

**Minutes**  
**Board of Natural Resources**  
A. W. Jones Heritage Center  
610 Beachview Drive  
St. Simons Island, GA 31522

**January 31, 2020**  
**10:00 a.m.**

**Attendees:**

**Board Members**

Jeff "Bodine" Sinyard, Chair  
Nancy Addison, Vice Chair  
Dee Yancey, Secretary  
William Bagwell  
Dwight Davis  
Dwight Evans  
Joe Hatfield  
Duncan N. Johnson – Via Conference Call  
Bill Jones  
Ray Lambert  
Rob Leebern  
Tim Lowe  
Aaron McWhorter  
Mark Mobley  
Mike Phelps  
Billy New  
Brother Stewart  
Miki Thomaston

**Guests**

Duane Harris  
Ed Meadows, AVOCET Group  
Charles McMillan, Georgia Conservancy  
Bart Gobeil, Georgia Conservancy  
Leah Dixon, Georgia Conservancy  
John Maddox, Georgia Environmental Protection Division  
Emily Ellison, St. Simons Land Trust  
Rena Ann Peck, Georgia River Network  
Michael Torras, Brunswick Landing Marina  
Ronny Just, Georgia Power  
Brant Lane, Hodges, Harbin Newberry & Tribble, Inc.  
John Burnette, Dover Bluff Club  
Fred Voigt, Jr., Dover Bluff Club  
Jim Renner, Southern Ionics Minerals  
Zach Harris, HunterMaclean  
Clay Montague, Satilla Riverkeeper  
Wilton DeLoach, Dover Bluff Club

**Staff Members**

Mark Williams, Commissioner  
Walter Rabon  
Kyle Pearson  
Josh Hildebrandt  
Melanie Johnson  
Cathy Barnette  
Thomas Barnard  
Jeff Cown  
Dave Crass  
Steve Friedman  
Doug Haymans  
Mark Whitney  
Jill Andrews  
Jan McKinnon  
Paul Medders  
Tyler Jones  
Ted Will  
Taylor Brown  
  
Lauren Curry, Assistant Director

Chairman Bodine Sinyard called the meeting of the Board of Natural Resources to order.

Chairman Sinyard introduced Mr. Jones Hooks, Executive Director of the Jekyll Island Authority, as the Public Focus speaker. Mr. Hooks welcomed the group to the Golden Isles and thanked the Board members, Commissioner Williams and staff for all their support.

Chairman Sinyard thanked Mr. Hooks.

Chairman Sinyard adjourned the Board meeting to begin the Committee meetings.

The January 31, 2020 meeting of the Board of Natural Resources was called to order by Chairman Bodine Sinyard.

Chairman Sinyard called for a motion to approve the minutes of the December 4, 2019 Board of Natural Resources meeting.

A motion was made by Ms. Addison, seconded by Mr. Mobley, and carried unanimously to approve the of the December 4, 2019 Board of Natural Resources Meeting. (Minutes attached hereto and made a part thereof)

Chairman Sinyard called on Lauren Curry, Deputy Director of the Environmental Protection Division, for her report.

Deputy Director Curry updated the Board on the Georgia Florida Supreme Court case, status updates on three facilities using ethylene oxide, and proposed cuts to EPD's budget. Deputy Director Curry further commended the joint efforts of EPD, DNR, Coastal Resources Division, and the US Coast Guard on their work with the Golden Ray vessel.

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

Commissioner Williams recognized Mr. Paul Medders with the CRD's Marine Fisheries Section. Mr. Medders received the 2019 Millie Graham award by the Georgia Association of Marine Education (GAME), at the GAME 2019 Annual Conference.

Commissioner Williams recognized Mr. Cameron Atkinson, a native of Rome, GA, and a current student at the College of Coastal Georgia. Mr. Atkinson is the recipient of the 2019 Nathan Deal Conserve Georgia's Natural Resources Scholarship.

Commissioner Williams provided an update on the 2020 Legislative Session; Keeping Georgia Wild Day at the Capitol; the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program Board of Trustees meeting and its inaugural slate of projects.

Commissioner Williams called on Taylor Brown, Chief of Grants, to give an overview of the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program and present its inaugural slate of projects for approval.

Ms. Brown stated the Rules of the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program were approved in June 2019. On July 1, the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Act became effective. In July and August, staff traveled around the state and conducted four (4) educational workshops for local governments, non-profits, and employees and had over 200 people in attendance. She further stated the pre-application cycle for eligible applicants opened on September 1 and closed on October 31.

Ms. Brown stated the program received 58 applications and over \$78 million in grant requests from around the state: Twenty-eight (28) from local governments; nineteen (19) from state agencies, including the DNR; and eleven (11) from non-profits. She further stated that all the projects were checked for eligibility and the applications were reviewed by three (3) independent reviewers who work for the department, using the evaluation criteria that were included in the Rules and approved by the Board of Trustees.

Ms. Brown stated the Board of Trustees met on January 21, 2020, to approve the list of projects, based on the revenue of taxes received by the state from sporting goods store sales and use taxes collected on outdoor recreation equipment from the immediately preceding fiscal year. She further stated the GOSA Trust Fund was appropriated \$20 million for this cycle, and fourteen (14) projects were approved for approximately \$19.9 million. Six (6) of the projects were DNR projects and eight (8) projects were for local governments and non-profits.

Ms. Brown requested Board approval of the slate of projects approved by the Board of Trustees. Upon approval, the projects will be transmitted for final review and approval to the chairpersons of the appropriations subcommittees of the House of Representatives and Senate over the Department of Natural Resources. Upon approval by the subcommittees, the applicants will be invited for a second-level application phase. She further stated it is anticipated that construction on the projects will begin during the summer.

A motion was made by Ms. Thomaston, seconded by Ms. Addison, and carried unanimously to approve the Board of Trustees of the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Fund 2019-2020 approved proposal of projects.

Commissioner Williams called on Jeff Cown, Director of the Parks, Recreation and Historic Sites Division, for his update.

Director Cown provided an update on revenues; First Day Hike; customer service training; and the merger with the Historic Preservation Division.

Commissioner Williams called on Mark Whitney, Assistant Director of the Wildlife Resources Division, for his update.

Mr. Whitney provided an update on the division's reorganization; the Game Management Section Annual Report; fisheries enhancements at Lake Burton Hatchery and Hugh Gillis PFA; Youth Falconry Specialty Hunt; and WRD's Annual Statewide Meeting.

Commissioner Williams called on Doug Haymans, Director of the Coastal Resources Division, who introduced J. T. Bennett, a Marine Tech with the Shellfish and Water Quality Unit and a Sergeant in the Georgia National Guard.

Sergeant Bennett stated he recently returned from a seven-month deployment to Afghanistan and would like to present a special gift to Commissioner Mark Williams. He further stated that he carried a Georgia state flag on his back while on his mission. He added the flag comes with a certificate of authenticity and is signed by the Commander. Sergeant Bennett presented the flag to Commissioner Williams and thanked him and all the department for their support.

Director Haymans recognized Jim Elliott with T & T Salvage, Coast Guard Commander Matt Baer, representing the Unified Command, Kevin Perry with Gallagher Marine Systems, and Lt. Commander Matt Waller.

Director Haymans called on Jim Elliott, T & T Salvage to provide an update on the plans for the Golden Ray removal. Mr. Elliott explained how they are working with environmental, engineering and other experts to erect an environmental protection barrier around the overturned cargo ship. He stated the barrier will mitigate threats to the marine ecosystem when the Golden Ray is eventually cut into large sections, removed by barge and transported to a recycling facility in New Orleans, LA.

Commissioner Williams stated this concludes his report.

Chairman Sinyard called on Rob Leebern, Chairman of the Coastal Committee, for his report.

A motion was made by Mr. Leebern, seconded by Mr. Jones, and carried unanimously that the Board approve the proposed amendments to the Rules of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Saltwater Fishing Regulations, Chapter 391-2-4. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part thereof)

A motion was made by Mr. Leebern, seconded by Ms. Thomaston, and carried unanimously that the Board approve the appointment of Mr. Brad Brookshire as a member of the Coastal Marshlands Protection and Shore Protection Committees.

Chairman Sinyard called on Dwight Evans, Chairman of the Wildlife Resources Committee, for his report.

A motion was made by Mr. Evans, seconded by Mr. Hatfield, and carried unanimously that the Board approve the proposed amendment to Chapter 391-4-2, Hunting Regulations pertaining to Ceylon Wildlife Management Area.

Chairman Sinyard stated he wanted to take this opportunity to thank the Board members for allowing him to serve as Chairman of the Board of Natural Resources in 2019 and thanked Commissioner Williams and staff for all their support.

Chairman Sinyard called on Ray Lambert, Chairman of the 2020 Nominating Committee, for his report.

Mr. Lambert stated the Nominating Committee met via conference call on November 20, 2019 and voted unanimously on a proposed slate of officers. He further stated he would like to present them to the Board for consideration: Nancy Addison, Chairman; Dee Yancey, Vice Chairman; and Bill Jones, Secretary.

A motion was made by Mr. Stewart, seconded by Mr. Evans and carried unanimously to approve the proposed slate of officers for 2020.

Mr. Sinyard passed the gavel to the new Board Chairman, Nancy Addison.

Chairman Addison thanked Mr. Sinyard for his dedicated service and presented a ceremonial gavel and a special gift to him as tokens of appreciation for his outstanding leadership.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

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Nancy A. Addison, Chairman

ATTEST:

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A. W. Jones III, Secretary