

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

Tuesday, August 22, 2023
9:00 a.m.

Board Members

Dwight Davis, Chair
Joe Hatfield, Vice Chair
Gary Vowell, Secretary
Nancy Addison
Randy Dellinger
Patrick Denney
Charles DePriest
Dan Garcia
Mark Hennessy
Penn Hodge
Kevin Jackson
Duncan Johnson
Bill Jones
Ray Lambert
Tim Lowe
Paul Shailendra
Harley Yancey

Staff Members

Walter Rabon, Commissioner
Kyle Pearson
Kate Iannuzzi
Donald Kirkland
Cathy Barnette
Thomas Barnard
Steve Friedman
Doug Haymans
Angie Johnson
Ted Will
Jill Andrews
Antoinette Norfleet
Scott Robinson

Jeff Cown, Director
James Boylan
Chuck Mueller
Anna Truszczynski

Guests

Debbie Phillips, GA Industry Environmental Coalition
Josh Purdy, Georgia State Parks
Melanie Reed, GA DNR
Mark Woodall, Sierra Club
Chris Manganiello, Chattahoochee Riverkeepers
Brooks Varnell, DNR Law Enforcement
Nic Matthew, Office of Planning and Budget
David Anderson, Office of Planning and Budget
Rick Dunn, Office of Planning and Budget
Meris Lutz, Atlanta Journal and Constitution
Anna Edmondson, Robbins Government Relations

The August 22, 2023 Board of Natural Resources meeting was called to order by Chairman Dwight Davis.

Chairman Davis welcomed Walter Rabon and thanked him for his service as Interim Commissioner.

Chairman Davis welcomed Jeff Cown and congratulated him on his appointment as Director of the Environmental Protection Division.

Chairman Davis welcomed Rick Dunn and congratulated him on his appointment as Director of the Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget.

Chairman Davis stated the first item for consideration is under Tab F, a resolution honoring and expressing appreciation to Mr. Richard E. Dunn for his service as Director of the Environmental Protection Division. After reading the resolution, Chairman Davis requested a motion to approve.

A motion was made by Mr. Davis, seconded by Mr. Lambert, and carried unanimously to adopt the resolution honoring Mr. Richard E. Dunn.

Chairman Davis presented the resolution to Mr. Dunn.

Mr. Dunn thanked the Board and EPD staff for their support during his tenure as Director of the Environmental Protection Division and congratulated Jeff Cown on his appointment as the new Director.

Chairman Davis stated that after an exhaustive search, Governor Brian Kemp has announced his recommendation for the Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources. He further stated that after consulting with counsel he proposed to amend the agenda to address the issue and called for a motion to approve.

A motion was made by Mr. Lambert, seconded by Mr. Vowell, and carried unanimously to amend the agenda to add the appointment of the Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources.

Chairman Davis stated that Governor Kemp has recommended Walter Rabon as the new Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources. He further stated that it is a well-deserved recognition of Walter Rabon’s years of service and expertise, as well as his service as Interim Commissioner.

Chairman Davis stated if there are no questions or comments, he requests a motion to approve.

A motion was made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Ms. Addison, and carried unanimously to appoint Walter Rabon as the Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources, to be effective immediately, with an annual salary of \$195,000.

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

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

Chairman Davis called for a motion to approve the minutes of the Board of Natural Resources meetings on June 27, 2023, the special called meeting on June 30, 2023, and the special called meeting on August 2, 2023.

A motion was made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Shailendra, and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the Board of Natural Resources meetings on June 27, 2023, June 30, 2023, and August 2, 2023.

Chairman Davis called on Jeff Cown, Director of the Environmental Protection Division, for his report.

Director Cown thanked the Board for their vote on August 2, appointing him as Director of the Environmental Protection Division. He stated that he is honored to have this position and will work hard every day to serve the agency and the public that we serve.

Director Cown congratulated Walter Rabon on his appointment as the DNR Commissioner.

Director Cown updated the Board on EPD's frost protection permitting program and an update on a landfill in South Fulton.

Director Cown stated this concluded his report.

Chairman Davis called on Walter Rabon for his first report as Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources.

Commissioner Rabon thanked the Chairman and Board and stated it is an honor and privilege to work alongside the Board in this new role and to serve with the men and women of

the DNR. He thanked the Board for their support on a daily basis and for their interaction with the agency. He thanked Governor Kemp for his confidence in him to serve in this role.

Commissioner Rabon welcomed new board member, Lesley Reynolds, and stated that Ms. Reynolds would be attending her first board meeting in September.

Commissioner Rabon recognized and welcomed Alexis Thompson as the new Public and Governmental Affairs assistant in the Commissioner's office.

Commissioner Rabon stated that Jeff Cown has officially started his role as the Director of the Environmental Protection Division, and he looks forward to working with him. He stated that Angie Johnson will serve as Interim Director of the State Parks and Historic Sites Division, and he hopes to have an announcement about the new Director in the coming days.

Commissioner Rabon updated the Board on the 2nd DNR Career Academy and thanked Taylor Brown Fisher and the entire team for a great job. He thanked Board members Mark Hennessy, Bill Jones, Joe Hatfield, and Randy Dellinger, and GNRFC Chairman, Chris Albrecht, for coming out and participating.

Commissioner Rabon stated the Brunswick Office hosted the House Caucus a few weeks ago and highlighted areas of each division.

Commissioner Rabon called on Antoinette Norfleet for an overview of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and to present the projects selected to move on to the second phase of the application process.

Ms. Norfleet stated the purpose of the briefing is to provide an update on the projects from cities and counties that were selected to move forward in the grant approval process and that no action is required at this time. She further stated the Land & Water Conservation Fund is a partnership between the Department of Interior, the GA DNR, and city and county governments. She added that the grants are awarded to acquire recreation lands as well as to develop new outdoor recreation facilities and renovate existing outdoor recreation facilities. She added the funding is received from revenue from oil and gas lease sales on the Outer Continental Shelf and each state receives an appropriation based on a formula that includes the state's population.

Ms. Norfleet stated there were 72 applications received, \$21,608,788.80 in requests, and \$48,895,835.13 in project cost estimates. She further stated that the 2022-2023 selections

include 27 projects, \$9,688,431.00 in grant requests, and \$23,703,577.13 in project cost estimates. She provided a map and list of the selected projects.

Ms. Norfleet stated this concluded her briefing.

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

Colonel Barnard provided an update on the 38th Game Warden Academy, Operation Digging Up Bones, Game Warden KP Boatright, winner of the North American Wildlife Officers Association's Region 6 Torch Award, and the 10th Annual Game Warden Awards Banquet on August 19.

Colonel Barnard stated this concluded his report.

Commissioner Rabon called on Angie Johnson, Interim Director of the State Parks & Historic Sites Division, for her report.

Interim Director Johnson provided an update on the storm damage response at Elijah Clark State Park, Inland Boat Operations Class at Florence Marina, Sapelo Island Archaeological Testing, new greens at The Creek at Hard Labor, and the Georgia Military Institute uniform coat on loan from A. H. Stephens to the Clay National Guard Center.

Interim Director Johnson stated this concluded her report.

Commissioner Rabon called on Doug Haymans, Director of the Coastal Resources Division, for his report.

Director Haymans provided an update on the Red Snapper Carcass Recovery Project, Coastal Pines Technical College Scholarship, the 2023 Fishing Camps held at the Coastal Regional Headquarters, and the donation of eight retired MARTA subway cars to CRD for offshore artificial reefs.

Director Haymans stated this concluded his report.

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

Director Will provided an update on 20th year of Georgia's alligator season, the turkey brood survey in July, the Southeastern Bat Diversity Network Bat Blitz hosted by the Wildlife

Conservation Section, Region 6 staff's continued removal of non-native catfish including flathead catfish that were recently discovered in the Ogeechee River, the Gateway to Fishing Program opportunities for the residents of metro Atlanta, and the promotion of Game Management's Kevin Lowery to Wildlife Conservation Section's Assistant Chief.

Director Will stated this concluded his report.

Commissioner Rabon stated this concluded his report.

Chairman Davis called on Nancy Addison, Chair of the Coastal Committee, for her report.

A motion was made by Ms. Addison, seconded by Mr. Shailendra, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to approve the proposed amendments to the Coastal Incentive Grant Program Description, Chapter 391-2-5-.01 through 391-2-5-.15. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part hereof)

Ms. Addison state this concluded her report.

Chairman Davis called on Ray Lambert, Chairman of the Environmental Protection Division, for his report.

A motion was made by Mr. Lambert, seconded by Ms. Addison, and carried unanimously to adopt the Resolution to approve the Proposed Amendments to the Rules for Air Quality Control, Chapter 391-3-1, Pertaining to Miscellaneous Changes and Updates. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part hereof)

A motion was made by Mr. Lambert, seconded by Mr. Shailendra, and carried unanimously to adopt the Resolution to approve the Proposed Amendments to the Rules for Air Quality Control, Chapter 391-3-1, Pertaining to Startup, Shutdown and Malfunction Emissions. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part hereof)

A motion was made by Mr. Lambert, seconded by Mr. Shailendra, and carried unanimously to adopt the Resolution to approve the Proposed Amendments to Rules for Safe Drinking Water, Chapter 391-3-5, Pertaining to Well Construction Standards. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part hereof)

A motion was made by Mr. Lambert, seconded by Mr. Shailendra, and carried unanimously to adopt the Resolution to approve the Proposed Amendments to Rules for Safe Drinking Water, Chapter 391-3-5, Pertaining to Lead Service Line Inventories. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part hereof)

A motion was made by Mr. Lambert, seconded by Mr. Shailendra, and carried unanimously to adopt the Resolution to approve the Proposed Amendments to the Rules for Hazardous Waste Management, Chapter 391-3-11. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part hereof)

Mr. Lambert stated this concluded his report.

Chairman Davis called on Tim Lowe, Chairman of the Land Committee, for his report.

A motion was made by Mr. Lowe, seconded by Mr. Jones, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval to purchase from William C. Elliott 62± acres as an addition to Dawson Forest WMA, Dawson County.

A motion was made by Mr. Lowe, seconded by Ms. Addison, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval to purchase from William C. Elliott and Ernest G. Elliott 275± acres as an addition to Dawson Forest WMA, Dawson County.

A motion was made by Mr. Lowe, seconded by Mr. Jones, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval to purchase from Jeanne Jordan Cook 308± acres as an addition to Clybel WMA, Jasper County.

A motion was made by Mr. Lowe, seconded by Mr. Shailendra, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval to purchase from April Chapman 337+ acres as an addition to Griffin Ridge WMA, Long County.

A motion was made by Mr. Lowe, seconded by Mr. Vowell, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval to purchase from Gator Hollow LLC 8± acres as an addition to Vogel State Park, Union County.

A motion was made by Mr. Lowe, seconded by Mr. Shailendra, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval to to enter into a Lease with the U.S. Army-Corps of Engineers for 0.34+ acres, Lake Seminole, Seminole County.

A motion was made by Mr. Lowe, seconded by Ms. Addison, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to grant a Revocable License Agreement and Ground Lease of up to 7,200 feet by the State Properties Commission and General Assembly to Extenet at Smithgall Woods State Park, Dawson County.

Mr. Lowe stated this concluded his report.

Chairman Davis stated the next Board of Natural Resources meeting will be held on September 26, 2023, in the DNR Boardroom, in Atlanta.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Dwight J. Davis, Chairman

ATTEST:

Gary Vowell, Secretary