

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

December 2, 2009

Attending:

Board Members

Bill Carruth, Chairman
Bill Archer
Earl Barrs
Dennis Billew
Gene Bishop
Jenny Lynn Bradley
Warren Budd
Joe Hatfield
Walter Hudson
Mabel Jenkins
Phyllis Johnson
Ray Lambert
Loyce Turner
Jim Tysinger
Jim Walters
Philip Watt
Tom Wheeler

Visitors

Kelly Jordan, Arabia Mountain
Reid Harris & Family, St. Simons Island
Bryan Tolar, Georgia Agribusiness Council
Ronny Just, Georgia Power
Brett Fleck, Georgia Power
Milton Jones, Columbus, Georgia
Bill Tinkler
Fred & Sarita Marland
Brice Rado
Donald A. Kenagy
Ashley Huring, McGuire Woods
Scott Tanner, Joe Tanner & Associates

Staff Members

Chris Clark
Allen Barnes
Paul Burkhalter
Todd Holbrook
Spud Woodward
Dan Forster
Becky Kelley
Marlin Gottschalk
Dave Crass
Steve Friedman
Terry West
Jim Ussery
Doralyn Kirkland
Emily Hitchcock
Lauren Curry
Mike Spencer
Walter Rabon
Megan Gray
Paul Nelson
Homer Bryson
Connie Buck
John Martin
Jeff Weaver
Mary Ann Evans
Hellen Harris

The December 2, 2009 meeting of the Board of Natural Resources was called to order by Chairman Bill Carruth. Chairman Carruth called for a motion to approve the minutes of the October meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Walters, seconded by Mrs. Johnson and carried unanimously that the Board approve the minutes of the October 2009 meeting.

Chairman Carruth called on Chris Clark, Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), for the Commissioner's Report.

Commissioner Clark stated that he would like to turn the meeting back over to the Chairman and Vice Chairman Jenny Lynn Bradley for presentation of the 2009 Rock Howard Award.

Chairman Carruth provided background on the Rock Howard Award, stating that it was given annually to an individual who has made great contributions in support of the mission of DNR, which is to manage, guide and promote the wise use of the state's natural, historical and recreational resources to the benefit of Georgia's present and future generations. He further stated that the award was named for the late Rock Howard, who was the first director of the Environmental Protection Division, created by Governor Jimmy Carter in 1972.

Chairman Carruth called on Jenny Lynn Bradley for comments. Mrs. Bradley stated that she had nominated Mr. Reid Harris for the Rock Howard Award after reading his book, *And the Coastlands Wait*. She further stated that the book showed the path that Mr. Harris took with tenacity, perseverance and personal sacrifice to be the author of the Coastal Marshlands Protection Act in 1970. She added that the fact that the legislation passed at all was a minor miracle, but the effects on Georgia's coast over the last 40 years are a major miracle.

Mrs. Bradley stated that all Georgians thank Mr. Harris with a huge debt of gratitude for his efforts on this issue.

At this time, the Rock Howard Award was presented to Mr. Harris, who thanked the Board and stated that Rock Howard was one of his heroes and that he was very grateful to receive the award bearing his name. Mr. Harris also thanked several individuals who had helped him to see the Coastal Marshlands Protection Act come to fruition.

Commissioner Clark stated that he would like to congratulate Terry West, Acting Assistant Director of the Wildlife Resources Division (WRD), on being elected President of National Association of State Boating Law Administrators, which represents recreational boating authorities in all 50 states that develops public policy for recreational boating safety.

Commissioner Clark updated the Board on the current budget situation, stating that it was part of the presentation given to the Governor and Senate Appropriations Committee, as well as to the General Assembly members present at the Legislative Listening Session at Unicoi State Park. (PowerPoint presentation attached hereto and made a part hereof).

Commissioner Clark referenced the DNR Capital Outlay Status Report for November and the FY-2010 Budget, Revenue and Expense Comparison through October that were in the Board package. He also referenced the Commissioner's Activity Report that had been handed out, and stated that the Weekly Updates had been sent via e-mail each week.

Commissioner Clark briefed the Board on Weekend for Wildlife in February and encouraged their participation.

Chairman Carruth called on Loyce Turner, Chairman of the Parks, Recreation and Historic Sites Committee.

A motion was made by Dr. Turner, seconded by Mr. Hatfield and carried unanimously that the Board amend the Intergovernmental Agreement to transition seven state park golf courses into the agreement and to approve the concept of continuing to collaborate with NGMA on the outsourcing effort and ultimately on the operation of the lodges and golf courses.

A motion was made by Dr. Turner, seconded by Mrs. Johnson that the Board adopt the Resolution to approve an Intergovernmental Agreement with Gordon County for Resaca Battlefield Historic Site. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part hereof)

Chairman Carruth called on Warren Budd, Chairman of the Land Acquisition Committee.

A motion was made by Mr. Budd, seconded by Mr. Barrs to grant a one-year Rental Agreement by the State Properties Commission to provide housing to tenants in exchange for providing custodial/law enforcement patrols at Sprewell Bluff State Park and Natural Area, Upson, Meriwether, and Talbot Counties and at Crockford Pigeon Mountain Wildlife Management Area, Walker County.

Discussion ensued.

A motion was made by Mr. Walters, seconded by Mr. Barrs and carried unanimously that the Board table the granting of a one-year Rental Agreement by the State Properties Commission to provide housing to tenants in exchange for providing custodial/law enforcement patrols at Sprewell Bluff State Park and Natural Area, Upson,

Meriwether, and Talbot Counties and at Crockford Pigeon Mountain Wildlife Management Area, Walker County until the January meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Budd, seconded by Dr. Turner and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to grant a one-year Lease Agreement with the option to renew two times by the State Properties Commission and a long-term Lease by the General Assembly to the City of Fargo for use of the Administration Building, Stephen C. Foster State Park, Clinch County. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part hereof)

Mr. Budd stated that before giving the motion for the next item, he would like to call on Commissioner Clark for comments.

Commissioner Clark stated that he would like to thank the board for the debate and conversations about the acquisition of the 63 acres in the Panola Mountain State Conservation Park. He further stated that he feels that this acquisition is an opportunity to reinvest in DNR's facilities so that revenues will increase. He added that this particular park serves a very large population in the metro-Atlanta area, and greatly impacts attendance in parks in other areas of the state.

Commissioner Clark stated that over the past five years, Panola Mountain State Conservation Park has averaged 170,000 visitors per year. He further stated that this is the most diverse park as far as attendance. He added that since the trail had been opened two years ago, park revenue has increased 70 percent. He further added that in the future, the goal is to link thousands of acres of public and quasi-public lands in DeKalb, Rockdale and Henry counties with camp sites established in Panola Mountain State Park.

Commissioner Clark stated that private donations of \$100,000 had been promised for this project, and that he hoped to receive even more in the coming months. He added that he appreciated the private sector's stepping up to help with this acquisition.

Commissioner Clark stated that he had confirmed that DNR will be allowed to keep \$500,000 Federal funds until April and that the option to acquire the property expires in February.

Discussion ensued.

A motion was made by Mr. Budd, seconded by Mr. Hudson and carried with dissenting votes by Mr. Hatfield and Mr. Lambert that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval for acquisition (purchase) of 63± acres of real property, Panola Mountain State Conservation Park, McBride Tract, Rockdale County, contingent upon raising a

minimum of \$100,000 in private funds. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part hereof)

Chairman Carruth called on Jim Walters, Chairman of the Nominating Committee for Board Officers for 2010.

Mr. Walters stated that the Committee met via telephone conference call and would like to present the following slate of Officers for the Board of Natural Resources for 2010: Jenny Lynn Bradley, Chairman; Earl Barrs, Vice Chairman; and Warren Budd, Secretary. He further stated that these nominees would be voted on at the January meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Bill Carruth, Chairman

ATTEST:

Earl D. Barrs, Secretary