

Minutes
Board of Natural Resources
Amicalola Falls Lodge
Oak Hall Ballroom
418 Amicalola Falls Lodge Road
Dawsonville, GA 30534

September 23, 2014

Attending:

Board Members

Philip Wilheit, Chairman
Ray Lambert, Vice Chairman
William Bagwell, Secretary
Nancy Addison
Dwight Evans
Bill Jones
Rob Leebern
Aaron McWhorter
Mark Mobley
Mike Phelps
Bodine Sinyard
Brother Stewart
Philip Watt
Dee Yancey

Staff Members

Mark Williams
Jud Turner
Homer Bryson
Becky Kelley
Steve Friedman
Kyle Pearson
Cathy Barnette
Taylor Brown
Mary Kathryn Yearta
Mary Walker
Wally Woods
Jeff Weaver
Stephen Adams
John Martin
Mark Whitney
Brooks Varnell

Visitors

Ronny Just, Georgia Power
Austin Hackney, Home Builders Association of Georgia

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The September 23, 2014 meeting of the Board of Natural Resources was called to order by Chairman Philip Wilheit.

Chairman Wilheit introduced Chris Clark, President and CEO of the Georgia Chamber of Commerce, to deliver an inspirational message.

Chairman Wilheit adjourned the Board meeting to begin the Committee meetings.

The meeting of the Board of Natural Resources was called to order by Chairman Wilheit.

Chairman Wilheit called for a motion to approve the minutes of the August 2014 Board meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Jones, seconded by Mr. Sinyard and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the August 2014 Board meeting.

Chairman Wilheit called on Mark Williams, Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources for his report.

Commissioner Williams thanked Bill Donahue, the North Georgia Mountains Authority and all the staff at Amicalola State Park for putting the meeting together and being such gracious hosts.

Commissioner Williams presented John Martin, Director of IT, with an award the IT Department received from the Georgia Digital Government Summit for the Georgia Outdoors Map.

Commissioner Williams gave an update on hunting season. He informed the Board that dove season began the first weekend in September and during that weekend 3,000 hunters were checked and 9,192 birds were killed. He added that archery hunting for deer began on September 13 and was off to a great start.

Commissioner Williams stated he was very proud of the Historic Preservation Division and their work on the Preservation Tax Incentives Program this year. He further stated in 2014 there are 92 projects representative of \$85 million in new investments.

Commissioner Williams stated the Department had submitted the budget request to the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget. He presented the budget proposal to the Board.

Commissioner Williams stated the only agency legislation the Department is pursuing for the upcoming legislative session is for the electronic reporting of wildlife harvest. He further stated technologies have become available that provide real-time, simplified reporting of harvested game animals by hunters. He added this change will make it easier for the Department to record harvested game, as well as create a much more customer friendly and adaptable recording system.

Commissioner Williams updated the Board on the feral hog issue involving Georgia farmers. He stated beginning in October, DNR will be partnering with the Department of Agriculture to pair up hunters who are looking for additional ways to hunt with farmers who need help killing the hogs causing the damage.

Commissioner Williams informed the Board that "Your State Park Day" is September 27th and Coastfest is October 4th. He encouraged the Board members to attend these events.

Commissioner Williams called on Jud Turner, Director of the Environmental Protection Division, for his report.

Director Turner updated the Board on Fort Gillem; the Tired Creek buffer case; the Supreme Court case with the State of Florida; and the Greenhouse Gases rule regarding existing power plants.

Commissioner Williams called on Becky Kelley, Director of the Parks, Recreation and Historic Sites Division, for her report.

Director Kelley updated the Board on “Your State Parks Day”; the Hardman Farm; the Recreation Trail Grant Program; the Camp Lawton Grand Opening on October 7th; and the Fort King George acquisition of the Bluestein Tract.

Director Kelley gave a presentation entitled the “State of State Parks.”

Commissioner Williams called on Lt. Col. Jeff Weaver to give an update on the Law Enforcement Division.

Lt. Col. Weaver updated the Board on the Labor Day boating weekend; the opening of dove season; and the drowning recovery on Lake Lanier.

Commissioner Williams called on Mark Whitney, Assistant Director of the Wildlife Resources Division, to update the Board.

Mr. Whitney updated the Board on coyotes; the deer peak activity map; National Hunting and Fishing Day on September 27th; wildlife license tags; and the Georgia aster.

Commissioner Williams stated there being no further business, his report was concluded.

Chairman Wilheit called on William Bagwell, Chairman of the Land Acquisition Committee, for his report.

A motion was made by Mr. Bagwell, seconded by Mr. Jones and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval to acquire (purchase) 2.12± acres of real property, Fort King George Historic Site, Bluestein Tract, McIntosh County. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part thereof)

A motion was made by Mr. Bagwell, seconded by Ms. Addison and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval to acquire (purchase) 210± acres of real property, Dawson Forest Wildlife Management Area, Noblin Tract, Dawson County. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part thereof)

A motion was made by Mr. Bagwell seconded by Mr. Evans and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval to acquire (purchase) 1.03± acres by the State Properties Commission and the General Assembly to Coastal Electric Membership Corporation for the purpose of constructing, operating and maintaining underground distribution lines for a new Maintenance Facility within the Townsend Wildlife Management Area, McIntosh County. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part thereof)

Mr. Bagwell stated that it had been noticed on the agenda that the Land Acquisition Committee would hold an Executive Session at the conclusion of the public meeting, and he invited all Board Members to attend.

Mr. Lambert stated Weekend for Wildlife would be held February 6-7, 2015. He urged all Board members to attend.

Mr. Bagwell called for a motion for the Land Acquisition Committee to go into Executive Session.

A motion was made by Mr. Leebern seconded by Mr. Yancey and carried unanimously by Mr. Bagwell, Mr. Phelps, Mr. Evans, and Mr. Jones that the Land Acquisition Committee go into Executive Session in accordance with the O.C.G.A. §50-14-3(b)(1)(B), in order to discuss the authorization of negotiations to purchase property. (Affidavit attached hereto and made a part hereof)

At the conclusion of the Land Acquisition Committee Executive Session, Mr. Bagwell adjourned the Executive Session.

Chairman Wilheit called the Board of Natural Resources to order.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

ATTEST:

Philip A. Wilheit, Jr., Chairman

William A. Bagwell, Jr., Secretary

Minutes
Law Enforcement Committee
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Attending:

Committee Members

Philip Watt, Chairman
Nancy Addison
William Bagwell
Rob Leebern
Mark Mobley
Mike Phelps
Bodine Sinyard
Philip Wilheit, Board Chair, ex-officio

Board Members

Dwight Evans
Bill Jones
Ray Lambert
Aaron McWhorter
Brother Stewart
Dee Yancey

Visitors

Ronny Just, Georgia Power
Austin Hackney, Home Builders Association of Georgia

Staff Members

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The September 23, 2014 meeting of the Law Enforcement Committee was called to order by Chairman Philip Wilheit.

Chairman Wilheit called on Dr. Philip Watt, Chairman of the Law Enforcement Committee, who called on RFC Brooks Varnell.

RFC Varnell gave an informative presentation on the Law Enforcement Division Canine Unit.

Discussion ensued concerning the training of the canines.

Chairman Watt stated following the Board meeting RFC Varnell would be conducting a demonstration with his canine partner Rock.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

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The September 23, 2014 Land Acquisition Committee was called to order by Chairman Philip Wilheit.

Chairman Wilheit called on William Bagwell, Chairman of the Land Acquisition Committee, who called on Steve Friedman, Chief of Real Estate.

Mr. Friedman stated the first item for consideration would be the acquisition of 2.12± acres of real property, Fort King Georgia Historic Site, Bluestein Tract.

Mr. Friedman stated the Bluestein Tract is a small but valued tract for the Fort King George Historic Site. He further stated it adjoins the historic site and is likely to possess historical artifacts and graves from a Spanish mission complex. He added the property has a 2,028 sq. ft. storage building which PRHSD will be able to utilize.

Mr. Friedman stated Mr. Bluestein will sell the tract to the Department for \$250,000. He further stated funds for the acquisition will come from DNR Bond 120.

Mr. Friedman stated he would request the Committee recommend that the Board approve the item as presented.

A motion was made by Mr. Evans, seconded by Mr. Yancey and carried unanimously that the Committee recommend that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval to acquire (purchase) 2.12± acres of real property, Fort King George Historic Site, Bluestein Tract, McIntosh County, as presented.

Mr. Friedman stated the next item for consideration would be the acquisition of 210± acres of real property at the Dawson Forest Wildlife Management Area known as the Noblin Tract.

Mr. Friedman stated the Noblin Tract will provide additional protection along Amicalola Creek and its tributaries. He further stated the tract is an inholding within the state owned 15,000 acres Dawson Forest Wildlife Management Area and that acquiring it will connect portions of the WMA that are currently separated. He added the acquisition will make management more efficient and improve the public's ability to access it.

Mr. Friedman stated the purchase price of the tract is \$1,075,000 and funds to purchase the tract will come from private donations, federal and state sources.

Mr. Friedman stated he would request the Committee recommend that the Board approve the item as presented.

A motion was made by Mr. Leebern, seconded by Mr. Phelps and carried unanimously that the Committee recommend that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek

State Properties Commission to acquire (purchase) 210± acres of real property, Dawson Forest Wildlife Management Area, Noblin Tract, Dawson County, as presented.

Mr. Friedman stated the final item for consideration would be the granting of a revocable license and permanent easement of 1.03± by the State Properties Commission and the General Assembly to Coastal Electric Membership Corporation for the purpose of constructing, operating, and maintaining underground distribution lines for a new Maintenance Facility within the Townsend Wildlife Management Area.

Mr. Friedman stated the WMA currently has no maintenance facility to store equipment or supplies. He further stated since the revocable license and permanent easement will benefit the Department, the Department recommends that the revocable license be granted at no cost.

Mr. Friedman stated he would request the Committee recommend that Board approve the item as presented.

A motion was made by Mr. Jones, seconded by Mr. Evans and carried unanimously that the Committee recommend that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval to grant a revocable license and permanent easement of 1.03± acres by the State Properties Commission and the General Assembly to Coastal Electric Membership Corporation for the purpose of constructing, operating and maintaining underground distribution lines for a new Maintenance Facility within the Townsend Wildlife Management Area, McIntosh County, as presented.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.