

**Minutes  
Coastal Committee  
Ogeechee Technical College  
Jack Hill Building, Oak Room  
20 Joe Kennedy Boulevard  
Statesboro, GA 30458**

**December 7, 2021  
9:00 a.m.**

**Committee Members**

Miki Thomaston, Chair  
Tim Lowe, Vice Chair  
Nancy Addison  
Joe Hatfield  
Duncan Johnson  
Bill Jones  
Rob Leebern  
Bodine Sinyard  
Dee Yancey, Board Chair, Ex-officio

**Board Members**

William Bagwell  
Dwight Davis  
Randy Dellinger  
Patrick Denney  
Dwight Evans  
Ray Lambert  
Billy New

**Guests**

Russell Kent, Public  
John D'Andrea, Georgia Natural Resources Foundation  
Ronny Just, Georgia Power  
Lyndy Saparow, Georgia Natural Resources Foundation

**Staff Members**

Mark Williams, Commissioner  
Walter Rabon  
Kyle Pearson  
Cathy Barnette  
Artica Gaston  
Thomas Barnard  
Taylor Brown  
Jeff Cown  
Steve Friedman  
Doug Haymans  
Ted Will  
Bill Donohue  
James Hamilton  
Brenda McMillian  
  
Richard Dunn, Director  
John Eunice  
Jac Capp  
Karen Hays  
Chuck Mueller  
Laura Williams

The December 7, 2021 meeting of the Coastal Resources Committee was called to order by Dee Yancey, Chairman of the Board of Natural Resources.

Chairman Yancey called on Kathy Knowlton, Marine Fisheries, for a briefing on proposed amendments to the Rules of Saltwater Fishing Regulations, Chapter 391-2-4.

Ms. Knowlton stated the Coastal Resources Division is proposing to amend the Saltwater Fishing Regulations to allow for the landing of blue marlin, white marlin, and sailfish, in Georgia for the first time in 20 years. She further stated the harvest of these species is tightly controlled by regulation of the National Marine Fisheries Service, Highly Migratory Species office. She added that anglers who land billfish in Georgia must be in full compliance with those federal regulations as well as possess a valid Georgia recreational fishing license.

Ms. Knowlton stated in the 1980s, billfish were overfished throughout coastal range; in 1988, there was no commercial harvest; and, in 2001, Georgia prohibited harvest. She further stated in 2006, highly restrictive federal regulations included 250 fish combined annual landings for Blue and White Marlin across Atlantic and Gulf Coasts; permitting, reporting and gear requirements; minimum sizes (Blue: 99", White 66" and Sails 63"); and it applies to all vessels unless state regulations are more restrictive.

Ms. Knowlton stated in 2020 the Federal Billfish Permits issued in North Carolina were 349 for Charter/Headboat and 1,436 for Angling; in South Carolina there were 122 for Charter/Headboat and 518 for Angling; in Georgia there were 27 for Charter/Headboat and 96 for Angling; and in Florida there were 754 for Charter/Headboat and 4,453 for Angling.

Ms. Knowlton stated the proposed amendments will include definitions; seasons, daily creel and possession limits, and minimum and maximum size limits; and possession and landing specifications. She further stated these amendments would allow for landing billfish in Georgia so long as all applicable federal regulations regarding their harvest are adhered to.

Ms. Knowlton stated the public notice of written comment period would begin on December 8, 2021, and close on January 11, 2022. She further stated the proposed amendments would require board action at the January 28, 2022 board meeting and would be implemented on March 1, 2022.

Chairman Yancey called on Doug Haymans, Director of the Coastal Resources Division.

Director Haymans stated that effective December 31, 2021, Mr. Chad Barrow's first term on the Coastal Marshlands Protection and Shore Protection Committees expires. He further stated Mr. Barrow has indicated to staff that he is interested in re-appointment. He added that Mr. Barrow has shown to be a valuable, consistent member of the CMPC and SPC. He further added that CRD staff, in consultation with the Coastal Committee chair, recommend reappointment of Mr. Barrow, and, if reappointed, his second term would be effective January 1, 2022, and extend to December 31, 2025.

A motion was made by Mr. Lowe, seconded by Ms. Addison, and carried unanimously that the Committee recommends the Board approve the reappointment of Mr. Chad Barrow to the Coastal Marshlands Protection and Shoreland Protection Committees.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.