

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

**August 25, 2020
9:00 a.m.
Via Teleconference Call**

Attendees:

Board Members

Nancy Addison, Chair
Dee Yancey, Vice Chair
Bill Jones, Secretary
Nick Ayers
William Bagwell
Dwight Davis
Denney, Patrick
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

Staff Members

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

Richard Dunn, Director
Lauren Curry
Jac Capp
Karen Hays
Chuck Mueller
Laura Williams

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The August 25, 2020 Board of Natural Resources meeting was called to order by Chair Nancy Addison.

Chair Addison called on the newly appointed board members, Mr. Patrick Denney and Mr. Nick Ayers, for a brief introduction.

Chair Addison called on Cathy Barnette for roll call and declaration of quorum.

Chair Addison adjourned the Board meeting to move into the Committee meetings.

Chair Addison called the meeting of the Board of Natural Resources to order.

Chair Addison called for a motion to approve the June 23, 2020 minutes.

A motion was made by Ms. Thomaston, seconded by Mr. Johnson, and carried unanimously to approve the June 23, 2020 minutes.

Chair Addison called for a motion to approve the August 10, 2020 minutes.

A motion was made by Mr. Bagwell, seconded by Mr. Hatfield, and carried unanimously to approve the August 10, 2020 minutes.

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

Director Dunn updated the Board on the final status of 2020 legislative activity pertaining to the Environmental Protection Division and operations on Golden Ray.

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 called on Kate Iannuzzi, Deputy Executive Counsel.

Ms. Iannuzzi stated this is an action item on a proposed resolution approving the contract between the Town of Pine Mountain, the Pine Mountain Tourism Association, and the Ida Cason Callaway Foundation relating to a hotel/motel tax on Callaway Gardens for FY2020-2021. She further stated this is a tax that Callaway Gardens approves of and wants to be levied upon them, in order to promote tourism in the area. She added the General Assembly, specifically in O.C.G.A. §48-13-55(c), placed the responsibility of approval of this contract and tax levy on the Board of Natural Resources. She further added, accordingly, the parties to this contract are requesting approval from the Board of Natural Resources because the law requires them to.

Ms. Iannuzzi stated that for the past twenty years, the Board of Natural Resources has approved of the tax levy and the contract between the parties, with the exception of one year. She further stated, it is her understanding, that for some reason in 2015, the Town, the Association, and the Foundation did not make a request with the Board.

Ms. Iannuzzi stated that O.C.G.A. §48-13-55(c), has the following requirements: there must be a written agreement between the municipality and the charitable trust that governs

the expenditure of the funds; the funds must be spent solely on promoting, attracting, stimulating, and developing conventions and tourism; and the tax levy, the collection of the tax, and the written agreement must be approved by the Board of Natural Resources.

Ms. Iannuzzi stated the package contains the following documents: the letter from Callaway Gardens requesting that the Board approve the contract; the contract that has been entered into between the Town and the Association, with the consent of Callaway Gardens, describing how the funds will be used by the Association to promote conventions and tourism; the Association's annual budget describing how the funds will be used; the Town's certification of the contract; and a proposed resolution approving the tax on Callaway Gardens and the contract governing the expenditure of the funds.

Ms. Iannuzzi stated the Board's favorable consideration of the proposed resolution would be appreciated.

A motion was made by Mr. Bagwell, seconded by Mr. Leebern, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to approve the Proposed Resolution approving hotel/motel tax on Callaway Gardens and contract governing expenditure of tax revenue. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part thereof)

Commissioner Williams provided a legislative update and stated that the Department was fortunate to have 5 out of 6 bills pass both chambers and to have Governor Kemp sign all 5 bills into law following the legislative session.

Commissioner Williams provided a Coastal Resources Division update and stated Georgia's spend plan for CARES Act aid to marine fishermen was approved by NOAA fisheries. He further stated CRD will now begin contacting as many as 400 commercial fishermen to determine loss eligibility to receive aid. He added that despite the outbreak, hard blue crab and shrimp landings have been above average for the first 6 months of the year. He further added that softshell crab landings are much lower, as most if not all of their markets dried up with restaurant closures.

Commissioner Williams stated the CRD hosted a commissioning ceremony for the new Research Vessel Reid W. Harris. He further stated the Harris will be conducting gear trials in September and hopefully will assume the duties from the R/V Anna later this year.

Commissioner Williams stated that renovations of the Houlihan boating access facility have been recently completed and the site re-opened. He further stated that both ramps were replaced, new shoreline armoring, removal of a dangerously old dock section, and the service

dock was extended by 30 ft. He added this project represents a partnership between CRD, WRD, and the City of Port Wentworth.

Commissioner Williams congratulated CRD's Jan McKinnon, Jordan Dodson, Jamie King, and Kelie Moore for their role on the US Army Corps of Engineers award winning Green Dream Team. He further stated that these four recently received the National 2020 US Army Corps of Engineers Sustainability Award for the Jekyll Creek Beneficial Use Pilot Project.

Commissioner Williams stated that CoastFest is approaching and, as with most events this year, is going virtual. He further stated the tentative schedule has events on September 30-October 2.

Commissioner Williams stated that work on the Golden Ray removal has been paused for 75 days, to resume on or about October 1. He further stated that all equipment is on-site and ready; however, bouts with COVID-19 pushed the response to the heart of hurricane season and it was decided to get through the hurricane season before beginning the cuts.

Commissioner Williams provided a Law Enforcement Division (LED) update. He stated the division welcomed 9 new game wardens who graduated from the academy in July. He added that this year's ceremony was particularly special as the Governor and First Lady were in attendance, and the Governor gave the keynote address.

Commissioner Williams stated on August 15, the LED was requested to provide public safety support to scheduled protests at Stone Mountain Park and the City of Stone Mountain. He further stated that LE officers performed ATV perimeter patrols of the park to keep protestors from entering illegally and assisted the DeKalb Sheriff's Office with dispersing crowds in the nearby city. He added that overall, there were 28 LE officers and 2 K-9s on site.

Commissioner Williams stated that LED's Marine Theft Unit recently assisted and coordinated the recovery of two vessels reported stolen in other states: one from Catawba Township, OH, in May 2020, and one from Charleston, SC, in March 2020.

Commissioner Williams stated the LE Division celebrated a year of excellence at their annual awards banquet at the Idlewilde Event Center. He congratulated 2020 Game Warden of the Year, Ryan Locke, and the James R. Darnell Award recipient, Dean Gibson.

Commissioner Williams provided a Wildlife Resources Division (WRD) update. He stated the Wildlife Conservation staff have been conducting monitoring to conserve Canby's Dropwort, a federally endangered plant. He further stated that monitoring includes water quality and

population status assessments. He added that Wildlife Conservation staff are also working with the Georgia Pollinator Partnership conducting surveys and database updates.

Commissioner Williams stated Game Management staff have completed annual alligator surveys and surveyed 171 miles of rivers and lake banks. He further stated that staff captured and collected vital data and tagged alligators as part of the survey. He added that staff also continue to actively trap and dispatch feral hogs on state property across the state.

Commissioner Williams stated the Fisheries Management Section is moving forward with the opening of Panola Mountain State Park Upper Alexander and Lower Alexander Lakes. He further stated the lakes will be managed for catch-and-release trophy bass fishing, thus making this a unique fishery just minutes from Downtown Atlanta. He added Panola Mountain State Park plans to open the lakes to public fishing on September 26, 2020, with a Kids Fishing Event.

Commissioner Williams stated this concluded his report.

Chair Addison called on Tim Lowe, Chairman of the Coastal Committee, for his report.

A motion was made by Mr. Lowe, seconded by Mr. Davis and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to approve the proposed amendments to the Coastal Incentive Grant Program Description, Chapter 391-2-5-.01 through 391-2-5-.15. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part thereof)

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

A motion was made by Mr. Lambert, seconded by Mr. Evans, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to approve the Proposed Amendments to the Rules for Hazardous Waste Management, Chapter 391-3-11. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part thereof)

A motion was made by Mr. Lambert, seconded by Mr. Yancey, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to approve the Proposed FY 2021 Solid Waste Trust Fund Spend Plan. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part thereof)

A motion was made by Mr. Lambert, seconded by Mr. Evans, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to approve the Proposed Grant Criteria for Georgia Diesel Emissions Reduction Program, Chapter 391-3-21-.15.

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

A motion was made by Mr. Davis, seconded by Mr. Jones, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval via Executive Order to demolish the Franklin D. Roosevelt State Park Cottage #22, Harris County. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part thereof)

A motion was made by Mr. Davis, seconded by Mr. Evans, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval via Executive Order to demolish the General Coffee State Park Pool House, Coffee 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 0.25± acres by the State Properties Commission and General Assembly to Granite-Active Networks at Fort Yargo State Park, Barrow County. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part thereof)

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 to enter into an agreement with Laurens County to lease Blackshear Ferry Landing, 0.88± acres. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part thereof)

A motion was made by Mr. Davis, seconded by Mr. Jones, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval to enter into an agreement with Charlton County to lease Burnt Fort Landing, 2.906± acres. (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