Minutes
Coastal Committee
A. W. Jones Heritage Center
610 Beachview Drive
St. Simons Island, GA 31522

January 31, 2020
10:00 a.m.

Attendees:

**Committee Members**
- Rob Leebern, Chair
- Bill Jones, Vice Chair
- Nancy Addison
- Tim Lowe
- Aaron McWhorter
- Miki Thomaston
- Dee Yancey
- Bodine Sinyard, Board Chair, Ex-officio

**Board Members**
- William Bagwell
- Dwight Davis
- Dwight Evans
- Joe Hatfield
- Duncan Johnson – Via Conference Call
- Ray Lambert
- Mark Mobley
- Billy New
- Mike Phelps
- Brother Stewart

**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

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

Chairman Sinyard called on Rob Leebern, Chairman of the Coastal Committee, who called on Doug Haymans, Director of the Coastal Resources Division.

Director Haymans stated the first item is action on proposed amendments to the Rules of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Saltwater Fishing Regulations, Chapter 391-2-4. He further stated the amendments establish a new size limit for Shortfin Mako Sharks, a prohibition on the harvest of Oceanic Whitetip Sharks, and a requirement to use circle hooks when fishing for all species of shark, except when fishing with flies or artificial lures.

Director Haymans stated the proposal was presented to the public for comment and only one comment was received.

A motion was made by Mr. Jones, seconded by Mr. Yancey, and carried unanimously that the Committee recommends the Board adopt the Resolution regarding the proposed amendments to the Rules of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Saltwater Fishing Regulations, Chapter 391-2-4, as presented.

Director Haymans stated his second item is the nomination of a member to the Coastal Marshlands Protection and Shore Protection Committees.

Ms. Addison offered a nominee for discussion: Mr. Brad Brookshire from Richmond Hill, GA. She stated Mr. Brookshire is a Bryan county commissioner and is very familiar with the area. She further stated Mr. Brookshire understands the importance of protecting the coastal marshlands and shores.

Discussion ensued.

A motion was made by Ms. Addison, seconded by Mr. Lowe, and carried unanimously that the Committee recommend the Board approve the nomination of Mr. Brad Brookshire as a member of the Coastal Marshland Protection and Shore Protection Committees.

Director Haymans provided an update on the Bluefish, a popular recreational fish along the Atlantic coast. He stated the Bluefish is managed primarily by the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council and in cooperation with the Atlantic State Marine Fisheries Commission. He further stated the most recent stock assessment stated the Bluefish are overfished but are not experiencing overfishing. In December, the Commission voted, in order to get the Bluefish out of the overfished category, to require
states to go to a three (3) fish limit for private anglers, and a five (5) fish limit for charter fishing, which is an 8.13% reduction for the state of Georgia.

Director Haymans stated he will apply for conservation equivalency, in the short term. He further stated he will request the Commissioner to sign an Administrative Order to close the season in March and April each year for the next thee (3) years, in order to meet the 8.13% reduction.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.