

# **MISSISSIPPI COMMISSION ON WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, & PARKS**

**Thursday May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025  
1:00 PM Business Session  
MDWFP Headquarters  
1505 Eastover Drive**

## **BUSINESS SESSION MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** Chairman Scott Coopwood and Commissioners Gary Rhoads, Billy Mounger, Colin Maloney, and Todd Hairston were in attendance.

Among the MDWFP staff attending were Executive Director Lynn Posey, Col. Jerry Carter, Lt. Col. Scottie Jones, Russ Walsh, Amy Blaylock, Jerry Brown, Jason Thompson, Andre´ Hollis, Drew Malone (General Counsel) and Doug Mann.

The Chairman gaveled the meeting into order and welcomed guests, both those watching the live stream video and those attending in person.

## **OPENING PRAYER**

Chairman Coopwood requested that Jason Thompson, Director of Administrative Services, open the meeting with prayer.

## **MINUTES**

Chairman Coopwood asked the Commission to review the minutes from the April meeting and when done called for a motion to approve the minutes.

**ACTION:** Upon motion by Commissioner Rhoads and seconded by Commissioner Maloney, the Commission meeting minutes of April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025, were unanimously approved.

## **AGENDA**

The Chairman asked Executive Director, Lynn Posey if there were any changes to the proposed agenda. Mr. Posey stated there are no public comments and there is a need for an Executive Session.

**ACTION:** Upon motion by Commissioner Rhoads and seconded by Commissioner Hairston, the Commission unanimously approved the meeting agenda for May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Perry Cox came before the Commission to discuss Animal Control Permits. Mr. Cox highlighted that while the ACP program serves an important role, its current implementation has shortcomings that risk harming adjacent landowners and undermining wildlife management efforts. He proposed forming a stakeholder-driven Steering Committee to review and improve the ACP process, emphasizing collaboration and transparency. Key concerns included a lack of consultation with neighboring landowners, inconsistent deer population assessments, and the risk of wasted wildlife resources. Mr. Cox also recommended clear standards for damage assessment, integration with the DMAP program, and mandatory donation of harvested deer. Mr. Cox pointed to successful models from Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Wisconsin as examples of how balanced, cooperative approaches can protect crops while maintaining conservation goals.

William Marcello, a concerned hunter and veterinarian, spoke out against the misuse of Depredation Permits (ACPs) in Mississippi. Mr. Marcello emphasized that while the permits were originally intended to protect crops, the current system was being abused, leading to ethical concerns and harm to deer populations. The speaker cited feedback from hunters across multiple states, who were alarmed by Mississippi's practices, particularly the use of night vision and suppressors. He reminded the Commissioners that many individuals had already raised these issues and urged action. Mr. Marcello stated it was time to resolve the problem and restore integrity to the process.

### **LICENSE SALES REPORT**

Jason Thompson, Director of Administrative Services, presented the License Sales Report for the month of April 2025. The total revenue for the end of April was down 3% (\$18,865,801.00) compared to April 2024.

Highlights of his report are listed below:

- Resident license sales – \$6,496,518.40 (down 1.51%)
- Non-resident license sales – \$11,540,702.60 (down 1.56%)
- Other Licenses – \$99,080.00 (down 0.3%)
- Lifetime License category – \$729,500.00 (down 4.63%)

### **WILDLIFE**

#### **40 Miss. Admin. Code, Part 2, Rule 5.3 Alligator Hunting Season for Public Waters**

Mr. Walsh stated there have been no public comments and he requested that Rule 5.3 be adopted by the Commission as a final rule.

The rule will allow alligator hunting in Graveline Bayou and its tributaries, excluding the Mississippi Sound and Fort Bayou.

**ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Rhoads and seconded by Commissioner Mounger, the Commission unanimously approved Rule 5.3 as final.**

**40 Miss. Admin. Code, Part 2, Chapter 1, WMA Regulations**

Mr. Walsh stated there have been no public comments and he presented the amended WMA regulations to the Commission to be made final.

**ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Mounger and seconded by Commissioner Rhoads, the Commission unanimously approved the WMA Regulation Changes as final.**

**40 Miss. Admin. Code, part 2, Rule 2.2 White-tailed Deer Seasons and Bag Limits**

Mr. Walsh stated there have been no public comments and he presented the amended Rule 2.2 to the Commission to be adopted as final.

**ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Rhoads and seconded by Commissioner Mounger, the Commission unanimously approved Rule 2.2 as final.**

**40 Miss. Admin. Code, Part 2, Rule 4.1 Small Game Seasons and Bag Limits**

Mr. Walsh stated there have been no public comments and he presented Rule 4.1 to the Commission to be adopted as final.

**ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Rhoads and seconded by Commissioner Mounger, the Commission unanimously approved Rule 4.1 as final.**

**40 Miss. Admin. Code, Part 2, Rule 8.3 Animals Inherently Dangerous to Humans**

Mr. Walsh stated there have been no public comments and he presented Rule 8.3 to the Commission to be adopted as final.

**ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Rhoads and seconded by Commissioner Mounger, the Commission unanimously approved Rule 8.3 as final.**

**40 Miss. Admin. Code, Part 1, Rule 8.4 Nonresident Licenses**

Mr. Walsh stated there have been no public comments and he presented the changes to Rule 8.4 to the Commission to be made final.

**ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Rhoads and seconded by Commissioner Mounger, the Commission unanimously approved Rule 8.4 as final.**

## **FISHERIES**

### **40 Miss. Admin. Code, Part 3, Rule 2.2 Regulations Regarding Community Fishing Assistance Program Lakes**

Jerry Brown, Chief of Fisheries stated there have been no public comments and he presented the change to Rule 2.2 to the Commission to be made final.

**ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Hairston and seconded by Commissioner Maloney, the Commission unanimously approved Rule 2.2 as a final.**

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT**

### **Law Enforcement Update**

Chairman Coopwood expressed what a good job the Law Enforcement bureau did at the Fallen Officer Memorial and how beautiful of a ceremony it was. Col. Carter thanked the staff for helping with the ceremony and was grateful for everything the MDWFP employees did in preparation.

Col. Jerry Carter, Chief of Law Enforcement, reported that during the month of May 2025, a total of 854 citations were issued with "No Resident License" being number one (170), "Trespassing" was number two (109), "Supplemental Feeding" was number three (77), "Unlawful Possession" was number four (75), and "Feeding inside CWD Zone" was number five (61).

Col. Carter continued his report, which highlighted several recent activities across the state. The first slide featured Officers Bowles and Sims successfully removing a nuisance alligator in Leflore County. The following slide showed unlawful slat boxes that were seized in the South Region. Next, images captured a few Wardens participating in a community Fishing Rodeo in the Central Region. Wardens Wesley and Evans were then shown engaging with an elementary school group, fostering youth education and outreach. The final slide featured Warden Trosclair interacting with a young participant at a "Touch-a-Truck" event in the South Region.

Customer counts for the department's shooting ranges for the month of April were: Mclvor – 1361; Turcotte – 1100; and McHenry – 676 customers.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Executive Director Posey recognized Andre Hollis, Director of Parks for receiving the Key to the City of Morton, MS award and the Mayor's Choice Award for Mentoring Young Men.

**NEXT MEETING DATE**

Executive Director Posey announced the proposed date and time for the next meeting as follows:

Date: Thursday June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025  
Location: MDWFP Headquarters – 1505 Eastover Drive  
Time: 10:00 AM Business Session

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Chairman Coopwood asked Executive Director Posey if there were a need for Executive Session. Executive Director Posey replied that there was indeed a need for an Executive Session to discuss prospective purchases of real property. The Chairman called for a motion to close the meeting to determine the need for Executive Session.

**ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Maloney and seconded by Commissioner Hairston the Commission voted unanimously to close the meeting to determine the need for an Executive Session to discuss potential purchases of real property or other transactions in land.**

The meeting was closed, and the room was cleared.

Drew Malone, General Counsel, announced to the visitors now in the lobby that the meeting had been closed to determine the need for an Executive Session to discuss potential transactions in real property.

A closed discussion followed.

**ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Maloney and seconded by Commissioner Hairston, the Commission voted unanimously to enter the Executive Session to discuss potential purchases of real property or other transactions in land.**

Drew Malone, General Counsel, announced to the visitors now in the lobby that the Commission had voted to enter Executive Session to discuss potential transactions in real property.

Land Coordinator, Art Kennard presented the Commission with the results of appraisals for a tract of land located in Marion County and contiguous to the Marion County WMA. Discussion followed.

**ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Hairston and seconded by Commissioner Rhoads the Commission voted unanimously to authorize staff to make an offer to purchase the property adjacent to the Marion County WMA, in compliance with applicable law.**

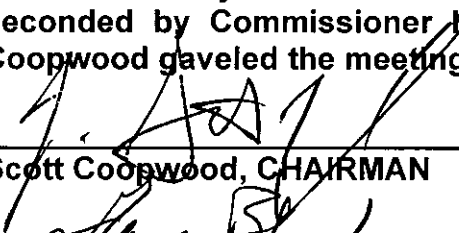
There being no further matters for discussion in Executive Session, Chairman Coopwood called for a motion to re-open the meeting.

**ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Rhoads and seconded by Commissioner Hairston the Commission voted unanimously to exit Executive session and return to an open meeting.**

Mr. Malone announced to those still outside the room that the Commission had voted to authorize making an offer to purchase a certain parcel of land in Marion County. Having no further business to discuss in the Executive Session, the Commission has opened the meeting.

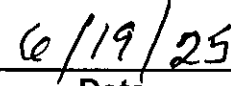
### ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Commission, Chairman Coopwood called for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Maloney made the motion to adjourn which was seconded by Commissioner Hairston. The motion passed unanimously. Chairman Coopwood gaveled the meeting into adjournment.

  
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Scott Coopwood, CHAIRMAN

  
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Gary Rhoads, VICE CHAIRMAN

  
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Date

  
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Date