

MISSISSIPPI COMMISSION ON WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, & PARKS

Tuesday, June 18, 2013 @ 2:30 p.m.

1505 Eastover Drive, Jackson, MS



MINUTES OF THE MEETING

PRESENT: Chairman Jerry Munro, Commissioners Bryan Jones, William "Billy" Deviney, John C Stanley IV, and Charles Rigdon

Among the MDWFP staff attending were: Dr. Sam Polles, Executive Director; Mr. Robert Cook, Deputy Executive Director; Ramie Ford; Larry Castle; Libby Hartfield; Jason Thompson; Chad Dacus, Larry Pugh, Col. Steve Adcock; Jim Walker; and Doug Mann, Special Assistant Attorney General.

Chairman Munro recognized the following visitors: Clay Wagoner and Representative Scott Bounds, Chairman of the House Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks Committee.

MINUTES

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Rigdon and seconded by Commissioner Jones, the Minutes of the May 22, 2013 meeting were unanimously approved as presented.

TODAY'S AGENDA

No additions or changes were made to the agenda.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Stanley and seconded by Commissioner Deviney, today's agenda was unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Three members of the public requested permission to address the Commission concerning hog enclosures and hog hunting regulations.

Jeff Hodges, Kenyse Hodges, and Jeremy A. Burrell: Jeff Hodges spoke first and requested clarification on certain hog rules outlined in MDWFP communication dated April 15, 2013. The main questions and concerns brought up were:

1. Any time someone other than a landowner is hog hunting, there are certain criteria which must be met. Jeff Hodges' confusion was whether the written permission requirement from each landowner was just during hunting season or any time. Col. Steve Adcock, Chief of Law Enforcement, stated that they need written permission from surrounding landowners if they go on their land. Ricky Flynt, Alligator/Furbearer Coordinator, stated

- that a letter of permission is only required when non-deed holders are using weapons or ammunition that exceed hunting season allowances or nighttime firearm restrictions.
2. Jeff Hodges stated that when his dogs cross over to another landowner's property he has the landowner who hired him call his neighbor and obtain permission to get his dogs. He would like to see the regulations adjusted so he does not have to get written permission from surrounding landowners. Could the law be adjusted so that a phone call will be sufficient?
 3. Do these regulations apply to hunters who use knives as their weapon? Mr. Hodges only carries a knife and Mr. Burrell stated that he carries a knife and a handgun. Col. Steve Adcock, Chief of Law Enforcement, stated that these regulations do not apply to hunters with knives. However, if they are hunting with a weapon that is not legal during that hunting season then they have to have written permission from the landowner.
 4. Discussion followed on hog enclosures. Regulations limit hog enclosures to 500 sq. ft. The April communication does not address enclosures which were established prior to May, 2012. Jeff Hodges suggested removing the size restriction on hog enclosures and adding an enclosure permit requirement.
 5. Mr. Hodges stated that hog hunting is developing into a sport and could be a source of revenue for the state. Mr. Hodges and Burrell requested consideration of expanding the enclosure regulations for the use of hog sporting events.

Dr. Sam Polles, Director of MDWFP, stated that the department is in the process of analyzing and refining hog regulations. The Commission was in agreement that hog hunters are important and needed. Commissioner Deviney stated that the Commission is here today to listen to their comments so that these regulations can be simplified. He concluded that a Work Session is needed to come to a solution for the farmers and the hog hunters. No action was taken at this time.

LICENSE SALES REPORT

Mr. Jason Thompson, License/Boat Registration Division Director, presented the License Sales Report for the month of May, 2013.

He reported the following cumulative sales (comparing May, 2013 to May, 2012):

- Overall total license sales up by \$181,000
- Resident License slightly down by .6 percent
- Sportsman's License up \$26,000
- WMA Permit up \$32,000
- Biggest increases are in Non-resident Licenses up \$89,000 and Other Licenses up \$89,000
- Overall our license sales are trending upward

PROPOSED Rule – 40 Miss. Admin. Code Pt. 1 Chap. 8 Rule 8.4 – Non-Resident Hunting and Fishing License & Fee Program

Mr. Thompson stated that this additional language corrected the omission of Non-resident Waterfowl Stamp.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Stanley and seconded by Commissioner Jones, the PROPOSED Rule was unanimously approved.

PROPOSED Rule – 40 Miss. Admin. Code Pt. 1 Chap. 8 Rule 8.9 - Crossbows

Mr. Thompson advised the Commission that the crossbow language was struck to include a change in the law beginning July 1, 2013 to reflect passage of Senate Bill 2048 which states, “Any person who is exempt from having a hunting license and any person licensed to hunt deer with a bow or primitive weapon may hunt with a crossbow or bow and arrow during any open season on deer, turkey or small game.”

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Rigdon, the PROPOSED Rule was unanimously approved.

FISHERIES**FINAL Rule – 40 Miss. Admin. Code Pt. 3 Chap. 2 Rule 2.1 – Regulations regarding State Fishing Lakes**

Mr. Larry Pugh, Fisheries Bureau Assistant Director, informed the Commission that Rule 2.1 was being presented for final adoption, with minor changes for clarification, on state lakes.

FINAL Rule – 40 Miss. Admin. Code Pt. 3 Chap. 3 Rule 3.1 – Regulations regarding Commercial Fishing

Mr. Pugh presented the following changes made to the INTENT for Rule 3.1:

Section C, Item 1

- Delete “d”. Harvest of common snapping turtles. Permits are no longer being issued to harvest common snapping turtles and the requirement to purchase a commercial fishing license for this permit is gone.

Section E, Item 7

- Clarified language for consistency regarding MDWFP number

Section G, Item 8

- Clarified; commercial harvest of paddlefish is not in Rule 3.1

Section H, Item 1

- Part “t”, corrected spelling of Bowie River to Bouie River.

- Part “u”, deleted this sentence, modified, and moved to same section, Item 6. The original language which prohibited all commercial fishing on waters open to roe harvest was too restrictive. We propose closing use of gill/trammel nets on interior waters open to roe harvest by individuals that do not have necessary paddlefish permits; however, the MS River will remain open to all commercial fishing gear regardless of roe season due to reciprocity with AR.

Section J

- Deleted Item 2; these exceptions are in conflict with Part 5, Chap 2, Rule 2.3, item K-4. *“Each commercial propagator shall provide a summary report to the Department upon requesting renewal of a commercial captive propagation permit.”* And commercial harvest of the common snapping turtle is being phased out, per Part 5, Rule 2.3, item F.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Stanley, Fisheries FINAL Rule 2.1 and Rule 3.1 (with changes) were unanimously adopted, as amended.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Citation Report

Col. Steve Adcock, Chief of Law Enforcement, stated that 621 citations were issued in May, with 191 citations for no licenses.

Reinstatement Requests

Col. Adcock brought before the Commission one request for reinstatement. Mr. Runnels appeared before the Commission in September, 2012 and his request for reinstatement was denied since he had received a fishing violation in the interim. He was instructed to come back before the Commission after a year had lapsed with no citations.

- Joseph Runnels, Batesville, MS

Mr. Runnels stated that he helped a friend load five deer into his truck. He received a citation for spotlighting and killing a deer. The Commission was advised that he had completed all requirements and paid \$8,000 in fines.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Rigdon, the request to reinstate hunting privileges to Mr. Runnels was unanimously approved as presented.

OTHER BUSINESS

Election of Officers

The Commission took up the matter of electing officers for the upcoming State Fiscal Year 2014.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Rigdon, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the nomination of John C Stanley IV as Chairman and Bryan Jones as Vice Chairman to serve July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014.

TENTATIVE MEETING DATE

Date: Wednesday, July 17, 2013

Time: 2:30 PM

Location: 1505 Eastover Drive, Jackson, MS

Commissioner Stanley requested that the Commission skip the meeting in August. Dr. Polles suggested that the Commission hold their meeting via teleconference for emergency items in August.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Stanley, 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 the relocation of a business or industry, job performance of specific individuals in specific positions, and transactions in land. Upon motion made by Commissioner Rigdon and seconded by Commissioner Jones the Commission voted unanimously to enter into executive session.

Dr. Polles informed the Commission that Ron Garavelli had retired effective June 30, 2013. Dr. Polles recommended Larry Pugh, Assistant Chief of Fisheries, be elevated to Director. In addition, Larry Bull, Regional Fisheries Biologist for Region II, was being recommended to take Larry Pugh's position as Assistant Chief.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Deviney, the Commission voted unanimously to approve Larry Pugh as the New Director of Fisheries and Larry Bull as the new Assistant Director of Fisheries.

Chief Steve Adcock then addressed the Commission on developing a policy for charging range fees at the shooting ranges operated by the Department. Staff was seeking guidance as to whether or not the Commission was interested in discounting or waiving range fees for seniors and youths. Discussion followed.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Jones, the Commission voted unanimously to charge seniors the full range fees for using the target ranges and to waive charging any youths any range fee.

Dr. Polles and Ed Penny addressed the Commission on a couple of tracts that have become available for purchase. One tract would eliminate an in-holding and gap at the Sunflower County property and another presents a unique public hunting opportunity in the hills.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Stanley, the Commission voted unanimously to perform appraisals of the subject properties.

There was no further business for Executive Session.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Rigdon and seconded by Commissioner Stanley, the Commission voted unanimously to exit Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Jerry Munro, CHAIRMAN

John C Stanley IV, VICE-CHAIRMAN

Date

7-17-13
Date