

Minutes
Board Meeting
Lake Blackshear Resort
2459-H U. S. Highway 280 West
Ballroom C
Cordele, GA 31015

December 5, 2012

Attending:

Board Members

Philip Watt, Chairman
Philip Wilheit, Secretary
William Bagwell
Dennis Billew
Joe Hatfield
Mabel Jenkins
Duncan Johnson
Phyllis Johnson
Ray Lambert
Aaron McWhorter
Mark Mobley
Mark Smith
Loyce Turner
Steven Woodruff

Staff Members

Mark Williams
Jud Turner
Homer Bryson
Spud Woodward
Dan Forster
Becky Kelley
Dave Crass
Kyle Pearson
Steve Friedman
Lauren Curry
Mark Whitney
Eddie Henderson
Randall Meeks
Sid Cooper
Mary Ann Evans

Visitors

Maurice Raines, Upson County Commission Chairman
Steve Hudson, Upson County Commissioner
Jim Wheelless, Upson County Manager
Bill Donohue, North Georgia Mountains Authority

The December 5, 2012 meeting of the Board of Natural Resources was called to order by Chairman Philip Watt.

Chairman Watt called for a motion to approve the minutes of the October 2012 meeting.

A motion was made by Mrs. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Bagwell and carried unanimously that the Board approve the minutes of the October 2012 meeting.

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

Commissioner Williams stated that he would like to thank Bob Johnson, General Manager of Lake Blackshear Resort, and his staff and Bill Donohue, Executive Director of the North Georgia Mountains Authority, for all their efforts in making the Board meeting such a success.

Commissioner Williams gave an update on the DNR Foundation Board, stating that Ben Stowers is the new Executive Director, Steve Levetan is the new Chairman, Glenn Wilkins is the Vice Chairman, and Mike Blanton is the Secretary-Treasurer. He further stated that he looked forward to working with the new leadership at the Foundation.

Commissioner Williams called on Lauren Curry, Director of Public and Governmental Affairs, who gave a brief outline of possible DNR legislation for the upcoming 2013 General Assembly.

Commissioner Williams called on Dave Crass, Director of the Historic Preservation Division (HPD), for comments.

Dr. Crass gave an update on the status of the augmented reality project at Camp Lawton, the tax incentive workshop with Historic Savannah Foundation, Section 106 workshop with National Park Service to facilitate local government participation in the federal review process, and planning with the Georgia Trust for the Statewide Historic Preservation Conference to be held in Milledgeville.

Commissioner Williams called on Becky Kelley, Director of Parks, Recreation & Historic Sites Division (PRHSD), for comments.

Director Kelley called on Sid Cooper, Assistant Manager of Georgia Veterans State Park, who welcomed everyone and gave background information about the park and surrounding area.

Director Kelley gave an update on the transition of Unicoi Lodge and Amicalola Falls Lodge to the North Georgia Mountains Authority and Coral Hospitality, thanking Bill Donohue for the part NGMA played in making the transition of both facilities as easy as possible. She called on Mr. Donohue, who gave a brief update on the changeover.

Director Kelley gave an update on conservation deer hunts and other activities on state parks and thanked the Wildlife Resources Division for their help with the hunts, the move to Panola Mountain State Park and Red Top Mountain State Park of the Atlanta-office staff, the Friends of Georgia State Parks Conference in February which will include the PRHSD management team, the First Day Hike, and the Childhood Obesity campaign.

Commissioner Williams called on Jud Turner, Director of Environmental Protection Division (EPD), for comments.

Director Turner gave an update on possible EPD legislation for the 2013 General Assembly, the Flint River Drought Protection Act and current water level, and the status of the Water Councils regarding appointments and reappointments.

Discussion ensued.

Chairman Watt 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 Stan Humphries to the Coastal Marshlands Protection Committee and the Shore Protection Committee to be effective January 1, 2013.

Chairman Watt called on Loyce Turner, Chairman of the Land Acquisition Committee.

A motion was made by Dr. Turner, seconded by Mr. Johnson and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval for the acquisition (purchase) of 810± acres of real property, Flat Tub Wildlife Management Area, Red Stripe Tract Phase I, via The Conservation Fund, Jeff Davis County. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part hereof)

A motion was made by Dr. Turner, seconded by Mr. Woodruff and carried with one no vote by Mrs. Jenkins that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval for the acquisition (purchase) of 5,102± acres of real property, Altamaha River-Penholoway Swamp, Boyles Island Tract Phase I, via The Nature Conservancy, Wayne County. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part hereof)

A motion was made by Dr. Turner, seconded by Mr. Johnson and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval for granting a revocable license and permanent easement by the State Properties Commission and the General Assembly for the purpose of installing, maintaining, and operating fiber optic cables providing internet service to Amicalola Falls State Park, Windstream Standard, LLC, 0.98± acres, Dawson County. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part hereof)

Before the motion on the next item, Dr. Turner recognized Maurice Raines, Chairman of the Upson County Commissioners; Steve Hudson, Upson County Commissioner; and Jim Wheless, Upson County Manager. Chairman Raines voiced their support of the Intergovernmental Agreement and thanked the Board for their efforts.

A motion was made by Dr. Turner, seconded by Mr. Johnson and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to enter into a 50-year Intergovernmental Agreement between the Department of Natural Resources and Upson County for management of 1187.4± acres, Sprewell Bluff State Park, Upson County.

Chairman Watt called on Phyllis Johnson, Chairman of the Nominating Committee to propose a slate of Officers of the Board for 2013.

Mrs. Johnson stated that she served as Chairman of the Nominating Committee for Officers for 2013, and that the other members of the Nominating Committee were Loyce Turner, Aaron McWhorter, Mark Mobley and William Bagwell.

Mrs. Johnson stated that the Nominating Committee met via conference call November 21, 2012, and that the unanimous decision was to propose a slate of officers for the 2013 year as follows: Rob Leebern, Chairman; Philip Wilheit, Jr., Vice Chairman; and Ray Lambert, Secretary. She further stated that this slate of officers will be voted on at the January 23, 2013 meeting.

Chairman Watt thanked Bob Johnson, Bill Donohue, Ronnie Phillips, Duncan Johnson, and Becky Kelley and the State Parks staff for all their hard work to make the Board meeting such a success. He also thanked the Friends of Georgia State Parks and the Upson County Commissioners for their support.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Philip C. Watt, Chairman

ATTEST:

Philip A. Wilheit, Jr., Secretary