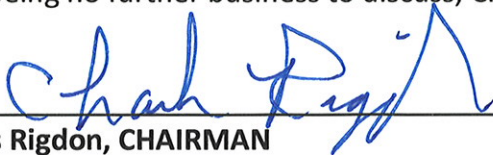
CLOSING REMARKS

Commissioner Bryan Jones addressed the Commission, staff, and officers in appreciation for their hard work and dedication to this agency.

Dr. Polles presented Commission Chairman Bryan Jones with a plaque showing his gratitude for Commissioner Jones' dedication and undying support of the Agency.

ADJOURNMENT

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



Charles Rigdon, CHAIRMAN

Date

Clay Wagner, VICE CHAIRMAN

Date