

Minutes

Coastal Committee

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

June 26, 2012

Attending:

Committee Members

Phyllis Johnson, Chairman
Mark Smith, Vice Chairman
Duncan Johnson
Aaron McWhorter
Loyce Turner
Jim Walters
Philip Wilheit
Rob Leebern, Acting Board Chairman, ex-officio

Board Members

William Bagwell
Dennis Billew
Joe Hatfield
Ray Lambert
Mark Mobley
Steven Woodruff

Visitors

Ronny Just, Georgia Power
Doug Fulle, Oglethorpe Power
Debbie Phillips, Georgia Industry Environmental Coalition
Phil Zinsmeister, Sierra Club
John Eberhart, Georgia Earth Alliance
Rebecca Lam, Environment Georgia
Jeanette Gayer, Environment Georgia
Madison Poche, Environment Georgia
Robin Osindel, Environment Georgia
Stefan Bugge, Environment Georgia
Scott Tanner, Joe Tanner & Associates

Staff Members

Mark Williams
Jud Turner
Todd Holbrook
Homer Bryson
Spud Woodward
Dan Forster
Becky Kelley
Dave Crass
Steve Friedman
Lauren Curry
Ben Stowers
Doug Haymans
John Bowers
Mike Harris
Richard Tanner
Jim Ussery
Doralyn Kirkland
Joshua Ellis
Zachary Harris
Kyle Pearson
Eddie Henderson
Steven Adams
Jac Capp
Paul Nelson
Leigh Burns
Mary Ann Evans
Hellen Harris

The June 26, 2012 meeting of the Coastal Committee was called to order by Acting Board Chairman Rob Leebern. Chairman Leebern called on Phyllis Johnson, Chairman of the Coastal Committee.

Mrs. Johnson called on Spud Woodward, Director, Coastal Resources Division, to present an action item.

Director Woodward stated that during the 2012 Legislative Session, the Georgia General Assembly passed Senate Bill 319, which Governor Deal subsequently signed into law May 2, 2012. He further stated that Senate Bill 319 amended the Coastal Marshlands Protection Act (CMPA) to allow occupancy of a live-aboard for 90 days during a calendar year. He added that Chapter 391-2-3 references the 30-day value in several locations and that the proposed amendment will change 30 to 90 in all of those locations.

Director Woodward stated that Senate Bill 319 also changed the definition of a live-aboard in the CMPA, the Protection of Tidewaters Act and the Right of Passage Act. He further stated that Chapter 391-2-3 includes a definition of live-aboard and that the proposed amendments will change this definition to be the same as in statute.

Director Woodward stated that because the proposed amendments are intended to harmonize statute and rule, they are considered a minimal change. He further stated that a minimal public participation plan was initiated and no public comment was received.

Director Woodward stated that he would like to request that the Committee recommend that the Board adopt the Resolution to approve the item as presented.

A motion was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Dr. Turner and carried unanimously that the Committee recommend that the Board adopt the Resolution to approve the proposed amendments to the Rules of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Coastal Marshlands Protection, Chapter 391-2-3, as presented. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part hereof)

Director Woodward called on Doug Haymans, Policy Coordinator, for a briefing on the proposed amendments to the Rules of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Saltwater Fishing Regulations, Chapter 391-2-4.

Mr. Haymans stated that during the 2012 Legislative Session, the Georgia General Assembly passed House Bill 869, which Governor Deal subsequently signed into law on May 2, 2012. He further stated that House Bill 869 amended O.C.G.A. Title 27 to move several aspects of saltwater fisheries management from statute to regulation. He added that the purpose of House Bill 869 is to allow the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) greater flexibility to manage saltwater fishing in a timely manner similar to the way hunting and freshwater fishing is currently managed. He further added that the proposed amendment effects this transition from statute to regulation, as intended by House Bill 869, by creating five new rules and amending three others.

Mr. Haymans stated that the proposed amendments will result in no changes to current recreational saltwater fishing regulations and only one change to current commercial saltwater fishing regulations. He further stated that this change is an increase in the quantity of live bait shrimp that may be transported via vehicle between commercial bait shrimp dealers from 50 quarts to 200 quarts. He added that in the interest of affording the regulated community ample opportunity for comment, a public hearing will be held on July 26, and that public comments will be taken until August 31.

Mr. Haymans stated that he plans to present the proposed amendments for action at the September meeting, and if approved, they will take effect January 1, 2013.

Discussion ensued.

Director Woodward gave an update on the following topics: (1) Federal emergency rule to allow limited harvest of red snapper; (2) formation of the Finfish Advisory Panel; (3) external grants (Clean Vessel Act, EPA Coastal Wetlands Grants).

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.