

Minutes

Land Committee

2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, S.E.
Suite 1252 East Tower
Atlanta, GA 30334

October 25, 2017

Attending:

Committee Members

Dwight Davis, Vice Chairman
William Bagwell
Bill Jones
Ray Lambert - **via conference call**
Brother Stewart
Philip Wilheit
Duncan Johnson, Jr., Board Chairman, Ex-Officio

Board Members

Nancy Addison
Dwight Evans
Aaron McWhorter
Mark Mobley
Mike Phelps
Bodine Sinyard - **via conference call**
Miki Thomaston
Philip Watt
Dee Yancey

Guests

Leon Watkins, White Stone Landfill
Bill Hodges, Hodges, Harbin, Newberry, & Tribble
Mark Woodall, Sierra Club
Ronny Just, GA Power
Hunter Loggins, GA Agribusiness Council
Leah Dixon, GA Conservancy
Chance Seabolt
Kitty Seabolt
Scott Taylor

Staff Members

Mark Williams
Kyle Pearson
Wes Robinson
Cathy Barnette
Amber Carter
Artica Gaston
Dave Crass
Rusty Garrison
Col. Eddie Henderson
Spud Woodward
Steve Friedman
John Bowers
Maj. Thomas Barnard
Lt. Col. Jeff Weaver
Matt Thomas
Chip Madren
Walter Lane
Stan Elrod
Doug Haymans
Taye Pierce
Mike Spencer
Mark Whitney
Sgt. Derek Dillard
Doyte Chaffin
Jeff Billups
Cpl. Bart Hendrix
John Martin
Richard Dunn
Lauren Curry
Laura Williams
Jeff Cown
Karen Hays
Donald Kirkland
Dika Kuoh
Erin Ruoff
Sarah Visser
Sydney Brogden

The October 25, 2017 meeting of the Land Committee was called to order by Duncan Johnson, Chairman of the Board of Natural Resources.

Chairman Johnson called on Dwight Davis, Vice-Chairman of the Land Committee, who called on Steve Friedman, Chief of Real Estate.

Mr. Friedman stated that Item A seeks approval to acquire 641.4± acres and a donated 0.25± acres access easement for administrative use in Taylor County at Fall Line Sandhills Wildlife Management Area. He further stated that the acquisition will extend the WMA south to a paved road which will improve management and increase the overall acreage making it a far better public recreational opportunity. He added that the Department will acquire the property with state, federal, and private funds.

Mr. Friedman stated he would request the Committee recommend that the Board approve the item as presented.

A motion was made by Mr. Stewart, seconded by Mr. Bagwell and carried unanimously that the Committee recommend that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval to purchase the 641.4± acres of real property and an access easement, Fall Line Sandhills Wildlife Management Area, U. Wall Plantation Tract, Taylor County, as presented.

Mr. Friedman stated that Item B seeks approval to acquire 129.9± acres in Upson County at Sprewell Bluff Wildlife Management Area. He further stated that the Willoughby Tract will improve management of the WMA, protect frontage along Reeves Creek, and greatly improve this portion of the WMA for public recreation. He added that the Department will acquire the property with State, federal, and private funds.

Mr. Friedman stated he would request the Committee recommend that the Board approve the item as presented.

A motion was made by Mr. Wilheit, seconded by Mr. Stewart and carried unanimously that the Committee recommend that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval to purchase the 129.9± acres of real property, Sprewell Bluff Wildlife Management Area, Willoughby Tract, Upson County, as presented.

Mr. Friedman stated that Item C seeks approval to enter into a 25-year lease for 1.33± acres with Dodge County to build the Ochise Landing Boat Ramp. He further stated that the Boat Ramp will provide improved public access for fishing, canoeing, and boating. He added that the County will provide general maintenance of the premises at no cost to the Department and the Department will erect signage for the site, improve the existing road along a 30' access easement included in the lease, add parking and rebuild the concrete boat ramp to Department standards.

Mr. Friedman stated he would request the Committee recommend that the Board approve the item as presented.

A motion was made by Mr. Bagwell, seconded by Mr. Stewart and carried unanimously that the Committee recommend that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval to enter into a lease with Dodge County for the Ochise Landing Boat Ramp, 1.33± acres, Dodge County, as presented.

Mr. Friedman stated that Item D requests approval via Executive Order to demolish the Red Top Mountain State Park Lodge in Bartow County. He further stated that the lodge sustained fire damage last year and is now a danger to the public. He added that in coming years a new visitor and interpretive center is expected to be built on this site.

Mr. Friedman stated he would request the Committee recommend that the Board approve the item as presented.

A motion was made by Mr. Jones, seconded by Mr. Stewart and carried unanimously that the Committee recommend that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval via Executive Order to demolish the Red Top Mountain State Park Lodge, Red Top Mountain State Park, Bartow County, as presented.

Mr. Friedman stated that Items E and F are briefing only and do not require action at this time. He further stated that Item E concerns a Petition for Change of Use of a Heritage Preserve to widen state route 30/US 280 at Georgia Veterans Memorial State Park. He added that the Georgia Department of Transportation submitted the letter of petition in May 2017 stating the intention to widen SR 30/US 280 on the east side of Lake Blackshear and replace the bridge.

Mr. Friedman stated that the petition is for a revocable license and a permanent easement over 5± acres. He further stated that the Department will hold a public hearing in November as required and bring the matter back to the Board for final approval after the public hearing.

Mr. Sinyard stated that this is a significant project and will impact the state park greatly.

Mr. Friedman stated that Item F concerns a Petition for Change of Use of a Heritage Preserve to widen state route 25/US 17 at Hofwyl-Broadfield Plantation Historic Site in Glynn County. He added that the Georgia Department of Transportation submitted the letter of petition in December 2015 stating the intention to widen SR 25/US 17 to four lanes for improved safety.

Mr. Friedman stated that the petition is for a revocable license and a permanent easement over 5± acres. He further stated that the Department will hold a public hearing in November, as required, and bring the matter back to the Board for final approval after the public hearing.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

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