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M I N U T E S

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON FORESTRY, FISH AND GAME COMMISSION

November 15, 1976

Topeka, Kansas

Members Present

- Representative R.E. Arbuthnot, Chairman
- Representative James Cubit
- Representative James Holderman
- Representative Herbert Rogg

Staff Present

- Robert Haley, Kansas Legislative Research Department
- John Rowe, Kansas Legislative Research Department
- Don Hayward, Revisor of Statutes' Office

Chairman Arbuthnot called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and welcomed those present. The Committee expressed regret that Senator Williams was ill.

Staff presented a review of the Governor's budget hearing on the Commission (see Attachment) and a review of the Commission's comprehensive planning program.

Discussion that followed questioned the possibility of Finance Council adjustments in future years expenditure authority for the purpose of land acquisition. The Committee expressed their interest in having the agency's acquisition of land correlated to both the specific needs of agency programs and available resources. The purchase of land without such a correlated plan was seen as undesirable. It was anticipated that the comprehensive planning effort by the agency would address this concern.

The Committee also felt that it would be impossible for the Commission to secure, either through purchase, license, or lease, sufficient land to meet the future sporting needs of Kansans. It was noted that since the majority of sportsmen currently use private lands and waters, agency efforts to improve and expand such private recreational potential should be significantly increased. It was again understood that the comprehensive plan would address this problem. The concern held by the Committee was that future hunting, and to some degree fishing, would be eventually restricted to wealthy individuals who would be able to pay for access to private lands.

The Committee also discussed the need for the agency to continually reevaluate its administrative policies and organization. It was noted that agency field personnel did not seem to have significant input to the decision-making process. The need appears to be for more effective delegation of both authority and responsibility, coupled with adequate resource allocation, centered in those responsible for specific field tasks and areas. Such evaluations of organization should be coupled with the planning process. The Chairman noted that while the Commission was first appraised of the need for comprehensive planning in 1972 by federal representatives, their interest was not stimulated until the need for such a program was also stressed by the Committee.

The balance of the morning and afternoon was spent in review and modification of the Committee report and proposed resolution. The Committee report as proposed with the modifications noted in the draft copy was approved. The minutes of the October meeting were also approved by the Committee.

Chairman Arbuthnot expressed his pleasure in working with the Committee members during the interim and thanked the members and staff for their efforts.

Prepared by John Rowe

Approved by Committee on:

[Signature]

date
12-6-76

MEMORANDUM

November 2, 1976

TO: Special Committee on the Forestry, Fish and Game
Commission

FROM: Kansas Legislative Research Department

RE: Governor's Budget Hearing

Mr. Fred Warders, Acting Director of the Forestry, Fish and Game Commission, presented a report on the agency's comprehensive planning strategy. While the strategy was not approved, the Commission will consider it at the next meeting.

Governor Bennett noted that comprehensive planning in the agency was badly overdue, but questioned whether the increase in land acquisition should be delayed until after the planning has produced additional information. Dr. Jerry Saylor, Commissioner, contended that it was better for the agency to have land in fee simple title rather than under license from the federal government. The discussion that followed indicated that the operating appropriation would be adequate to obligate all federal funds without the land acquisition. It was also determined that the agency does not have detailed plans for the additional land acquisition funds. It was noted that the Finance Council could approve expenditures for land if additional funds were needed.

Commissioner Bill Hawes reviewed his concern that the agency have a fee increase. Governor Bennett indicated that he believed that the Legislature would approve a fee increase only to balance the budget or to provide funds for new programs. He also noted that the Legislature would need details on what any new programs would produce. Discussion determined that the fee increase would not be needed to fund ongoing programs in FY 1978 or FY 1979. Governor Bennett concluded that a fee increase was premature and would only increase resistance to a fee increase in the future.

The agency also expressed concern that two Information Writer I positions and several other items were eliminated.