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**MINUTES**

**MEETING - AUGUST 13, 2019**

The meeting was changed to a conference call by Executive Director Mitch Attaway. Several Board members were not going to be able to attend due to unforeseen circumstances.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Fallin at 10:00AM. Mitch Attaway asked Robert Amos to give the invocation.

The following board members were present on the conference call: Chairman Harold Fallin, Board Members Kerry Van Moore, Drew Echols, Bob Martin and Jason Winters. Attending members of the Commission were Executive Director Mitch Attaway, Conservation Manager Robert Amos, Urban Program Manager Ben Ruzowicz, Rural Project Manager Ben Hyer, Resource Specialist Andrea Tuggle and Administrative Assistant Jerri Helbing. Other Attendees were Katie Sanders from GACD, Tansel Hudson and Tina Jerome from NRCS and Jeffery Harvey from Farm Bureau.

Mr. Attaway asked for approval of the minutes from the June 11, 2019 meeting. There was a motion by Bob Martin to approve, a second from Kerry Van Moore and they were approved unanimously.

**Executive Director’s Report** - Mitch Attaway stated there was no old business so he proceeded to the Personnel Report. He introduced Andrea Tuggle as the new Safety & Compliance Specialist for Jackson County. He introduced Jerri Helbing as the new Administrative Assistant. Mr. Attaway stated an offer has been extended to Alyssa Lamb as a Resource and Grant Specialist for the Athens Office to begin September 3rd. Mr. Attaway reported on the resignation of Jonathan Rutland, Ernie Babb and Will Jackson. Guerry Thomas will be retiring effective September 1st . Mr. Attaway stated there have been 2 promotions recently, Ben Hyer and Greg Walker are now the Rural Project Managers for Grant and Water Shed Programs. There are presently 2 positions being advertised: Erosion & Sediment Specialist and a Resource Specialist for Henry County.

**Financial Report** – Mr. Attaway reported that the Governor announced a 4 percent budget cut for the FY20 and a 6 percent cut for FY21. This equates to $87,000 in FY20 and $130,000 for FY21. Mr. Attaway will not cut salaries or new positions. He is having a special Budget Meeting with the GSWCC Mangers to come up with a realistic plan for budget cuts.

**New Business** – Mr. Attaway reported on the request from GACD for GSWCC to fund the Group Meetings at the rate of $41.00 per supervisor. A motion was made by Mr. Echols and seconded by Mr. Martin and the motion was passed.

**Conservation Report** – Conservation Manger Robert Amos announced there were 2 new appointed Supervisors, 12 reappointed Supervisors and 4 resignations, some of which were received at the last minute. A motion was made to approve these by Mr. Martin and seconded by Mr. Van Moore and the approval was unanimous. Mr. Amos also stated what a great job Andrea Tuggle is doing and what a big help she is to him.

**Urban Report** – Urban Program Manager Ben Ruzowicz reported that staff continue to work with Walton County and St. Mary’s to complete the MOA process. Mr. Ruzowicz stated there has been an issue with Trainer Roy McHaney and a recommendation has been made to decertify him by the Stakeholder Advisory Board. There was a motion by Mr. Fallin and a second by Mr. Martin to decertify. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Ruzowicz also stated the GSWCC review approximately 200-300 plans a month and none are over 35 days old. There are over 99,000 certification in the data base, some people have more than 1 certification. Mr. Ruzowicz presented 7 new trainers for approval. A motion for approval was made by Mr. Martin, seconded by Mr. Moore and it passed unanimously.

**Rural Report** – Rural Project Manager Ben Hyer announced WMP for Chickasawhatchee and Coosawatee River have been completed. GSCWW was awarded The Resource Conservation Activities grant from NRCS. This grant will host workshops, cover crop demo plots in the southern portion of the state, equaling $115,000. Mr. Hyer also reported the Secured Federal Grant Funding equals $1.4M and additional grants being applied for or in negotiations are $315,000. The watershed update stated 31 structures have been identified and received federal funding to complete an assessment, 17 structures will have assessments completed and 20 will receive an emergency action plan using state bond funds.

**GACD Update** - Vice President Roger Bowman stated Danny Hogan was inducted into the NACD Hall of Fame. GACD is going to conduct a financial survey of the Districts. The purpose is to see what their Conservation and Outreach needs are especially if they had an unlimited monetary source. Mr. Bowman also talked about the new supervisor training and how it will be beneficial for the established supervisors as well. GACD is going to participate in the Greater Georgia Guided Pollinators Census August 24th. Mr. Bowman reported they have implemented 6 active trappings for feral swine. The Annual Meeting is in the planning stage for early April near the Columbus area, more details TBA.

**NCRS Update** – State Conservationist Tansel Hudson stated that 100 percent of the animal mortality has been paid out for Hurricane Michael. NRCS wants to implement a NEW plan for natural disasters. They want to be quicker with relief and implement what they learned from Hurricane Michael. Tina Jerome would like to have a GSWCC representative at the September 4th Source Point Meeting being held at the State Office from 10:00AM -12:00PM. Mr. Attaway confirmed there would be a GSWCC member there.

Jeffrey Harvey from Farm Bureau stated that Hemp regulations are in place and that licenses should be issued by November. Also the metal tags on live stock are being replaced with RFID tags and should be in place by 2023.

The next board meeting is scheduled for October 15, 2019.

With no other business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 11:15AM.

Respectively Submitted by:

Jerri Helbing

Approved by:

 10/15/2019 \_\_\_\_\_8/14/2019 GSWCC Chairman Date GSWCC Executive Director Date