

Minutes
Board of Natural Resources
2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, S. E.
Suite 1252 East Tower
Atlanta, GA 30334

Tuesday, June 22, 2021
9:00 a.m.

Attendees:

Board Members

Dee Yancey, Chair
Bill Jones, Vice Chair
Dwight Davis, Secretary
Nick Ayers
William Bagwell
Randy Dellinger
Patrick Denney
Dwight Evans
Joe Hatfield
Duncan Johnson
Ray Lambert
Rob Leebern
Tim Lowe
Paul Shailendra – via Zoom
Jeff “Bodine” Sinyard
Miki Thomaston
Gary Vowell – via Zoom

Guests

Ronny Just, Georgia Power

Staff Members

Mark Williams, Commissioner
Walter Rabon
Kyle Pearson
Kate Iannuzzi
Josh Hildebrandt
Cathy Barnette
Artica Gaston
Courtney Hall
Thomas Barnard
Jeff Cown
Steve Friedman – via Zoom
Doug Haymans
Ted Will
Clint Peacock

Richard Dunn, Director
John Eunice
Jac Capp
Karen Hays
Chuck Mueller
Laura Williams

The June 22, 2021 Board of Natural Resources meeting was called to order by Chairman Dee Yancey.

Chairman Yancey called on Captain Mike Burgamy to give the invocation.

Chairman Yancey adjourned the Board meeting to move into the Committee meetings.

Chairman Yancey called the meeting of the Board of Natural Resources to order.

Chairman Yancey called for a motion to approve the minutes from the May 25, 2021, Board of Natural Resources meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Sinyard, seconded by Mr. Johnson, and carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the May 25, 2021 Board of Natural Resources meeting.

Chairman Yancey called on Richard Dunn, Director of the Environmental Protection Division, for his report.

Director Dunn updated the Board on major activities within the Air, Water, and Land branches. He stated the Planning and Support program within the Air Protection Branch is working with the EPA on the redesignation of the Atlanta Metro area from non-attainment to attainment for the 2015 Ozone standard. He further stated Mobile and Area Sources program is in the process of reprocurring the I&M contract for operating the vehicle emissions testing program and is anticipated to have a new contract in place by the end of the year. He briefed the Board on continued work by the Stationary Source Permitting program and the Ambient Monitoring program to address ethylene oxide emissions by strengthening permits for medical sterilizers as well as deploying new monitoring technology.

Director Dunn further updated the Board on Watershed's monitoring of PFAS in finished drinking water beginning in February with an initial focus on 110 public water systems in the Coosa and Tennessee basins. He stated the sampling program is ongoing and now has the capacity to analyze the samples at EPD labs rather than having to send the samples off to a third-party lab. He notified the Board of the Clean Water Act Triennial Review that is in process to review and revise water quality standards. He added several staff changes have occurred within the Safe Dams Program and Watershed Enforcement and Compliance program.

Finally, Director Dunn updated the Board on Coal Combustion Residual permit applications and issuances. He further notified the Board on work with EPA on the cleanup of lead contaminated soil at a site across the street from the Mercedes-Benz Stadium. He reported

UST inspections are fully back online after shelter in place orders last March and the program has met their monthly target inspection numbers for the last three months.

Director Dunn stated this concluded his report.

Chairman Yancey called on Mark Williams, Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources, for his report.

Commissioner Williams welcomed everyone and stated it is good to be back in Atlanta with everyone for the first time since the global pandemic began a year and a half ago.

Commissioner Williams began his report by congratulating the 35th class of the DNR Game Warden Academy and thanking Chairman Dee Yancey and board members Miki Thomaston, Randy Dellinger, Billy New, Gary Vowell and Patrick Denney for attending the ceremony. He expressed his appreciation to Governor Brian Kemp for his personal address and handing out the diplomas.

Commissioner Williams recognized Game Warden Tyler Lewis as the recipient of the 2021 Torch National Award for the Southeast Region. He stated the award is one of the highest honors for conservation officers and is given by the North American Wildlife Enforcement Officers Association.

Commissioner Williams updated the Board on the second session of the DNR Leadership Academy and their experience on Sapelo Island.

Commissioner Williams called on Colonel Thomas Barnard, Director of the Law Enforcement Division, for his report.

Colonel Barnard provided an update on the Special Operations Group Training in Advance Firearms; Atlanta Crime Suppression Detail; the arrest of the suspect for theft by taking, felony interference with government property, loitering, unlawful dumping, and felony possession of tools to commit a crime at Red Top Mountain State Park, Region I; a case still under investigation in Region II, where a suspect was charged with 25 separate violations in Rabon County; an incident in Warren County, Region III, where a suspect was charged with discharging a firearm from a public road, and the passenger was charged with obstruction/hindering a law enforcement officer; a recent case in Sumter County, Region V, where a suspect was charged with hunting out of season, hunting with an illegal weapon, and failure to record big game harvest; a recent case in Appling County, Region IV, where a suspect was charged with illegal sale of game fish; and a recent case in Sumter County, Region VI, where game wardens apprehended commercial shrimp trawlers that were stealing shrimp prior to the season opening.

Commissioner Williams called on Jeff Cown, Director of State Parks and Historic Sites Division, for his report.

Director Cown provided an update on the ribbon cutting for the new outdoor classroom at Panola Mountain; dedication of the “Etowah Chief” sculpture by Barry Henderson at Etowah Indian Mounds; Georgia EMC article promoting bike trails and events at Skidaway Island; the new Interpretive Center at Skidaway Island featured in the local “This Week at the Landings” publication; a “Things to Know” article published by WSB-Atlanta to help visitors plan their trips; High Falls opening of the renovated Historic Trail to the public and full ADA access to view the falls; Gopher Tortoise Release at George L. Smith; results from the recent “Best Hiking Trails” survey and the top 5 trails are: West Rim Trail at Cloudland Canyon, Waterfalls Trail at Cloudland Canyon, Amicalola Falls Trail Loop, Canyon Loop Trail at Providence Canyon, and the White Trail at Sweetwater Creek; summer Junior Ranger Camps at Crooked River, Fort King George, Fort McAllister, and Hardman Farm, a turtle program at General Coffee, and summer camp at High Falls for a visiting Girl Scout troop.

Commissioner Williams called on Ted Will, Director of the Wildlife Resources Division, for his report.

Director Will provided an update on the 2021-2022 Hunting Regulations; Alligator Quota Hunts, which opens at sunset on Friday, August 20; Sapelo Marsh Landing Renovations with a projected completion date in September; the WRD’s Rx fire teams’ prescribed fire, which burned 64,194 acres; ADA projects at Charlie Elliott to provide trail access to wheelchair users; Proposed Shorebird Island Design; Public Water Fish Stockings, with 9,479,208 fish stocked into public waters in FY2021; National Fishing and Boating Week; and Fishing Basics Classes at Go Fish Education Center and welcoming large groups back to the facility.

Commissioner Williams stated this concluded his report.

Chairman Yancey called on Ray Lambert, Chairman of the Environmental Protection Committee, for his report.

A motion was made by Mr. Lambert, seconded by Mr. Evans, and carried unanimously to adopt the Resolution to approve the Proposed Amendments to the Rules for Erosion and Sedimentation Control, Chapter 391-3-7. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part hereof)

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Delos H. Yancey, III, Chairman

ATTEST:

Dwight J. Davis, Secretary