

MISSISSIPPI COMMISSION ON WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, & PARKS

Wednesday, November 28, 2012 @ 8:30 a.m.

MDWFP Main Office, 1505 Eastover Drive, Jackson, MS



MINUTES OF THE MEETING

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

ABSENT: Commissioner William "Billy" Deviney

Among the MDWFP staff attending were: Dr. Sam Polles, Executive Director; Mr. Robert Cook, Deputy Director; Ramie Ford; Larry Castle; Noel Hughes; Michael Bolden; Libby Hartfield; Ed Penny; Chad Dacus; Ron Garavelli; Col. Steve Adcock; Lt. Col. Sammy Fisher; Jim Walker; Donnie Tate; Sharon Polzin; and Doug Mann, Special Assistant Attorney General.

WELCOME

Chairman Munro welcomed Representative Michael Evans (member of the House MDWFP Committee) and Mr. Kenny Ellis (Lt. Governor's Office).

MINUTES

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Rigdon and seconded by Commissioner Stanley, the Minutes of the October 25, 2012 meeting were unanimously approved as presented.

TODAY'S AGENDA

The agenda was amended to reflect the addition of one item to Other Business; namely, Law Enforcement Realignment.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Rigdon, today's agenda was unanimously approved as amended.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.



LICENSE SALES REPORT

License Sales Report

Mr. Michael Bolden, Director of Administrative Services, presented the License Sales Report for the month of October, 2012. Mr. Bolden distributed a month to month comparison sales report to the Commission. He stated that overall our cumulative sales are down, but the month to month comparison shows that we are catching up. Overall we are not down more than two percent from this time last year. Mr. Bolden added that we should catch up in November and December as people purchase their hunting licenses. The trend indicates that people are purchasing their licenses at the last minute so that they can get a year's worth of coverage from the time they begin hunting.

Marketing has changed their strategy to initiate sales. Lacey Kuhn, Marketing Coordinator, handed out three promotional ads to the Commission and made these comments. The first was a postcard entitled "The Great Outdoors is Calling You Back." This postcard will be sent as a renewal reminder to lapsed resident and non-resident hunters and anglers. The pictorial postcard with hunting and fishing scenes splashed across the card will be a visual reminder of what they are missing.

Marketing's second handout, "Take a Friend Hunting," will be targeting adult non-hunters as hunters are encouraged to introduce a friend to the excitement of hunting. Mrs. Kuhn stated that this promotion increased the Apprentice License sales by 33% last year. January and February's Small Game Season will be used to push this promotion.

Lifetime Sportsman license promotion has already begun as stocking stuffers for the Christmas Season. Before age 12 this license costs \$500; and after 12 the cost increases to \$1,000. Even though this is the end of license sales for this person, Mr. Bolden advised the Commission that federal dollars still come in whether these licenses are used or not.

MUSEUM OF NATURAL SCIENCE

Public Notice of Intent M1-3821 – Rental of Museum for Meetings and Events

Mrs. Libby Hartfield, Director of the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science, presented the following public notice for Commission approval. P.N. of Intent M1-3821 establishes guidelines and regulations for rental, catering, delivering, and clean up of the museum. Mrs. Hartfield stated that other museums and events in the surrounding area were canvassed to assess the market values and regulations.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Stanley, the above mentioned Public Notice of Intent M1-3821 Rental of Museum for Meetings and Events was unanimously approved as presented.



FISHERIES

Public Notice F5-3798 Paddlefish, Temporary

Mr. Ron Garavelli, Fisheries Bureau Director, presented the following public notice for Commission approval. He reminded the Commission that fishermen came last month and requested a postponement to the change from 5-inch to 6-inch netting until the next fishing season. This temporary Public Notice would allow the 5-inch netting regulations to remain for 120 days, and then revert to the 6-inch regulations.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Rigdon and seconded by Commissioner Jones, the above mentioned Public Notice F5-3798 Paddlefish, Temporary was unanimously approved as presented.

WILDLIFE

Wildlife Awards

Mr. Ed Penny, Wildlife Bureau Director, presented the following Wildlife awards. The foundation also provided gift cards to each from Academy Sports:

- **WMA Manager of the Year Award - Jimmy Drewery**
- **Wildlife Administrative/Support Employee of the Year Award - Josh Nunley**
- **Wildlife Biologist of the Year Award - Lann Wilf**

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Law Enforcement Awards

Col. Steve Adcock and Major Jerry Carter presented the following Law Enforcement awards:

- **Boating Officer of the Year Award - Marcus Christian**
- **SEAFWA Officer of the Year Award - John Collum**

Mr. Collum was selected from 100 nominees for this regional award. His accomplishments include several community programs such as Children's Reading Program, Kid's Rodeo for Handicapped Children, Farm Day, and Wild Turkey Federation. He has also had the opportunity to save the lives of three people.

Reinstatement Requests

Col. Steve Adcock, Law Enforcement Chief, brought before the Commission seven requests for reinstatement. A request from Adam Moore in Lucedale, MS was pulled from the agenda due to his arrest over the weekend for hunting with revoked privileges. Each violator appeared before the Commission and stated the reason for his conviction. Commissioner Munro requested to hear all seven requests and vote at the conclusion.



- Michael Kyle, Kosciusko, MS

Mr. Kyle stated that he was a passenger along with Jonathan Miller, also present today. Five people were in the vehicle. One person in the vehicle shot his gun, no deer was killed. He spent \$2,400 for his fine and will pay \$500 today.

- Terry Comans, Sebastopol, MS

Mr. Comans stated he was the oldest offender of the group today and should have known better than to spotlight a deer. He has missed the past three years hunting with his kids. He added that this has been a burden on his family.

- Jonathan Miller, Ethel, MS

Mr. Miller was in the backseat of the vehicle when the guy with him decided to shoot at a deer. A game warden was in the vicinity and arrested them. He was fined \$2,300.

- Mitchell Allen Russell, Sardis, MS

Mr. Russell was riding around with a friend. They spotlighted and shot a deer. He stated that it had been tough not hunting.

- Jonathan Duke, West Point, MS

Mr. Duke stated that he and a friend shot a deer at night. When they returned the law enforcement was at the scene. He was fined \$2,300, \$700 to get his gun and \$500 today.

- Anthony Prather, Brookhaven, MS

Mr. Prather was with several friends when they shot two does. He was fined \$2,500 and an additional \$500 to get out of jail. He has learned his lesson.

- Steven Bryan, Vicksburg, MS

Mr. Bryan stated that in January, 2011 he shot a deer. It has been a very expensive lesson.

Chairman Munro and Col. Adcock both emphasized that these violations not only cheat themselves but their families. This is money that could be used for better purposes. Munro asked that each one tell their friends about the consequences of these actions. There are many others who are not caught and the conservation of our wildlife depends on each one of us.

Col. Adcock advised the Commission that all these men had met the requirements and paid their fines. He recommended that they be reinstated.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Stanley and seconded by Commissioner Jones, the request to reinstate hunting privileges to all seven of the above mentioned men was unanimously approved.

Realignment of Law Enforcement

Mr. Robert Cook, Executive Deputy Director, advised the Commission that two years ago Dr. Polles, Executive Director, requested a salary survey. The results of the survey indicated that our Law Enforcement Officers are behind our colleagues in the Southeast and in other state agencies. MDWFP staff have discussed with the Personnel Board and members of the Legislature on how to proceed. We are so far behind that this will take several steps to accomplish over a certain time period.

Mr. Cook emphasized that our law enforcement are the first on the scene for natural disasters and are not only committed but passionate about what they do. They are the backbone of law enforcement in our state.

Mr. Ivy Williams, Director of Human Resources, advised the Commission that our law enforcement officers are at the lowest realm of salaries in the Southeast. Our lower level jobs are \$6,000 - \$8,000 below the average and administrative positions are \$16,000 - \$25,000 behind. We are asking to be more competitive so that our people will see job opportunities. We ask for the Commission's support and commitment.

ACTION: Commissioner Jones made a motion that the Commission support the realignment of Law Enforcement positions. Commissioner Stanley seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the Commission.

Dr. Polles added that the key to this moving this forward lay with the Legislature. He requested the Commission to take this to their friends in the Legislature and ask for their support. Hopefully this will be effective beginning July 1, 2013.

OTHER BUSINESS

Colonel Adcock brought up a matter for the Commission's consideration. Previously the Commission has reviewed all requests made by certain groups who are handicapped or exempt from having a license which ask permission to use an alternate weapon or method of hunting during a requested hunting season. Colonel Adcock asked if there might be a more efficient way to handle such requests, other than bringing each one to the Commission.

Discussion followed.

ACTION: Commissioner Jones made a motion that the Commission authorize Law Enforcement to evaluate and grant requests for licensing and/or weapons exemptions on a case-by-case basis. Commissioner Rigdon seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the Commission.

**TENTATIVE MEETING DATE**

Date: Wednesday, December 19, 2012

Time: 2:00 PM

Location: Chamber of Commerce, Greenwood, MS

EXECUTIVE SESSION

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Stanley and seconded by Commissioner Jones, the Commission voted unanimously to close the meeting to determine the need for executive session. The Commission determined that executive session was needed to discuss ongoing criminal investigations, and job performance of specific personnel in specific positions, and related issues. Upon motion made by Commissioner Rigdon and seconded by Commissioner Stanley, the Commission voted unanimously to enter into executive session.

Dr. Polles and Robert Cook presented the more detailed law enforcement realignment plan with names of specific employees and salary increases, promotions and related position changes.

ACTION: Commissioner Jones made a motion that the Commission approve the realignment plan for Law Enforcement positions. Commissioner Stanley seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the Commission.


Staff also updated the Commission on ongoing enclosure inspections. No action was required of the Commission.

There was no further business for Executive Session.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Rigdon and seconded by Commissioner Jones, 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

12/19/12

Date



John C Stanley IV, VICE-CHAIRMAN

12/19/12

Date