

Minutes
Coastal Committee
2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, S. E.
Suite 1252 East Tower
Atlanta, GA 30334

September 22, 2009

Attending:

Committee Members

Tom Wheeler, Chairman
Bill Archer
Gene Bishop
Jenny Lynn Bradley
Mabel Jenkins
Bob Rutland
Loyce Turner
Jim Walters
Bill Carruth, Board Chairman, ex-officio

Board Members

David Allen
Earl Barrs
Warren Budd
Joe Hatfield
Ray Lambert
Jim Tysinger

Visitors

Ron Bradford, Music Visions
Andrew Schock, The Conservation Fund
Will Wingate, The Georgia Conservancy
Walter Jones, Morris News Service
Shana Udvardy, Georgia Conservancy
Shirl Parsons, Georgia Wildlife Federation
Doug Fulle, Oglethorpe Power Corporation
Mike Giles, Georgia Poultry Federation
Aaron Estis, The Estis Group
Lee Lemke, Georgia Mining Association
Abit Massey, Georgia Poultry Federation
Jackie Jackson Teel, Savannah Metro Planning Commission

Staff Members

Chris Clark
Carol Couch
Paul Burkhalter
Todd Holbrook
Susan Shipman
Dan Forster
Becky Kelley
Marlin Gottschalk
Ray Luce
Dave Crass
Jill Andrews
Susan Reeves
Brad Gane
Steve Friedman
Jennifer Kaduck
Linda MacGregor
Lauren Curry
Emily Hitchcock
Jeff Weaver
Homer Bryson
Terry West
Doralyn Kirkland
Jim Ussery
Lon Revall
Bill Donohue
Ronnie Phillips
Mary Ann Evans
Yolanda Fanning

The September 22, 2009 meeting of the Coastal Committee was called to order by Board Chairman Bill Carruth. Chairman Carruth called on Tom Wheeler, Chairman of the Coastal Committee.

Mr. Wheeler called on Susan Shipman, Director of Coastal Resources Division (CRD). Ms. Shipman stated that the first item was for action on the proposed amendments to the Cycle XIII Coastal Incentive Grant Program Criteria, Chapter 391-2-5-.01 through 391-2-5-.18, and called on Jill Andrews, Operations Program Manager at CRD.

Ms. Andrews stated that Coastal Incentive Grant Program is the pass through funding mechanism for the Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) Coastal Management Program. She further stated that this program is funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) through the Coastal Zone Management Act. She added that the purpose of the grant program is to provide funds to projects that first and foremost support the mission of the program, which is to balance economic development in the coastal zone for the protection of the state's natural and cultural resources.

Ms. Andrews stated that the grant program also supports projects that are local and regional priority, as well as research. She further stated that each year the program allocates approximately 60% of its annual funding, which totals \$1,100,000, in the form of Coastal Incentive Grants. She added that projects are solicited through requests for proposals (RFP). She further added that within that RFP is a list of themes or funding priorities, which are established by the Coastal Advisory Council (CAC).

Ms. Andrews stated that the CAC is appointed by the Commissioner of DNR and comprised of representatives of local governments, academic, non-governmental organizations, state agencies, as well as private citizens. She further stated that each year the recommendation of the CAC is presented to the Board of Natural Resources for approval. She added that upon Board approval, an RFP will be issued and projects from local governments will be solicited within the 11-county coastal area. She further added that proposals will also be accepted from Regional Commissions within that area, state-affiliated education and research institutions, and other state agencies.

Ms. Andrews stated that the only caveat is that all projects must be physically located within or focus entirely on the coastal zone. She further stated that the types of projects typically funded through this grant program include projects for local and regional planning initiatives, stewardship education and outreach, research projects, as well as low-cost construction projects for public access.

Ms. Andrews stated that the 12th Cycle of the Coastal Incentive Grant program is ready to begin. She further stated that since 1998 the program has funded nearly 300 projects totaling \$12.6 million. She added that each project must leverage an additional

one-to-one match for their grant monies, and to date there are \$25 million projects in the coastal management program.

Ms. Andrews stated that the primary bulk of the funding in the past has gone to research institutions for research-type projects, but that more applications are beginning to come in from local governments doing on-the-ground management of resources, and that she hopes to see that trend continue.

Ms. Andrews introduced Susan Reeves, Grants Management Specialist, Ecological Services Section, to continue the presentation.

Ms. Reeves stated that part of the funds have been committed to multi-year projects that had begun last year or that would begin this year. She further stated that \$860,000 will be awarded to new applicants for next October.

Ms. Reeves stated that once the Board approves the Resolution regarding the grant program, the RFP will be issued in October, applications will be due in January 2010, a review process with an outside review panel will then occur, and once approval from NOAA is received next summer, DNR will contract with a successful applicant and their projects will begin October 2010.

Ms. Reeves stated that the CAC has made changes to the criteria, which involve four major areas: maximum funding amount, length of the project period, themes or funding priorities, and evaluation criteria used to score projects. She further stated that this year the maximum amount for grant awards will be \$100,000, which the applicants match one-to-one. She added that the maximum term for the grants will be 2-year projects.

Ms. Reeves stated that there are minor changes to the themes or funding priorities. She further stated that the final theme is more of a directed project, which allows them to tackle issues which are seen as important in a more specific way, such as the accumulation of wrack, which is dead marsh grass against docks and in areas of live marsh.

Ms. Reeves stated that the last section of the Rule contains the evaluation criteria, which are used to score the applications received. She further stated that both research and non-research applications are received. She added that a subcommittee of the CAC worked to correlate the two criteria, so that different types of proposals would compete on equal footing.

Ms. Reeves stated that minor text changes were made to ensure applicants clearly described how their projects will be useful to coastal management priorities. She further stated that she would request adoption of the Resolution that was in the board package.

Ms. Reeves stated that the numbering of the Rule had been revised and that an explanation had been placed in front of each Committee and Board member.

Discussion ensued.

A motion was made by Mrs. Bradley, seconded by Dr. Turner and carried unanimously that the Committee recommends that the Board adopt the Resolution regarding proposed amendments to the Cycle XIII Coastal Incentive Grant Program Criteria, Chapter 391-2-5-.01 through 391-2-5-.18. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part hereof)

Ms. Shipman called on Brad Gane, Assistant Division Director, Ecological Services Section, to present a briefing on the proposed amendments to the Coastal Marshlands Protection Regulations, Annual Marina Lease Rate Adjustment, Chapter 391-2-3-.04.

Mr. Gane stated that House Bill 170, which passed during the 2009 Legislative Session and signed by the Governor, amended the Coastal Marshlands Protection Act (CMPA), by establishing the annual rental fee for marina water bottoms leases at \$1,000.00 per acre. He further stated that it specified the method for lease areas to be calculated and also required Rules to be promulgated that would provide a basis for adjusting the rental rates annually.

Mr. Gane stated that the amendments to the law specify using a consumer price index or other federal index to adjust the rate, considering the effect of inflation or deflation on the annual rental rate. He further stated that the annual rate will be established each spring before invoicing marine operators or lease holders for the upcoming year.

Mr. Gane stated that a public hearing would be held in October and that he would be bringing the proposed amendments to the Board at the December meeting for action.

Discussion ensued.

Mrs. Shipman presented an update on the shrimping industry, the snapper-grouper issue, and CoastFest.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.