

Minutes
Board of Natural Resources
2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, S. E.
Suite 1252 East Tower
Atlanta, GA 30334

May 19, 2020
9:00 a.m.
(Via Teleconference Call)

Attendees:

Board Members

Nancy Addison, Chair
Dee Yancey, Vice Chair
Bill Jones, Secretary
William Bagwell
Dwight Davis
Dwight Evans
Joe Hatfield
Duncan N. Johnson, Jr.
Ray Lambert
Rob Leebern
Tim Lowe
Mike Phelps
Billy New
Paul Shailendra
Jeff "Bodine" Sinyard
Brother Stewart
Miki Thomaston

Guests

Ryan Gesser, Georgia Industry Environmental Coalition

Staff Members

Mark Williams, Commissioner
Walter Rabon
Kyle Pearson
Josh Hildebrandt
Cathy Barnette
Amber Carter
Artica Gaston
Courtney Hall
Thomas Barnard
Jeff Cown
Steve Friedman
Rusty Garrison
Doug Haymans
Tina Johannsen
Mike Burgamy

Richard Dunn, Director
Lauren Curry
Karen Hays

The May 19, 2020 Board of Natural Resources meeting was called to order by Chair Nancy Addison.

Chair Addison called on Captain Mike Burgamy, Law Enforcement Division, to provide an opening prayer for the Board meeting.

Chair Addison called on Cathy Barnette to do roll call and verify a quorum is present. Those in attendance on the conference call were Nancy Addison, Chair, Dee Yancey, Vice Chair, Bill Jones, Secretary, William Bagwell, Dwight Davis, Dwight Evans, Joe Hatfield, Duncan Johnson, Ray Lambert, Rob Leebern, Tim Lowe, Billy New, Mike Phelps, Paul Shailendra, Bodine Sinyard, Brother Stewart, and Miki Thomaston.

Chair Addison called for a motion to approve the minutes of the April 18, 2020 Board of Natural Resources meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Evans, seconded by Mr. Hatfield, and carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the April 28, 2020 Board of Natural Resources meeting.

Chair Addison called on Richard Dunn, Director of the Environmental Protection Division, for his report.

Director Dunn updated the Board on the new changes to the budget for fiscal year 2021 and the reopening of EPD offices to allow for routine inspections and complain investigations to resume, lab operations, and record reviews by appointment.

Director Dunn stated this concluded his report.

Chair Addison called on Mark Williams, Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources, for his report.

Commissioner Williams thanked the Board for their commitment and service during this trying and life-changing time and thanked the public guests for joining us on the conference call and for their involvement in the DNR's work.

Commission Williams stated the Department continues to be largely operational during the COVID-19 response, with nearly all parks, WMAs, PFAs, and other properties remaining open. He further stated that the Game Wardens are working long days and have spent over 14,263 hours while conducting 4,093 targeted patrols as of last week in the monitoring and enforcing of COVID-19 directives. He added that WRD staff continue to support medical supply deliveries for the state, and CRD staff served as points of contact on the coast to help the public navigate the administrative orders and how to stay in compliance with all beach usage directives.

Commissioner Williams stated that May 6 was State Employee Appreciation Day and he thanked the entire DNR family for their hard work and for their flexibility and diligence during this complex crisis.

Commissioner Williams provided a legislative update and stated that legislators will return to the capitol in early June for in-person budget and committee meetings and the general assembly will reconvene for two weeks in the middle of the month.

Commissioner Williams provided an update from the Grants team. He stated the initial steps of the 2020-2021 DNR grant cycle have already begun by announcing funding opportunities for qualified applicants through both the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program and the Land and Water Conservation Fund. He further stated the Outdoor Stewardship Program will open its pre-application period on August 1 and will run through October 16. The Land and Water Conservation Fund will open its pre-application cycle in late summer, with those dates soon to be posted on the DNR Grants web page. He added the Grants Unit will be conducting a series of webinar-based Educational Workshops covering both grant programs in June.

Commissioner Williams recognized Jeff Stewart, the Assistant Hatchery Manager at the Lake Burton Hatchery for rescuing a boy who slipped and fell while wade fishing on the Tallulah River in Rabun County. He stated that Jeff immediately ran to his aid and followed the boy along the streambank until he was able to reach out and pull him to safety. He added the boy and his family were very thankful for Jeff's heroic actions, which may have averted a potential tragedy.

Commissioner Williams provided an update on the Coastal Resources Division. He stated the CRD staff learned on May 7 that the Secretary of Commerce announced an allocation of \$1.9 million for Georgia. He further stated that marine commercial fishermen, charter businesses, qualified aquaculture operations, processors, and other fishery-related businesses are eligible to receive relief, but must be able to prove at least a 35% loss of income when compared to the same period over the past five years, to qualify. He added that the CRD hopes to be able to distribute these funds in late summer or fall.

Commissioner Williams stated that the CRD brought back online several CRD surveys that were suspended in April, including the Ecological Monitoring Trawl Survey aboard the R/V Anna. He further stated one of the primary uses of the data from this survey is to help with the opening of the upcoming shrimp season. He added that CRD has also restarted beach water and shellfish area sampling and angler intercept surveys.

Commissioner Williams stated that earlier in the month the CRD team hosted Congressman Buddy Carter for his second visit in 2020 to CRD Headquarters. He further stated that Director Haymans and Region 6 Game Wardens took the congressman for an up-close visit of the Golden Ray to inspect progress. He added the salvage team hopes to begin cutting in early July.

Commissioner William provided an update on the Parks, Recreation and Historic Sites Division. He stated the Parks Division has provided a huge benefit to the citizens of Georgia and even the neighbor states during the pandemic by offering opportunities to pursue mental, spiritual and physical health.

Commissioner Williams stated that the Parks division followed every safety recommendation from the Governor's office and the public health officials. He further stated that Parks staff worked in

record time to stand up Self Check-In for cottage and camping guests, which helped keep our overnight guests comfortable and safe. He added that as a result of the properties remaining open, Parks had holiday weekend level visitation each weekend this spring and resulted in a 40% increase in camping occupancy and camping revenue is \$1 million above last year.

Commissioner Williams stated that DNR's Rangers found innovative ways to serve the public by creating eRanger videos for children who had to attend school remotely. He further stated that since launching on March 25, there have been 870,700 views of the program.

Commissioner Williams introduced Kate Ianuzzi as the new Deputy Executive Counsel and welcomed her to the DNR family.

Commissioner Williams stated this concluded his report.

Chair Addison called on Mr. Ray Lambert, Chairman of the Environmental Protection Committee, for his report.

A motion was made by Mr. Lambert, seconded by Ms. Thomaston, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to approve the Proposed Amendments to the Rules for Air Quality Control, Chapter 391-3-1. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part thereof)

Chair Addison called on Mr. Joe Hatfield, Chairman of the Wildlife Resources Committee, for his report.

A motion was made by Mr. Hatfield, seconded by Mr. New, and carried unanimously to approve the Proposed Amendments to Hunting Regulations, Subject 391-4-2.

Chair Addison called on Mr. Dwight Davis, Chairman of the Land Committee for his report.

A motion was made by Mr. Davis, seconded by Mr. Yancey, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval of the Granting of a Revocable License Agreement and Permanent Easement of up to 3.24± acres by the State Properties Commission and General Assembly to AT&T at Wormsloe Historic Site for a fiber optic cable, Chatham County. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part thereof)

A motion was made by Mr. Davis, seconded by Mr. Sinyard, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval of the Granting of a Revocable License Agreement and Permanent Easement of up to 13.99± acres by the State Properties Commission and General Assembly to Glynn County at the Sansavilla WMA and Clayhole Swamp WMA to pave Pennick Road, Glynn County. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part thereof)

A motion was made by Mr. Davis, seconded by Mr. Stewart, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval of the Granting of a Revocable License Agreement and Permanent Easement of up to 2.02± acres by the State Properties Commission and General Assembly to Amanda Anne Hall, Margie J. Deer, Sally J. Grose,

and Nollie Leigh Motes (Property Owners) at the Tallulah Gorge State Park for an access easement, Rabun County. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part thereof)

A motion was made by Mr. Davis, seconded by Mr. Shailendra, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval to renew a five (5) year sublease agreement between the Department of Natural Resources and Elbert County, Bobby Brown State Park, Elbert County. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part thereof)

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Nancy A. Addison, Chairman

ATTEST:

A. W. Jones III, Secretary