

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

**March 24, 2020**

**Attendees:**

**Board Members**

Nancy Addison, Chair  
Dee Yancey, Vice Chair  
Bill Jones, Secretary  
William Bagwell  
Dwight Davis  
Dwight Evans  
Joe Hatfield  
Duncan N. Johnson, Jr.  
Ray Lambert  
Rob Leebern  
Tim Lowe  
Mike Phelps  
Billy New  
Paul Shailendra  
Jeff "Bodine" Sinyard  
Brother Stewart  
Miki Thomaston

**Guests**

Ronny Just, GA Power  
Bryan Tolar, GA Urban Ag Council  
Leah Dixon, GA Conservancy

**Staff Members**

Mark Williams, Commissioner  
Walter Rabon  
Kyle Pearson  
Josh Hildebrandt  
Cathy Barnette  
Steve Friedman  
Tina Johannsen  
Richie Golden  
  
Richard Dunn, Director  
Lauren Curry  
Karen Hays

The March 24, 2020 Board of Natural Resources Conference Call meeting was called to order by Chair Nancy Addison.

Chair Addison called on Captain Mike Burgamy, Law Enforcement Division, to provide an opening prayer for the Board meeting.

Chair Addison called on Cathy Barnette to do roll call and verify a quorum is present. Those in attendance on the conference call were Nancy Addison, Chair, Dee Yancey, Vice Chair, Bill Jones, Secretary, William Bagwell, Dwight Davis, Dwight Evans, Joe Hatfield, Duncan Johnson, Ray Lambert, Rob Leebern, Tim Lowe, Billy New, Mike Phelps, Paul Shailendra, Bodine Sinyard, Brother Stewart, and Miki Thomaston.

Chair Addison called for a motion to approve the minutes of the February 25, 2020 Board of Natural Resources meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Sinyard, seconded by Mr. Hatfield, and carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the February 25, 2020 Board of Natural Resources meeting.

Chair Addison called on Richard Dunn, Director of the Environmental Protection Division, for his report.

Director Dunn updated the Board on EPD's response to the State of Emergency including employee teleworking, public hearings, public notice and comment, and open record and in-person file reviews.

Chair Addison called on Mark Williams, Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources, for his report.

Commissioner Williams started by thanking everyone for their understanding as we go about our work while following Governor Kemp's directives for the state during the COVID-19 response. He stated that DNR is fully functioning, offices remain open, parks continue to welcome guests, biologists are managing wildlife and habitat across the state, as the Department continues to prioritize its most important asset, the safety of our people. He thanked Deputy Commissioner Walter Rabon and all the DNR staff for their work during this crisis. He further stated the Weekend for Wildlife debriefing meeting is rescheduled on April 28, 2020.

Commissioner Williams provided a legislative update and stated all the Department's legislation has been very well received with little to no opposition. He stated the FY2020 amended budget has been signed by the Governor, and we are continuing to closely work with the House and Senate on the FY2021 budget. He further stated that after careful deliberation with the Governor and in the best interest of the health of the public, legislative staff and legislators, the general assembly session has been suspended indefinitely out of an abundance of caution towards the COVID-19 outbreak.

Commissioner Williams stated that the Parks, Recreation and Historic Sites Division has been intricately involved with the COVID-19 response. A very small, isolated part of Hard Labor Creek State Park is currently being used to house seven patient monitoring trailers. All other DNR facilities and most amenities, including Hard Labor Creek, remain open and operational.

Commissioner Williams stated the Game Wardens and the Law Enforcement Division are also involved in the COVID-19 response by providing security at the Hard Labor Creek monitoring site and assisting GEMA in their statewide activities such as transporting supplies to and from secure facilities.

Commissioner Williams stated the Law Enforcement Division was deeply involved with the CWD Task Force investigative meeting in early March at Indian Springs. He further stated that the LED is the feature in the Spring 2020 issue of International Game Warden magazine.

Commissioner Williams announced the retirement of WRD's Assistant Director Mark Whitney, beginning April 1. He stated that Assistant Director Whitney has been an invaluable asset for the past 23 years and thanked him for his hard work and commitment.

Commissioner Williams stated that WRD's new Wildlife Conservation Section's 2019 annual report is posted on WRD's website. He further stated in the current issue of Garden & Gun magazine, you will see WRD's Clay George, who was recognized as a Southern Hero for his work with the Atlantic Right Whale team.

Commissioner Williams stated this concluded his report.

Chair Addison called on Dwight Davis, Chairman of the Land Committee, for his report.

A motion was made by Mr. Davis, seconded by Mr. New, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval to enter into a lease agreement with Houston County to lease Knowles Landing Boat Ramp, 2.21± acres. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part thereof)

A motion was made by Mr. Davis, seconded by Mr. Jones, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval to enter into an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Georgia Forestry Commission for the Arrowhead Seed Orchard, Ocmulgee WMA, Bleckley and Pulaski Counties. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part thereof)

A motion was made by Mr. Davis, seconded by Ms. Thomaston, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval of the Disposition (surplus) of up to 2+ acres of the Okefenokee Heritage Education Center to Charlton County. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part thereof)

A motion was made by Mr. Davis, seconded by Mr. Sinyard, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval

of the Granting of a Revocable License Agreement and Permanent Easement of up to 0.35± acres by the State Properties Commission and General Assembly to Georgia Power Company at Chief Vann House Historic Site, Murray County. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part thereof)

Mr. Davis stated this concluded his report.

Chair Addison stated the next Board of Natural Resources meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 28, 2020, in the DNR Boardroom.

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