

MISSISSIPPI COMMISSION ON WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, & PARKS

**Thursday July 24th, 2025
10:00 AM Business Session
MDWFP Headquarters
1505 Eastover Drive
Jackson, MS 39211**

BUSINESS SESSION MINUTES

PRESENT: Chairman Gary Rhoads, and Commissioners Colin Maloney, Todd Hairston, and Drew St. John were in attendance. Vice-Chairman, Billy Mounger, joined by phone.

Among the MDWFP staff attending were Executive Director Lynn Posey, Curtis Thornhill, Scottie Jones, Col. Jerry Carter, Russ Walsh, Amy Blaylock, Jerry Brown, Jason Thompson, Brian Ferguson, 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 Rhoads requested that Jason Thompson, Director of Administrative Services, open the meeting with prayer.

SWEARING-IN CEREMONY

Chairman Rhoads called for the next item on the agenda, which was the swearing-in of newly appointed Commissioner, Drew St. John. The oath of office which may be found in Section 268 of the Mississippi Constitution of 1890, was administered to the Commissioner by Mrs. Michelle Carter, of the Executive Staff. Having taken the oath, Commissioner St. John took his seat and began his official duties.

MINUTES

Chairman Rhoads asked the Commission to review the minutes of the June meeting and when done, he called for a motion to approve the minutes.

ACTION: Upon motion to approve by Commissioner Hairston and seconded by Commissioner Maloney, the Commission meeting minutes of June 19th, 2025, were unanimously approved.

AGENDA

The Chairman asked Executive Director, Lynn Posey, if there were any changes to the proposed agenda. Mr. Posey stated that there were no changes and there would not be a need for an Executive Session. There also would be no public comments.

Action: Upon motion by Commissioner Maloney and seconded by Commissioner Hairston, the Commission unanimously approved of the meeting agenda for July 24, 2025.

LICENSE SALES REPORT

Jason Thompson, Director of Administrative Services, presented the License Sales Report of June 2025.

Highlights of his report are listed below:

Resident license sales - \$6,996,068.50 (down 5.74%)

Non-resident license sales - \$11,848,618.50 (down 2.58%)

Other license sales - \$312,506.00 (down 3.84)

Lifetime license sales - \$809,500.00 (down 2.00%)

PARKS

40 Miss. Admin. Code, Part 6, Rule 1.1 State Park Fees (FINAL)

Brian Ferguson, Parks Chief of Staff, discussed Rule 1.1, changing State Park Fees. The changes will increase fees for rental and events. There was no public comment on the changes

ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Maloney and seconded by Commissioner St. John, the Commission unanimously approved Rule 1.1 as a FINAL rule.

40 Miss Admi. Code, Part 6, Rule 1.2 General Rules and Regulations for State Parks (FINAL)

Mr. Ferguson also brought up Rule 1.2 for final approval. Mr. Ferguson did point out one minor change was made to the Rule to clarify some confusion in regard to reservations. The addition that was added being that the individual making the reservation could not sell that reservation to another individual. Mr. Ferguson stated that while that should have been obvious to the customers that was a question that had been asked in the past and required clarification.

ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Hairston and seconded by Commissioner Maloney, the Commission unanimously approved Rule 1.2 as a FINAL rule with changes.

Director Posey asked Mr. Ferguson to discuss the status of the renovations and visitor counts with the Commission.

Mr. Ferguson discussed an update on the visitation and occupancy rates at the State Parks for the month of June 2025.

The rates are listed below:

Visitors – 42,037

Occupancy – 16,690

Total Revenue - \$815,620.00

Mr. Ferguson also gave a brief update on the state of repairs of the State Parks.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Col. Jerry Carter, Chief of Law Enforcement, reported that during the month of June 2025, a total of 375 citations were issued with "No Resident License" being number one (88), PFD Violation was number two (31), Trespassing was number three (25), No Boat Registration was number four (24), and No Boat Certificate was number five (23).

Customer counts for the department's shooting ranges for the month of June were:

McIvor – 501

Turcotte – 527

McHenry – 400

Mr. Carter recognized and pinned officers that had been recently promoted to senior positions in Law Enforcement.

1. Lieutenant Colonel Chris Reed, Assistant Chief of Law Enforcement
2. Major Jody Matheny, Regional Administrator for the Central Region
3. Major Kallum Herrington, Regional Administrator, South Region
4. Major Steven Westerfield, Commander of SRT
5. Major Brent Madden, Director of Training

NEXT MEETING

Date: Wednesday, August 20th, 2025

Location: MDWFP Headquarters – 1505 Eastover Drive

Time: 10:00 AM Business Session

EXECUTIVE SESSION

General Counsel informed the Commission that there was in fact a need for Executive Session to discuss possible land purchases. 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 transactions regarding the prospective purchase of 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 transactions regarding the prospective purchase of land.

A closed discussion followed.

ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Maloney and seconded by Commissioner Hairston the Commission voted unanimously to enter Executive Session to discuss transactions regarding the prospective purchase of land.

Drew Malone, General Counsel, announced to the visitors now in the lobby that the Commission had voted to enter Executive Session to discuss transactions regarding the prospective purchase of land.

Russ Walsh brought forth the possible purchase of two tracts of land. One located in the Pascagoula WMA and the other located in Marion County. After discussions regarding the average of the two appraisals and the funding source the Commission voted to give the Department the authority to make offers on the Pascagoula WMA tract and the Yager Tract in Marion County.

Upon motion by Commissioner Maloney and seconded by Commissioner Hairston the Commission voted unanimously to authorize the Department to make an offer to purchase the Marion County tract of land.

Upon motion by Commissioner Maloney and seconded by Commissioner St. John the Commission voted unanimously to authorize the Department to make an offer to purchase the Pascagoula WMA tract of land.

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

ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Maloney 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 the Department to make offers to purchase two tracts of land, one located adjacent to the Pascagoula WMA and the other in Marion County.

Having no further business to discuss in Executive Session, the Commission opened the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

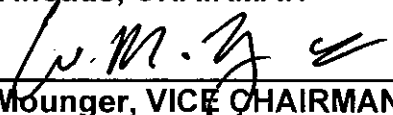
There being no further business before the Commission, Chairman Rhoads called for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Maloney made the motion to adjourn which was seconded by Commissioner St. John. The motion passed unanimously. Chairman Rhoads gaveled the meeting into adjournment.



Gary Rhoads, CHAIRMAN

8/20/25

Date



Billy Mounger, VICE CHAIRMAN

8/20/25

Date