# LAFOURCHE PARISH GAME & FISH COMMISSION

**Minutes: May 17, 2021**

The regular monthly meeting of the Lafourche Parish Game and Fish Commission was held on Monday, May 17 2021 at 6:30 p.m., at the Mathews Methodist Church Education Building located at 201 Central Lafourche Dr, Mathews.

**Meeting Agenda**

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Chairman Vince Guillory.

**Roll Call:** Present – Vincent Guillory, Marty Vedros, and John Guidry; absent – Oray Savoie. A legal quorum was present.

**Approval of Minutes:** A motion was made by John Guidry and seconded by Marty Vedros to approve the April 2021 minutes as presented. Voting yes – all. Motion passed.

**Approval of Agenda:** A motion was made by Marty Guidry and seconded by John Guidry to amend the agenda as presented. Voting yes – all. Motion passed.

**Secretary Report:** Paid monthly bills; check mail; sent minutes and agenda to Clerk of Court; monthly financial report; recorded lease transfers; answered phone calls and emails; deposited annual lease fees; Paid first quarter taxes; Mailed out letters for lease holder emails.

**Approval of Financial Report**: A motion was made by Marty Vedros and seconded by Marty John Guidry to accept the April 2021 financial report as presented. Voting yes - all. Motion passed.

**Public Input**: Chairman Vince Guillory stated that because of verbal interruptions from the audience in recent meetings, the Game and Fish Commission meetings will generally follow the Parish Council protocol concerning public input. A lease holder stated numerous boaters were ignoring the no wake zone in Camp Canal and that some of old no wake zone signs were not readily visible because of brush. A motion was made by John Guidry and seconded by Marty Vedros for the Commission to purchase additional no wake zone signs and later place them at appropriate locations. Votig yes – all. Motion approved. John Guidry to accept the March 2021 financial report as presented. Another lease holder along the canal in the small island in the south central portion of Lake Fields also mentioned that there was a problem with boat wakes. He was advised that his camp lease was not in the parish ordinance no wake zone, but unofficial no wake zone signs could be posted.

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**Board Member Resignation:** Vice chairman Jake Cheramie resigned from the Commission effective March 24, 2021 due to personal reasons. His resignation letter was submitted to the Parish Council. The vacancy will eventually be filled by the Lafourche Parish Council. Another individual who had a camp on the island

**Lease Holder Issues: Unleashed Dog, Honey Bees, Failure to Pay Lease Fee, and Improper Camp Sale:** Several camp issues recently occurred, including a free roaming large dog along the west bank of Camp Canal, a honey bee infestation in a Bayou Dumar camp, failure to pay the annual lease payment, and the sale of a camp without prior approval of the Commission.

Individual letters were sent to the lease holders with the honey bees and loose dog. The lease holder with the honey bee infestation contacted chairman Vincent Guillory and said that they were unable to locate anyone to eradicate the bees, but purchased chemicals to rid the bees as soon as possible. The lease holder with the free roaming dog has not responded.

Block N4, Lots 5-6 Lease Cancellation: Current lease holder, who has no camp or other buildings, was sent several letters and all were returned to the Commission. The lease document states that “lessee agrees that any change in address must be furnished to the lessor” and that “after a grace period of 30 days (from Jan. 1), the remaining term of said lease may automatically expire at the option of the Commission.” Chairman Vincent Guillory recommended that the lease be cancelled. Marty Vedros moved to approve the motion and John Guidry seconded to cancel the lease. Voting yes – all. Motion passed.

**Notification of Lease Holders about Camp Lease Signage, Email Addresses, Camp Sales, Etc:**  At the last Commission meeting, Chairman Vincent Guillory noted that lease signage is required according to their camp lease, but there were a few camps without the signage. The Commission subsequently notified lease holders with emails that appropriate lease signage is required and any lease holder without a lease sign should notify the Commission and they would be provided such without cost by the Commission. The buyer of the camp where the owner sold it without permission was advised to complete the required paperwork.

Lease holders without emails will be sent a letter covering all the topics addressed in the emails.

**Potential Commercial Lease Application:** Rick Ledet, who owns Eagle Industrial Equipment, would like to lease 800 ft. of state waterfront property on the northeast corner of Umbrage canal and Company canal. Such a lease will require approval from the Commission. This property was leased from 2000-2009 but the lease was not renewed. The process to issue such a lease will be lengthy because the public bid process must be followed. The Office of State Lands has an application form to lease state property. Before the Commission proceeds any further with this application, Chairman Vincent Guillory recommended contacting Rick Ledet and also that a new lease document would have to be developed and annual lease fee determined.

**LDWF Information (Lake Bouef SAV decline, Florida Bass Stocking, and Aquatic Weed Control)**

Chairman Vincent Guillory contacted several LDWF freshwater fisheries biologists who worked in either Lake Bouef or Lake Fields about several topics.

The first involved the dramatic decline of submergent vegetation in Lake Bouef, another shallow coastal freshwater lake similar to Lake Fields and Lake Long. They said that apple snails and not water quality was probably responsible for the decline in submergent vegetation, but also mentioned that SAV tends to be cyclical. No sharp decline in SAVs was observed in Lake Fields. Cha pointed out that Lake Bouef has an undeveloped water shed and clear water while Lake Fields has a large watershed with numerous pumping stations and Lake Fields is nutrient enriched. The nutrients could have stimulated growth of SAVs and thus made it more difficult for apple snails to reduce SAVs.

The second pertained to LDWF stocking of larval Florida largemouth bass four times for stocking in Lakes Fields and Lake Long. Survival of larval fish is very low when compared to fingerling size fish, and I suspected that the stockings would not increase the numbers of largemouth bass nor introduce Florida largemouth bass genes into the native largemouth bass population. The LDWF collected largemouth bass internal organs from lakes where Florida largemouth bass were stocked and contracted a laboratory to conduct a genetic analysis of samples. Most lakes, including Lake Fields and Lake Long, with Florida largemouth bass stocking had no evidence of Florida largemouth bass genes. They concluded that the stockings of larval Florida largemouth bass had no impact.

The LDWF has severe funding issues because they do not receive funding from the State. I was also advised by LDWF biologists that the aquatic weed control funding was sharply reduced, and that water hyacinth spraying in and around Lake Fields and Lake Long would probably not occur this year. However, if the proposed legislation to increase license fees for recreational hunting and fishing and commercial fishing passes, water hyacinth spraying may be restored next year.

**Commercial Crab Fishing Restrictions:** At the January meeting, a brief discussion was held concerning commercial crabbing and other fishing restrictions and a request was made to add this topic to the Commission meeting agenda. This agenda item was deferred to the next meeting. At the current meeting, the agenda item was deferred again to the next meeting because only three board members were present.

**Alligator Egg and Alligator Tag Permits:** Chairman Vince Guillory stated that an alligator egg permit for three years was issued in 2019 to C & M Gator Farm LLC but the permittee did not collect any eggs in 2020 because of reduced market demand for alligators and the COVID-19 impact on labor. Their state paperwork for 2021 was mailed to the Commission, and it was signed and mailed to the LDWF.

The Commission has not solicited alligator tags for several years because of the extremely low prices of alligator hides, but Chairman Vincent Guillory recommend that the Commission submit a bid notice for alligator tags partially because of the increased number of large alligators near camps. A motion was made by Marty Vedros and seconded by John Guidry. Voting yes – all. Motion passed.

**Commission Bylaws Revision:** Tabled for a future meeting.

**Other Business:** None.

Board Member Assignments: ChairmanVince Guillory proposed at the last meeting that Oray Savoie, with assistance from John Guidry and Marty Vedros, coordinate the inspection or camps for sale and other issues requiring a field inspection.

**Next Meeting:** To be determined.

**Adjournment:** John Guidry moved and Marty Vedros seconded to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed.

Vincent Guillory, Chairman

Shontelle Dufrene/Secretary