

GA Natural Resources Foundation Board Meeting Minutes
Meeting of Friday, March 17, 2017, 10:00 a.m.
DNR Board Room, East Tower, Atlanta, GA

The meeting was called to order by Georgia Natural Resources Foundation Board Chair, Amy Hillman. Board members in attendance were Glen Wilkins, Sara Clark, Edens Davis, Lonice Barrett, Philip Wilheit, Jr., Dr. Richie Bland, Commissioner Mark Williams and Executive Director Mark Walker. Also attending were Deputy Commissioner Walter Rabon, Wes Robinson and Amber Carter.

The minutes from the October 28, 2016, meeting held in the DNR Board Room were approved following a motion by Glen Wilkins and a second by Sara Clark.

The financial report was given by Executive Director, Mark Walker, in the absence of Secretary/Treasurer. The Financials presented were approved following a motion by Edens Davis and a second by Lonice Barrett.

Chair Hillman then called for the Commissioner's Report. DNR Commissioner, Mark Williams, reported that we are nearing the end of the 2017 Legislative Session. All four of DNR's pieces of agency legislation crossed over from the House to the Senate and they working hard to get them on the Governor's desk before Sine Die, which is March 30th.

Just to give a small Weekend for Wildlife update – as you may know, 2017 was a record year with over \$1.1 Million dollars raised. The Direct Appeal for educational opportunities was a huge success raising almost \$70,000. The Commissioner thanked the Foundation and everyone with GNRF for making this event a success.

The Commissioner also stated that, sadly, Robin Hill's last day with WRD was February 28th. He said that she has moved on to work with Tennessee's Natural Resources Foundation in the same type of work. As we move forward in the planning for the 2018 event, Amber Carter in the DNR Administrative Office will be taking over Robin's role with the event. Please reach out to her with any questions you have!

As the weather starts getting warmer, Commissioner Williams encouraged all to reach out to their office and set up some site visits, or a ride along with one of the game wardens. He encouraged members to get out in the field and interact the staff. Lastly, on a personal note, Commissioner shared that he and his wife, Pam, just gave their older daughter away on Jekyll Island. He said she is no longer a Williams.

GNRF Executive Director, Mark Walker, was then called on to give an update on "Weekend for Wildlife." Like the Commissioner, he also welcomed Amber Carter on board for Weekend for Wildlife. Mark stated that Amber has already been working closely with WFW by securing BidPal this past year, working with Chair Hillman on contracts, etc. Everyone is also

excited about 2018 being the 30th Anniversary, and Amber is also already working on a brand logo, special recognition of the event, and meetings for the WFW Fundraising Committee.

The 2017 “Weekend for Wildlife” Fundraising Committee and efforts helped set a new record for the most ever TOTAL raised at over \$1.1 Million. Congratulations to everyone who participated and worked to make it such a success. Walker recapped the \$25,000 matching contribution we received for our Fund Appeal during WFW. It was in support of Conservation & Environmental Education and programming.

Walker then reported on other gifts the Foundation is working on including Walmart Foundation/Georgia Advisory Council for their upcoming giving cycle this summer in Georgia, Georgia Power Foundation, and Coral Management charitable giving which has committed to GNRF based on their per room contributions. All three of these are significant contributions for the Foundation and support us greatly in general operating efforts as well.

Walker stated that he continues to work with DNR’s Accounting Director, Deputy Accounting Director and the Account Manager to help set up the GNRF new “business unit” through the State Accounting Office (SAO). This is a streamline process in the Foundation operations for both accounts payable and accounts receivable. Walker stated it also helps us in the checks and balances process and is a lot like how the Georgia Department of Education already functions for their Georgia Education Foundation. He has made contact with their executive director as well, and they plan to meet soon to discuss the benefits and similarities of the two foundations.

Other Business discussion held was with Sara Clark and Chair Hillman appointing Edens Davis, along with the Commissioner, to serve on the Grants Committee to look at possible contributions being made in the spring for the five Divisions.

Chair Hillman also appointed Glen Wilkins to help work on and meet with public relations contacts and firms to discuss an overhaul to GNRF’s branding and grassroots efforts this year.

Lastly, discussion was held for overview of the rest of Georgia Natural Resources Foundation upcoming dates for 2017 which are provided in the Board email notices and packets.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.

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