

**Minutes
Board of Natural Resources
Georgia Southern University
Engineering & Research Building
Room 3000
4012 Forest Drive
Statesboro, GA 30458**

**Tuesday, April 26, 2022
9:00 a.m.**

Board Members

Bill Jones, Chair
Dwight Davis, Vice Chair
Duncan Johnson, Secretary
Nancy Addison
William Bagwell
Randy Dellinger
Patrick Denney
Dwight Evans
Joe Hatfield
Ray Lambert
Rob Leebern
Tim Lowe
Billy New
Bodine Sinyard
Miki Thomaston
Gary Vowell
Dee Yancey

Guests

Bryan Tolar, GA Urban Agriculture Council
Dr. Ryan McNutt, Georgia Southern University
Dr. Matthew Compton, Georgia Southern University
M. Jared Wood, Georgia Southern University
Jason Metzger, GA EPD

Staff Members

Mark Williams, Commissioner
Walter Rabon
Kyle Pearson
Donald Kirkland
Cathy Barnette
Artica Gaston
Alexandrea Solomon
Thomas Barnard
Jeff Cown
Steve Friedman
Ted Will
Doug Haymans
Tina Johannsen
Antoinette Norfleet

Richard Dunn, Director
John Eunice
Karen Hays
Anna Truszczynski

The April 26, 2022 Board of Natural Resources meeting was called to order by Chairman Bill Jones.

Chairman Jones welcomed everyone to the April board meeting.

Chairman Jones thanked President Kyle Marrero and the staff at Georgia Southern University for their warm welcome and kind hospitality.

Chairman Jones introduced CPL Jordan Crawford for a moment of inspiration.

Chairman Jones introduced Mr. Nealie McCormick, Chairman of the Georgia Council on American Indian Concerns.

Chairman Jones introduced GSU Dr. Matthew Compton, GSU's College of Behavioral and Social Sciences.

Chairman Jones introduced GSU's Dr. Asli Aslan, Director of the Institute for Water and Health.

Chairman Jones called on Cathy Barnette for a declaration of quorum.

Chairman Jones adjourned the Board meeting and to move into the Committee meetings.

Chairman Jones called the meeting of the Board of Natural Resources to order.

Chairman Jones called for a motion to approve the minutes of the Board of Natural Resources meeting on March 22, 2022.

A motion was made by Mr. Bagwell, seconded by Mr. Johnson, and carried unanimously that the Board approve the minutes of the Board of Natural Resources meeting on March 22, 2022.

Chairman Jones called on called on Richard Dunn, Director of the Environmental Protection Division, for his report.

Director Dunn updated the Board on the amended Fiscal Year 2022 budget's inclusion of pay raises for state employees and additional supplements for employees in STEM positions, FY 2023 budget as the first budget since the 2020 constitutional amendment allowing fees to be dedicated for certain purposes including the Solid Waste Trust Fund scrap tire fees

and passed legislation reauthorizing hazardous waste fees. Director Dunn further updated the Board on EPD's role chairing the Site design and Environmental Issues committee in the Georgia Department of Economic Development's Rivian Project, a new office for the Coastal Division headquarters, and an update on the Twin Pines permit application.

Director Dunn stated this concluded his report.

Chairman Jones called on Mark Williams, Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources, for his report.

Commissioner Williams provided a legislative update and stated that HB 1147, HB 1148, HB 1233, HB 1349, and SB 469 passed and is awaiting signature from the Governor. He further provided a budget update, which included funding to restore Game Wardens that were eliminated during Covid, in addition to annualizing the \$5,000 cost of living adjustment added in AFY23.

Commissioner Williams stated that he joined Winder Mayor, David Maynard, for their 50-year recreation accessibility celebration at Fort Yargo. He further stated the event was held in conjunction with the opening of the Wilkins Greenway Trail, which connects the city of Winder and Fort Yargo and was paid for, in part, with GOSA funds.

Commissioner Williams thanked the Game Wardens for their swift response to the devastating tornado that struck Bryan County.

Commissioner Williams called on Colonel Thomas Barnard, Director of the Law Enforcement Division, for his report.

Colonel Barnard provided an update on LED's technology and the uses and benefits, including electronic transmission of all reports, citations, and Division forms; the ability to run reports and stats in Smartdata; transmission of boat incidents to BARD (Coast Guard database) after two-step supervisor review process; a project underway with the Judicial Council of Georgia to automate Resource Citation export to county court systems; and the ability to analyze data in Smartdata. He provided an update on body cameras; Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) and Records Management Systems (RMS); Power DMS document storage and management; social media; communications (two-way radio and LTE); and drones.

Commissioner Williams called on Jeff Cown, Director of the State Parks and Historic Sites Division, for his report.

Director Cown provided an update on the new assistant manager residence at Laura Walker State Park; Sweep the Hooch river clean-up event; Annual Satilla Forestry Day at Laura Walker; a Civil War era flag finial at Pickett's Mill Historic Site; 120 Publix Employees that provided

volunteer work at Chattahoochee Bend, F. D. Roosevelt, Fort Yargo, Jarrell Plantation, Red Top Mountain, and Sweetwater Creek; winter project to repair and restore the SAM Shortline Power Car; 77th Annual Commemorative Ceremony at the Little White House and the announcement of \$2.2 million in the state budget for renovation of the historic pools; and the Park Ranger Academy Graduation. Commissioner Williams stated that WellStar Health System has announced their plan to purchase park passes for their 25,000 employees, which is a great partnership with our state parks.

Commissioner Williams called on Doug Haymans, Director of the Coastal Resources Division, for his report.

Director Haymans provided an update on the new state record for the Vermillion Snapper (5 lbs. 11.68 oz.), caught by Mark Neville, Richmond Hill; April Ecological Trawl Monitoring Survey; and the deployment of Reef Darts from donated power poles from Georgia Power, donated sewer box culverts, and purchased concrete to create a forest of upright poles for reef structures.

Commissioner Williams called on Ted Will, Director of the Wildlife Resources Division, for his report.

Director Will provided an update on the highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPIA), the detection in bald eagles in Georgia, and the DNR's work with the Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study to investigate mortalities involving wild birds on the coast; prescribed burning on Wildlife Management Areas and their goal to burn 70-75 thousand acres; and a fisheries update with 90,000 trout stocked across North Georgia, an extremely successful spring fry production, and a \$200,000 donation from Bass Pro Shops.

Commissioner Williams stated this concluded his report.

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

A motion was made by Mr. Lambert, seconded by Mr. Johnson, and approved unanimously that the Board adopt the resolution to approve the proposed amendments to the Rules for Erosion and Sedimentation Control, Chapter 391-3-7. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part thereof)

Chairman Jones called on Mr. Randy Dellinger, Chairman of the State Parks & Historic Sites Committee, for his report.

A motion was made by Mr. Dellinger, seconded by Ms. Thomaston, and approved unanimously that the Board adopt the resolution to approve the proposed amendment to the

Rules for the Land and Water Conservation Fund Program, Chapter 391-5-13-.02. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part thereof)

Chairman Jones called on Mr. Tim Lowe, Chairman of the Land Committee, for his report.

A motion was made by Mr. Lowe, seconded by Mr. Johnson, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the resolution for approval to enter into a 25-year lease agreement with Augusta-Richmond County for the 2.53+ acres Lock and Dam Boat Ramp. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part thereof)

Chairman Jones called on Mr. Dwight Davis to read a resolution recognizing the achievements of DNR Team Members during the M/V Golden Ray incident.

Chairman Jones called for a motion to approve the resolution.

A motion was made by Ms. Addison, seconded by Mr. Yancey, and approved unanimously that the Board adopt the resolution recognizing the achievements of DNR Team Members during the M/V Golden Ray incident. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part thereof)

Chairman Bill Jones, Vice Chairman Dwight Davis and Commissioner Mark Williams presented the resolution to the DNR Team Members who were in attendance.

Chairman Jones stated the next Board of Natural Resources meeting will be held at 9:00 a.m., on Tuesday, May 24, 2022, at the Go Fish Education Center Theater, 1255 Perry Parkway, Perry, GA 31069.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

A. W. Jones, III, Chairman

ATTEST:

Duncan N. Johnson, Jr., Secretary