

Minutes
Board of Natural Resources
Middle Georgia College
Alderman Hall
1100 Second Street, S. E.
Cochran, GA 31014

October 26, 2011

Attending:

Board Members

Earl Barrs, Chairman
Dennis Billew
Warren Budd
Bill Carruth
Joe Hatfield
Duncan Johnson
Phyllis Johnson
Ray Lambert
Rob Leebern
Aaron McWhorter
Mark Smith
Loyce Turner
Jim Walters
Philip Watt
Philip Wilheit
Steven Woodruff

Staff Members

Mark Williams
Todd Holbrook
Homer Bryson
Spud Woodward
Dave Crass
Emily Hitchcock
Steve Friedman
Terry West
Lauren Curry
Jac Capp
Mark Smith
Walter Rabon
Mary Ann Evans

Visitors

Ronny Just, Georgia Power
Cliff Avant, Mayor, City of Cochran
Susan Osler, Cochran Better Hometown
Kathryn Fisher, Cochran Chamber of Commerce
Charlotte Pipkin, Bleckley County Board of Education
Doug Fulle, Oglethorpe Power
Mark Woodall, Sierra Club
Pamela Flores, Raccoon Hogg Community Development Corporation

The October 26, 2011 meeting of the Board of Natural Resources was called to order by Chairman Earl Barrs.

Chairman Barrs called on Mayor Cliff Avant, City of Cochran, who welcomed the Board and staff and stated that he was pleased that the Board had chosen to have their meeting in Cochran and invited the Board members to return anytime.

Chairman Barrs called on Kathryn Fisher, Chamber of Commerce, who welcomed the Board and staff and thanked them for their service to the State of Georgia.

Chairman Barrs called on Dr. Mike Stoy, President of Middle Georgia College, who welcomed the Board and staff and thanked them for choosing Middle Georgia College as the facility for the Board meeting.

Chairman Barrs thanked the City of Cochran and Middle Georgia College for being such good hosts during the Board's visit.

Chairman Barrs called on Charlotte Pipkin, Bleckley County Board of Education, who delivered the time of inspiration and reflection.

After the time of inspiration and reflection, Chairman Barrs called the Committees to order. At the conclusion of the Committee meetings, Chairman Barrs called the Board back to order.

Chairman Barrs called for a motion to approve the minutes from the September 2011 meeting.

A motion was made by Dr. Watt, seconded by Mr. Walters and carried unanimously that the Board approve the minutes of the September 2011 meeting.

Chairman Barrs called on Mark Williams, Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), for comments.

Commissioner Williams thanked Chairman Barrs for hosting the Board in Cochran and gave an update on the ongoing budget and legislative process. He also gave an update on the fishkill in the Ogeechee River and stated that 158,000 bluegill, 175,000 redbreast and 500 largemouth bass have been restocked in the river.

Commissioner Williams updated the Board on the successful bear season in North and South Georgia, and gave an update on deer season in those areas.

Commissioner Williams noted that the Capital Outlay Report for October and the Weekly Updates were included in the Board package.

Commissioner Williams called on Emily Hitchcock, Executive Counsel, to present an action item to redirect \$1,000,000.00 from DNR 115 (Lake Lanier Islands Amphitheater) to DNR 114 (major repairs and maintenance statewide).

Ms. Hitchcock stated that the purpose of the redirection of funds was to provide renovations at the Lodge at Unicoi State Park. She further stated that based on a detailed engineering and architectural evaluation of the Unicoi Lodge, the Engineering & Construction Unit estimates that a competent renovation of the facility will cost approximately \$7.87M, and that DNR currently has \$3.15M programmed in Fiscal Year 2012 for this work. She added that the additional \$1M will provide for renovation of additional lodge rooms.

Ms. Hitchcock stated that she would like to request that the Board approve the redirect.

A motion was made by Mr. Walters, seconded by Mr. Hatfield and carried unanimously that the Board approve the redirection of \$1,000,000.00 from DNR 115 (Lake Lanier Islands Amphitheater) to DNR 114 (major repairs and maintenance statewide) to provide additional funds for the renovation of the Lodge at Unicoi State Park.

Commissioner Williams called on Terry West, Assistant Director of Wildlife Resources Division (WRD), for an update.

Mr. West briefed the Board on bear season and record kills in the past. He gave a briefing on vessel registration transfer to the Department of Revenue, and on the digital communication contract. He also gave an update on Weekend for Wildlife, which will be held February 3 – 4, 2012 at the Cloister.

Chairman Barrs called on Phyllis Johnson, Chairman of the Coastal Committee.

A motion was made by Mrs. Johnson, seconded by Dr. Turner and carried unanimously that the Board approve the appointment of Donald Richard “Rick” Gardner to the Coastal Marshlands Protection Committee and Shore Protection Committees for a four-year term to be effective January 1, 2012.

Chairman Barrs appointed the following individuals to serve on the Nominating Committee for the 2012 Board of Natural Resources Officers: Loyce Turner, Chairman; Steven Woodruff; Philip Wilheit; Phyllis Johnson; and Duncan Johnson.

Chairman Barrs called on Pamela Flores, Raccoon Hogg Community Development Corporation, to address the Board.

Ms. Flores handed out a questionnaire, a document regarding the establishment of the Raccoon Hogg Community Development Corporation, and a proposed Resolution to create a Joint Study Committee on the Preservation of Sapelo Island, and asked that the Board members complete the questionnaire before she spoke further.

Chairman Barrs stated that the Board would not complete at that time the questionnaire that had just been given to them, and requested Ms. Flores to address the Board with her concerns.

Ms. Flores stated that she would like to request to address the Board on Committee Day at the December meeting.

Chairman Barrs stated that she would be able to do so.

Ms. Flores addressed the Board regarding her concerns for Sapelo Island. Ms. Flores requested that the Board establish a sub-committee to meet on Sapelo Island to consider the concerns she raised and other issues.

Ms. Flores confirmed that her organization does not represent the island residents.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Earl D. Barrs, Chairman

ATTEST:

Mabel C. Jenkins, Secretary