

MINUTES

SOUTH CAROLINA WILDLIFE AND MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING

Dennis Building
Columbia, S. C.
May 15, 1981

The regular monthly meeting of the South Carolina Wildlife and Marine Resources Commission was held at the Dennis Building, Columbia, S. C., at 10:00 a. m., on May 15, 1981, with Chairman Edens presiding. Notice of the date, time, and place of the meeting was mailed to the state's media. Commissioners present at the meeting included Commissioners Edens, Altman, Compton, Owen, Stubbs, Harrelson, and Dawson. Directors and staff members present included Dr. Timmerman, Larry Cartee, Mike Creel, Mac Flood, Judy Benton, John Evans, Sonny Baines, Tommy Edwards, Ed Joseph, Benny Reeves, Brock Conrad, Pat Ryan, Joe Logan and Jeff Fuller. Guests at the meeting included Dr. Jackie Jacobs of the S. C. Wildlife Federation, Lamar Dawkins of the Law Enforcement and Boating Advisory Board, Mrs. Nell Clark and Mr. Tyrone Courtney of Spartanburg and Mr. Carroll Davis of Cowpens.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Edens called the meeting to order at 10:00 a. m.

ITEM I. READING OF THE MINUTES

Commissioner Harrelson noted that on page 5, Item E, Other Remarks, he wanted to clarify that in regard to a bill on trawling at Edisto Beach, he had talked with Charlie Bearden about this several years ago when this came up and the Minutes appeared that such discussions had been recently. Subject to this clarification, the Commission approved a motion to dispense with the reading of the Minutes and approve them as submitted.

ITEM II. LAKE THICKETTY CREEK PROPERTY

Chairman Edens asked Tommy Edwards to introduce guests at the meeting to discuss this matter. Mr. Edwards introduced Mr. Tyrone Courtney, Attorney from Spartanburg, and Carroll Davis of Cowpens and Nell Clark of Spartanburg who are members of the Edith Davis family. Tommy Edwards noted that he had sent out a background memorandum to the Commission regarding the family's request to purchase property the Department had acquired at Lake Thicketty Creek (copy attached to original Commission Minutes). Mr. Courtney noted that the Department acquired about 26 acres from Mrs. Edith Davis for the construction of this lake in 1968, based upon an easement acquired in 1967. Mr. Sam Wolf of Soil Conservation Service advised Mrs. Davis and her family that the property would be developed for recreational use including relocating a road, horseback trail, and the like. In the deed, it was stated that if contemplated use was not



made by the Department then the property could be repurchased. Carroll Davis and Nell Clark commented to the Commission noting they were told the property would be developed for recreational use and asked the Commission to consider their request to repurchase the property since it has not been put to its contemplated use as stated in the deed. Tommy Edwards stated the Department contends that the property has been put to its contemplated use as required since the area has been developed as a fish and wildlife area as opposed to a floodwater retarding structure. Dr. Timmerman noted that usually when such property is acquired for construction with federal agencies, such as the Soil Conservation Service, the land value is used as a match to obtain federal funds. This may serve as an obstacle if the Commission approved the repurchase of this property. Tommy Edwards stated that he had talked with the Soil Conservation Service in Columbia who advised him that this project was constructed on a cost-sharing basis and if the Department diverted itself of the property, there is a likelihood we could owe the federal government money back on this project. Mr. Courtney stated that the family is willing to pay the Department for the property and if this is so, it would not be proper to penalize the Davis family. Commissioner Compton moved for the Commission to hold an executive session to receive legal advice regarding this proposed transfer of property. Commissioner Stubbs seconded the motion and it was adopted by the Commission. Chairman Edens announced that the Commission would hold an executive session following the regular meeting to receive legal advice on this matter. Chairman Edens advised Mr. Courtney, Mr. Davis and Ms. Clark that the Commission would go over their request thoroughly and communicate with them on this matter.

ITEM III. COMMENTS

Chairman Edens noted that his recent operation was a complete success and he thanked everyone for their contact and get-well wishes while he was in the hospital.

Dr. Timmerman went over the license fee increase legislation and commended Commissioner Altman and his colleagues for their efforts on this legislation. Dr. Timmerman noted there was a lot of activity on this bill in the House and excerpts of the House Journals were passed out to the Commission denoting the process this bill went through. A listing of the license fees in the House and Senate versions of this bill was passed out to the Commission for information. Dr. Timmerman noted that the Senate has adopted the House version of the bill with an amendment to allow a lakes and reservoirs permit on Lake Monticello and other lakes in the area. This will go to the House next week for concurrence.



Dr. Timmerman expressed thanks to the Commission, House and Senate members, and staff for their efforts and assistance with this legislation. Chairman Edens noted that in these economic times, it is remarkable that the license fee increase, duck stamp, and tax checkoff bills have been approved. He noted that this action reflects that the Department stands high in public approval and we should be aware that this is a real vote of confidence in the Department and its performance. Chairman Edens complimented the staff for the success in these efforts.

Dr. Timmerman distributed notes from his recent Directors' Staff Meeting to the Commission for their information. Dr. Timmerman asked the Commission for guidance on the monthly reports for the Commission meeting regarding length of each division's report.

Dr. Timmerman advised the Commission that the meeting of the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies will be held October 18 - 21 in Tulsa.

Dr. Timmerman passed out to the Commission, a recent memo from the Budget and Control Board concerning a freeze on purchases and filling vacancies.

Dr. Timmerman noted that the Commission had requested bronze plaques to put on the walls in honor of Chief A. A. Richardson and Mr. James W. Webb. Proofs for these plaques were passed around to the Commissioners for their advice and guidance.

On behalf of the South Carolina Wildlife Federation, Dr. Jackie Jacobs presented to the Commission for their Conference Room, the print of a recent painting done by Sonny Baines.

ITEM IV. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Dan Dobbins was out of town and Judy Benton passed out the latest legislative report which has all bills pertaining to the Department this year. A meeting is scheduled with the Directors and Dr. Timmerman Monday morning to update everyone on legislative proposals.

ITEM V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Division Reports:

1. Administrative Services: There was nothing further to report.
2. Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries: There was nothing further to report.
3. Law Enforcement & Boating: There was nothing further to report.
4. Information & Public Affairs: There was nothing further to report.



5. Marine Resources: Dr. Joseph noted that the shrimp season opened today and about 100 boats have gone out, but we do not know yet if they are finding any shrimp. Dr. Timmerman stated that Georgia will open their season around June 15th. They have been dragging for shrimp and only found a few below Brunswick. Chairman Edens asked Dr. Joseph to monitor the first part of the season closely and to keep the Commission posted on progress about once a week for the first few weeks of the season.

B. Advisory Board Reports:

1. Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries: Commissioner Owen stated that the Board will meet on June 11th.

2. Law Enforcement & Boating: Pat Ryan presented the Board's report for Commissioner Shuler who could not attend the meeting. The Board discussed the procedure for selecting the outstanding Conservation Officer of the Year noting that more recognition and publicity is needed for this. Jim Mills discussed the public firing range program and Tom Kohlsaas went over the non-game and endangered species program. The Board also discussed the status of stray dogs and discussion was held on retirement for Conservation Officers. Mr. Lamar Dawkins was welcomed as a new member on the Advisory Board.

3. Marine Resources: Commissioner Compton stated that the Board met on May 8th and Minutes of the meeting will be sent out shortly. The Board discussed various items pertaining to sponge crabs, shrimp seine nets, reporting requirements, update from President of the Crabbers Association regarding proposed tax exemptions, etc. Chairman Edens stated that we should continue giving notice of the Board meetings to the commercial industry.

4. Heritage Trust: Dr. Timmerman noted that this Board will meet shortly.

C. Salary Review Committee: Dr. Timmerman stated that this report has not been signed as the budget has not passed and we need to determine how the merit increase will be handled for discussion with the Division Directors. Dr. Timmerman noted that he is approving this report and passing it on to the Commission.

D. Appointments: Dr. Timmerman distributed a copy of the recommendations for appointments and re-appointments for Conservation Officers and Deputy Wildlife Conservation Officers. The Commission approved all DWCO re-appointments and appointments as recommended. Dr. Timmerman noted that Helen Marie Litchfield is recommended for appointment as a Conservation Officer in Beaufort



County. This is a replacement for Officer J. C. Hodge who is retiring on June 30, 1981. We do not have funds in our budget for this position, but she is recommended for appointment to be put on our payroll after July 1, 1981, subject to Officer Hodge retiring and the restoration of five (5) Conservation Officer positions and funding in our FY 1981-82 budget. In the interim, the South Carolina Coastal Council will employ Ms. Litchfield on a full-time, temporary basis to train with Officer Hodge. Dr. Timmerman noted that the conditions of employment are outlined in a letter he sent to Dr. Wayne Beam dated May 6, 1981 (copy attached to original Commission Minutes). Following discussion by the Commission, Commissioner Harrelson moved for the Commission to approve the appointment of Ms. Litchfield subject to the conditions of the referenced letter from Dr. Timmerman to Dr. Beam of May 6, 1981.

Commissioner Stubbs asked if the Department had considered holding regional training sessions for new DWCO appointments. It was noted that there may not be enough people in an area to justify the expense of holding regional training, but if there are a certain number in an area that need training, we may be able to take another look at this idea. Chairman Edens noted that if we find out this is a real problem, it can be brought back to the Commission for further discussion.

E. Other Remarks: Sonny Baines noted that the Greenville Chapter of the South Carolina Wildlife Federation is looking at holding an Operation Respect Conference on September 21, 1981, which is National Hunting and Fishing Day.

Dr. Timmerman stated that the staff met this week at the Webb Center with landowners participating in the GMA Program and he asked Jeff Fuller to elaborate on this meeting. Jeff Fuller noted this was a good meeting and there was a general impression some lands will be taken out of the GMA Program next year when ten-year leases will expire. Dr. Timmerman stated that there were concerns expressed about misuse of property. The Department made the point that we have implemented the Operation Respect Program and that they are a very important unit in the hunting community. The public relations benefits of being in the GMA Program were also discussed and there may be follow-up meetings with some Board members on this matter.

Dr. Timmerman noted that some funds at the Marine Center are in jeopardy as some funds may be restored for the 88-309 projects which is small at the Marine Center and a large program like MARMAP may be cut in which we receive about \$400,000 annually. Dr. Timmerman noted that he has asked Dr. Joseph to put together some information on this matter as we may need to write members of the state's Congressional Delegation.



Benny Reeves discussed a recent Attorney General's opinion dealing with employees paid with federal funds and the Department's reduction in force policy. Dr. Timmerman stated that recent correspondence on this will be sent out to the Commission and they will be kept informed on this matter.

In regard to the proofs for the bronze plaques for Chief Richardson and Mr. Webb, the Commission suggested that Dr. Timmerman use his judgement on this matter. The Commission discussed the Division Reports in the monthly Commission packet and recommended that such reports should not exceed two pages, double spaced.

F. Time and Place of Next Meeting: The Commission agreed to meet June 12, 1981, at the Dennis Building in Columbia.

ITEM VI. ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the regular meeting, the Commission approved a motion to tentatively adjourn the regular meeting at this time and hold an executive session which was voted upon previously.

RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION

Following the Executive Session, the Commission returned to regular session and invited participants into the meeting.

Chairman Edens announced that in Executive Session, the Commission adopted a motion for the Commission to refuse the offer by Carroll Davis and Nell Clark to repurchase the land in question at Lake Thicketty Creek and to advise them that the Department is using the land as contemplated from the grantor. Commissioner Harrelson moved for the approval and ratification of this action. Commissioner Compton seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the Commission.

There being no further business, the Commission adopted a motion to adjourn the regular meeting.



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