

MISSISSIPPI COMMISSION ON WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, & PARKS

Wednesday, December 17, 2014

2:30 p.m.

Greenwood-Leflore County Chamber of Commerce, Greenwood, MS



MINUTES OF THE MEETING

PRESENT: Chairman Bryan Jones, Commissioners Charles Rigdon, William "Billy" Deviney, Clay Wagner, and Bill F. Cossar

Among the MDWFP staff attending were: Dr. Sam Polles, Executive Director; Robert Cook, Deputy Executive Director; Larry Castle, Michael Bolden, Chad Dacus, Larry Pugh, Col. Steve Adcock, Ed Penny, Jason Thompson, and counsel, Doug Mann and Drew Malone, Special Assistant Attorneys General.

Chairman Jones gaveled the meeting to order.

OPENING PRAYER

Larry Castle, Director of Technical Programs, opened the regular session with a prayer.

MINUTES

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Rigdon and seconded by Commissioner Deviney, the minutes of November 19, 2014 were unanimously approved as presented.

TODAY'S AGENDA

ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Wagner and seconded by Commissioner Cossar, today's agenda was unanimously approved.

LICENSE SALES REPORT

License Sales Report

Mr. Jason Thompson, License/Boat Registration Division Director, presented the License Sales Report for the month of November, 2014. He informed the Commission that total revenue for November was down over 3% from last year. However, the most recent report generated on December 16 shows revenue down only 1%.

His report included the following cumulative sales (comparing November, 2014 to November, 2013):

- Resident License - sales down more than 3%. Small game license sales are up close to 1%. The annual range permit is up \$17,000 from last year and the senior and youth exempt licensing are up from last year.
- Non-resident Licenses - sales are down 3%. But the first two weeks of December show that those numbers have improved and only down 1%.
- Other Licenses – revenue is up over 2% in the Permits category.
- Lifetime Licenses – The total number of lifetime licenses sold are down 6% from last year, but those numbers have improved also in the month of December showing the lifetime category down 2%.

Since the renewal e-blast was sent to 6,100 lapsed hunters, 972 have renewed their licenses.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were made.

FISHERIES

FINAL Rule 40 Miss. Admin. Code Part 3

Mr. Larry Pugh, Fisheries Bureau Director, presented two rules for Final passage.

- **Rule 2.2 – Fisheries Community Assistance Program**
- **Rule 3.1 – Commercial Fishing**

Mr. Pugh recommended removing Bay Springs from proposed Rule 3.1 based on public comments received. Seven e-mails, as well as a petition with 100 signatures, were discussed which advocated disallowing commercial fishing opportunities at those lakes.

No changes were made to Rule 2.2.

ACTION: Commissioner Wagner made a motion to approve FINAL Rules 2.2 and 3.1, with changes to Rule 3.1, as presented. Commissioner Deviney seconded the motion and the motion carried.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Citation Report

Col. Steve Adcock, Chief of Law Enforcement, briefed the Commission on 669 citations issued statewide between November 7 and December 11. Top five violations were No License, Baiting and Supplemental Feeding, Trespassing, Hunting from a Public Road, and No Hunter Orange. Pictures of violations were presented.

The number of McHenry Shooting Range customers continues to increase and Col. Adcock predicts that attendance will soon surpass Turcotte Shooting Range.

Reinstatement Requests

Col. Adcock brought before the Commission two requests for reinstatement. Each violator was asked to come forward and state why his license had been revoked.

- **Dustin Weed, Prairie, MS**

Mr. Weed was arrested for headlighting deer and hunting from a public road. He had been raccoon hunting that evening. His gun was in the back of his truck. No deer were killed. He was fined \$2,125.00.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Rigdon and seconded by Commissioner Deviney, the Commission voted unanimously to reinstate Mr. Weed's license.

- **Rabon Scott, Greenwood Springs, MS**

Mr. Scott was arrested for headlighting after he ran out of gas. A deer was killed by his friend. His fine was \$3,200.00.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Cossar, the Commission voted unanimously to reinstate Mr. Scott's license.

OTHER BUSINESS

- **Request to Revoke WMA Privileges**

Mr. Chad Dacus, Wildlife Bureau Director, requested that the hunting privileges of Horace Lester, Jr. be revoked from all Wildlife Management Areas in Mississippi for the period of one year. He has received two convictions for trespassing on private property on two different occasions. Mr. Lester has been using Malmaison WMA to access the private property outlined in the convictions. He has trespassed on this property numerous times and was convicted for two incidents.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Wagner and seconded by Commissioner Cossar, the WMA privileges of Mr. Horace Lester, Jr. were revoked, by unanimous vote, for all Wildlife Management Areas.

- **Wounded Warrior Bonfire Project**

Mr. Larry Castle, Director of Technical Programs, and Mr. Hunter L. Fordice, Founder of the Wounded Warrior Bonfire Project, presented a request to waive the Big Game License Fees for five Purple Heart recipients who are non-residents of Mississippi. On January 9 – 11, 2015 the Warrior Bonfire Project will bring seven wounded Warriors deer hunting on their property in

Valley Park, MS. Of these seven, two are Mississippi residents and already possess a valid MS hunting license.

ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Wagner and seconded by Commissioner Cossar, the Wounded Warrior Bonfire Project request was unanimously approved as presented.

- **MDWFP Duck Cam**

Mr. Chad Dacus, Wildlife Bureau Director, introduced Jim Tipton, President, TIP LLC. Mr. Tipton's services have been used to position cameras for monitoring alligator nests and black bear dens. An advanced camera was recently placed in one of the WMA's which can be remotely controlled. Still photographs can be taken and live video can be streamed on the MDWFP website as well. Mr. Tipton demonstrated live streaming on the website to the Commission. This system is solar powered and the total package costs around \$20,000. To Mr. Tipton's knowledge Mississippi is the first to use this technology. MDWFP plans to use this technology to monitor hogs.

No action was taken by the Commission.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Wednesday, January 21, 2014 @ 2:30 p.m., 1505 Eastover Drive, Jackson, MS

EXECUTIVE SESSION

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Cossar, the Commission voted unanimously to close the meeting to determine the need for Executive Session. The Commission determined that Executive Session was needed for discussions regarding transactions in real property, ongoing criminal investigations, job performance of specific individuals in specific positions, and budget line items which may affect the continued employment of specific employees. Upon motion made by Commissioner Cossar and seconded by Commissioner Wagner, the Commission voted unanimously to enter into Executive Session.

Chad Dacus updated the Commission on the ongoing operations at Half Moon Ranch and Hunter's Ridge enclosures in the aftermath of the owners' pleas and sentencing. At least one animal has tested positive for disease. Staff is meeting with the State Veterinarian and the USFWS to come up with an action plan for more sampling of the animals still within the enclosure. **No action was required of the Commission.**

Dr. Polles updated the Commission on several properties which are under consideration for acquisition. Discussion followed to include funding sources, account balances and cost estimates for the proposed acquisitions. The Commission requested a report of funding levels for the next meeting. In addition, a site visit or two was discussed to determine whether or not the tract would be worth pursuing before spending the money for appraisals. **No action was taken by the Commission.**

Mr. Cook presented a proposed change in the agency's overtime policy for law enforcement officers. The proposed change would allow the agency to pay officers for overtime worked if under a disaster declaration or other special written orders, AND if funds are available.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Cossar, the Commission voted unanimously to adopt the amended overtime policy, Chapter 01, Policy 04 of the MDWFP Policy Manual, as presented.

There was no other business for discussion in Executive Session.

Upon motion made by Commissioner Wagner and seconded by Commissioner Rigdon, the Commission voted unanimously to end Executive Session and open the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

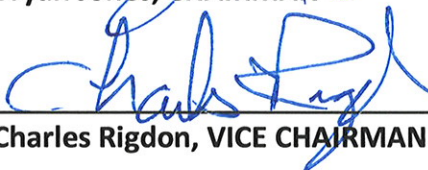
There being no further business to discuss, Chairman Jones gaveled the meeting into adjournment.



Bryan Jones, CHAIRMAN



Date



Charles Rigdon, VICE CHAIRMAN



Date