

Commission on Marine Resources

COMMISSION ON MARINE RESOURCES

COMMISSION MEETING

Tuesday, December 19, 2017
9:00 a.m.
Bolton Building Auditorium
1141 Bayview Avenue
Biloxi, Mississippi 39530

Commission Members:

- Steve Bosarge, Chairman
Ron Harmon, Vice Chairman
Richard Gollott
Mark Havard
Jolynne Trapani

Also Present:

- Jamie M. Miller, Executive Director DMR
Sandy Chestnut, Esq., Assistant Attorney General

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251
COURT REPORTER
(228) 396-8788

1 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: we are glad to see
2 everybody. Looks like we've got a very rambunctious crowd
3 here.
4 I would like to call the meeting to order and
5 begin with the Pledge of allegiance led by Executive
6 Director Jamie Miller.
7 (Whereupon, the Pledge of Allegiance was
8 recited.)
9 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Approval of the minutes.
10 We actually have two sets of minutes to approve at this
11 meeting.
12 I need a motion for the approval of minutes for
13 November 21st, 2017.
14 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: So moved, Mr. Chairman.
15 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: we have a motion.
16 Do we have a second?
17 COMMISSIONER HARMON: So seconded, Mr. Chairman.
18 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: All those in favor say
19 aye.
20 (All in favor.)
21 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Opposed?
22 (None opposed.)
23 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Motion carries.
24 Next we have approval of the minutes for the
25 special session meetings of December 5th, 2017.

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251
COURT REPORTER
(228) 396-8788

1 COMMISSIONER HARMON: Mr. Chairman, I would like
2 to make a motion that we approve the minutes.
3 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Second, Mr. Chairman.
4 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: we have a motion and
5 second.
6 All those in favor say aye.
7 (All in favor.)
8 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Opposed?
9 (None opposed.)
10 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Motion carries.
11 Approval of the agenda.
12 Do we have any changes, or modifications, to the
13 agenda?
14 (No response.)
15 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Seeing none, do we have a
16 motion to approve the agenda as written?
17 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: So moved, Mr. Chairman.
18 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Do we have a second for
19 that motion?
20 COMMISSIONER HAVARD: I'll second it, Mr.
21 Chairman.
22 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: we have a motion and a
23 second.
24 All those in favor say aye.
25 (All in favor.)

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251
COURT REPORTER
(228) 396-8788

1 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Opposed?
2 (None opposed.)
3 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Motion carries.
4 Next is the Executive Director's report.
5 Before we get to that, today is, of course,
6 Jamie's last meeting with us and this is our chance to
7 kind of say our thank you for him.
8 It has been an honor to have him lead us and to
9 bring this agency to what it is. I may be the second
10 longest serving member. I think Commissioner Gollott has
11 probably been here a little longer than I have. we have
12 seen some changes.
13 To bring Jamie onboard and he's a younger
14 gentleman, but I tell you he has impressed me. He has
15 done a lot for this agency.
16 I tell him all the time I can see him. He's got
17 a conscience. Things bother him. To me, that goes a long
18 way. It makes him think about things.
19 Like I say, it's been an honor and a privilege.
20 I hate to see him go. I think Mr. Joe is going to have
21 some big shoes to fill. I'm sure he can handle it, but we
22 are going to miss you.
23 JAMIE MILLER: Thank you.
24 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: If any of the other
25 Commissioners here would like to say a few words, now is a

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251
COURT REPORTER
(228) 396-8788

1 good opportunity.  
 2 Jolynne.  
 3 COMMISSIONER TRAPANI: I would like to say I  
 4 have enjoyed my short time with Jamie, and I really  
 5 appreciate how he pulls everybody together and makes an  
 6 extra effort to work with everybody as a whole.  
 7 We wish you the best in your future endeavors.  
 8 JAMIE MILLER: Thank you.  
 9 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Mark.  
 10 COMMISSIONER HAVARD: Jamie, one of my deciding  
 11 factors, when I was approached with the Commissioner  
 12 position, was looking at the leadership within, and you  
 13 understand not only the leadership, but you understand the  
 14 resource.  
 15 I think you have done a great job in bringing  
 16 the department to where it is today, and I think Joe will  
 17 take the bull by the horns and run with it.  
 18 I have enjoyed working side-by-side with you  
 19 through this short tenure. Good luck with your new  
 20 venture.  
 21 JAMIE MILLER: Thank you.  
 22 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Mr. Chairman, I would  
 23 like to say a couple of things.  
 24 First of all, since the time I've met Jamie, I  
 25 have thought of him like a friend as well as a director.

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
 COURT REPORTER  
 (228) 396-8788

1 He has always been there to talk to. You could always  
 2 talk with ease, and he would tell you exactly what is on  
 3 his mind.  
 4 I told him, when I came in a while ago, that I  
 5 had forgotten the Gretian. I wanted to get some because I  
 6 think he's more like Barack Obama. When he started this  
 7 job, he didn't have gray hair in his head and, now, he's  
 8 salt and pepper. We are probably saving his hair, by  
 9 sending him to another job.  
 10 JAMIE MILLER: Thank you.  
 11 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Ron.  
 12 COMMISSIONER HARMON: Director Miller, I would  
 13 like to thank you. You took a rough cut charter boat  
 14 fisherman, cleaned him up, polished him up, and you have  
 15 been a mentor to me on this Commission.  
 16 I can't say thank you enough. I think you have  
 17 done an outstanding job for this agency, and I have been  
 18 proud to serve on this Commission under your leadership.  
 19 JAMIE MILLER: Thank you.  
 20 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Joe.  
 21 JOE JEWELL: Good morning Commissioners and  
 22 Director Miller.  
 23 I wanted to say a few words to you this morning,  
 24 before you got out of here. As everyone knows, today is  
 25 your last day.

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
 COURT REPORTER  
 (228) 396-8788

1 Jamie, I had just the utmost respect for you and  
 2 the leadership that you provided to our agency in a very  
 3 difficult time. You saw us through those issues. You  
 4 laid the foundation for us to be a great agency and to  
 5 move forward in a very positive direction. There are just  
 6 not enough words to say how grateful I am and the staff of  
 7 the DMR for all that you did for us.  
 8 On behalf of the Marine Commission, Department  
 9 of Marine Resources and especially the Fisheries staff, we  
 10 are going to honor you this morning with what we do for  
 11 all Commissioners that leave the Commission and Executive  
 12 Directors. We have a presentation for you.  
 13 If Chairman Bosarge would like to come down with  
 14 Jamie.  
 15 JAMIE MILLER: I would like the whole Commission  
 16 to come down and join me, if that's okay.  
 17 JOE JEWELL: Sure. This is on behalf of the  
 18 Marine Commission.  
 19 As you know, we have a tradition of awarding the  
 20 Executive Director and outgoing Commissioners what we call  
 21 the fish compass. It's a compass, but artistically we do  
 22 it with a series of fish that represent certain things.  
 23 We are going to present this to you this morning.  
 24 JAMIE MILLER: Thank you.  
 25 KEITH DAVIS: Since y'all are already standing,

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
 COURT REPORTER  
 (228) 396-8788

1 I was going to do this as part of our report, but Marine  
 2 Patrol also has a small presentation to make to the  
 3 Director. It's not a photograph as nice as the fish  
 4 compass.  
 5 Director Miller is going to be traveling to  
 6 Jackson. I'm not sure about all the reports that we hear  
 7 about the City of Jackson, but I hear that the crime is  
 8 pretty bad up there.  
 9 When we got the news that Director Miller was  
 10 going to be traveling and working and living in Jackson,  
 11 we thought, well, he needs the means of protecting  
 12 himself.  
 13 Marine Patrol passed the hat and we went out and  
 14 purchased Director Miller a little small token to conceal  
 15 and protect himself.  
 16 We are not giving this to him lightly. I want  
 17 the Commission to know that Director Miller has traveled  
 18 to the gun range. He has gone through our qualifications  
 19 course.  
 20 One of the things that Director Miller instilled  
 21 upon me, when he brought me onboard, was training, and he  
 22 led by example. He has been out there. He has gone  
 23 through the FBI Small Arms Qualifications course, and he  
 24 is very well equipped to handle this weapon.  
 25 On behalf of Marine Patrol, we would like to

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
 COURT REPORTER  
 (228) 396-8788

1 present to you this Glock 9 millimeter that has been  
2 inscribed with "Enhance. Protect. Conserve. Executive  
3 Director from 2013-2017".

4 We are going to miss you, and we appreciate your  
5 leadership. Thank you.

6 JAMIE MILLER: Thank you.

7 KEITH DAVIS: We also bought him some bullets,  
8 too. For y'all that don't know Director Miller, he's a  
9 little cheap. He doesn't like to spend money.

10 We would like to get a couple of pictures with  
11 the Commission, as well.

12 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Now, we will continue on  
13 with the Executive Director's report.

14 JAMIE MILLER: Thank you, Chairman.

15 I had an opportunity Friday to spend time with  
16 many of the employees and to thank them.

17 I have not had a chance to thank the Commission,  
18 and I really just wanted to say, when I interviewed for  
19 this position, Chairman Bosarge was part of that interview  
20 committee and he asked some simple, but tough questions.  
21 He really wanted to know, I think, if I understood the  
22 resource and he wanted to believe that I was going to be  
23 the right person coming in.

24 I don't know if I convinced him of that, but I  
25 did get the opportunity, and it absolutely has been one of

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 the career highlights for me, being able to serve in this  
2 capacity for the agency, but also working alongside men  
3 and women that are committed to the resource.

4 Although they serve and represent different  
5 stakeholders, I think at the end of the day each of these  
6 Commissioners want what is best for Mississippi and for  
7 the resource. I truly believe that.

8 I appreciate your patience with me. I know that  
9 sometimes we had difficult discussions, but I appreciate  
10 your patience and I appreciate your support, and I  
11 appreciate you giving me the opportunity to serve in this  
12 capacity.

13 I do consider each of you friends, and I hope  
14 that if there is ever an opportunity for me to help anyone  
15 here in any way, that you would call on me and ask.

16 Although I'm going to Jackson, I was still born  
17 and raised on the Coast and understand the Coast, and I  
18 hope that I can bring that voice to Jackson and make sure  
19 that we are represented up there the right ways.

20 Everybody that I have met along the way,  
21 fishermen, dealers, just folks interested in the resource,  
22 it was a pleasure to get to know you and I hope that I  
23 served you well and I hope that if there is anything I can  
24 do for you in the future that you won't hesitate to call  
25 me.

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 I really appreciate it. I just want to say  
2 thanks. Just like what the Chairman said, sometimes words  
3 just don't do enough, but I want you to know from the  
4 bottom of my heart thank you.

5 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Just don't change your  
6 number.

7 That concludes the Executive Director's report.  
8 Chief Davis, Office of Marine Patrol.

9 KEITH DAVIS: Good morning. The report is  
10 pretty straight forward. I don't think that there is  
11 anything that sticks out that you may have concerns with,  
12 but, if there is, I will certainly try to answer any  
13 questions that you may have on the regular report.

14 That being said, I do want to give you an  
15 update. Back in July, during your July meeting, you  
16 requested Marine Patrol to give you some more details on  
17 what enforcement looked like, in terms of speckled trout.

18 Since that meeting, three thousand three hundred  
19 and three fishermen have been checked. We have  
20 encountered twenty-three hundred and six Spotted Seatrout.  
21 We have issued thirty-seven undersized trout violations.  
22 We issued four over the limit trout citations.

23 I do want to point out that at last month's  
24 meeting in Jackson County, a concerned recreational  
25 fisherman approached me and informed me that there were

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 recreational fishermen in the bayous that were keeping  
2 undersized speckled trout.

3 We responded to that complaint. We have checked  
4 six hundred and seven fishermen since then, encountered  
5 three hundred and thirty-six Spotted Seatrout, issued  
6 seven citations for undersized Spotted Seatrout and one  
7 citation for over the limit.

8 I do want to point out that that particular day  
9 when we received the report, I sent an officer to the  
10 particular bayou. I don't want to mention any specific  
11 bayous because we are still concentrating enforcement  
12 efforts there, but the day of that complaint we went out  
13 and encountered an individual who had ten undersized  
14 Spotted Seatrout onboard his vessel at the time.

15 We quickly learned that the information that was  
16 provided was accurate and that enforcement picture looks  
17 the same, and we have spread out the enforcement across  
18 the Coast and we are encountering recreational guys  
19 keeping an abundant amount of undersized Spotted Seatrout.

20 If any of you have a question on what we are  
21 doing with the undersized trout, we first try to return it  
22 to the sea, if the fish is alive. If it's not alive and  
23 it's an exorbitant amount, we donate it to local food  
24 banks.

25 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Great.

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

Commission on Marine Resources

1 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: That's good. With that  
2 particular species being overfished and undergoing  
3 overfishing, we need all the help we can get to try to  
4 rebuild it.

5 We appreciate it.

6 KEITH DAVIS: Yes, sir. Although we are not  
7 dismissing any of the other enforcement efforts, most of  
8 our enforcement efforts, right now, are concentrated on  
9 recreational fishermen.

10 We appreciate the information, and I wanted to  
11 make sure that we point that out in the Commission meeting  
12 so if there is anyone out there who knows of individuals  
13 violating the resource, we would like to have that  
14 information so we can follow up on it. Thank you.

15 COMMISSIONER HAVARD: Chief, one real quick  
16 question.

17 On the Spotted Seatrout and keeping the short  
18 fish, do you think it's lack of knowledge of the limit, or  
19 do you think it's just they are blatantly keeping short  
20 trout, in your opinion?

21 KEITH DAVIS: In my opinion as a fisherman  
22 myself, the fish are just now coming in, I think, to the  
23 bays. I anticipate that those numbers will go down, as  
24 the fish are more abundant in the bays.

25 The other problem that we are caught with is the

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 amount of days that we've had a lot of bad weather. Being  
2 a fisherman myself, it is awfully cold going out there  
3 trying to catch Spotted Seatrout and it's tough to throw  
4 those back.

5 COMMISSIONER HAVARD: I guess my point was is  
6 there a way that we need to publicize the limits to get  
7 the knowledge out there?

8 KEITH DAVIS: I don't think it's a bad idea, if  
9 you are asking my personal opinion.

10 I do know that, when the Commission decided to  
11 change the size limit, there were a lot of publications  
12 that went out from our public relations office.

13 I wouldn't be opposed to maybe considering going  
14 back out and republicizing that the size limit has been  
15 changed and enforcement is heavily looking at that.

16 COMMISSIONER HAVARD: Thank you.

17 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I think that would be a  
18 good idea. We will get Melissa on that.

19 Now, we move on to Office of Marine Fisheries,  
20 Mr. Joe Jewell.

21 JOE JEWELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

22 I want to thank you again, Jamie, for all you've  
23 done for our agency. We appreciate that.

24 In honor of your leaving us, I'm going to try to  
25 be as brief as possible.

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 We have three agenda items this morning. First  
2 will be Mr. Erik Broussard with an oyster update.

3 ERIK BROUSSARD: Good morning Commissioners,  
4 Director Miller, Ms. Chestnut.

5 This morning I have the Oyster Season Update  
6 prepared for you. I'm going to start off with a table  
7 that you are pretty familiar with by now.

8 Move over to the fourth column. Everything in  
9 red are areas that have reached their quota. There are  
10 two areas that have not. They are in black.

11 The Pass Dredge, Area II "F", the quota is one  
12 thousand fifty-nine and two hundred and thirty-four sacks  
13 have been harvested, leaving eight hundred and twenty-five  
14 sacks remaining for harvest.

15 In Area II "G", Pass Marianne, one thousand two  
16 hundred and eight sacks was the quota and one thousand  
17 seventy-seven sacks have been harvested, leaving a hundred  
18 and thirty-one sacks available for harvest.

19 These two areas did open up Saturday morning.  
20 They were open Saturday and Monday. Unfortunately, the  
21 weather wasn't very conducive for the fishermen to get out  
22 and fish, so we had minimal effort.

23 This is basically the same breakdown just for  
24 more visual aid. Red is the areas that are closed and how  
25 many days they were open. Green is the two areas we just

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 spoke about, what the quota is and what the harvest is to  
2 date.

3 Then, the same for Area V "A", Biloxi Bay. The  
4 Commission authorized another thousand sacks of harvest at  
5 the last meeting. We have not been able to get this area  
6 open with the weather, with the rainfall that we have had  
7 in the recent week. We have been monitoring and we will  
8 continue to monitor this area to try to get it open as  
9 soon as possible.

10 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Erik, can I interrupt you  
11 right there?

12 ERIK BROUSSARD: Sure.

13 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Thank you for saying  
14 that, that we haven't been able to get this open for our  
15 fishermen and we have got a closing date on it. We put  
16 that on it at the last meeting, the end of December.

17 I would like to extend that and modify the  
18 motion to say that we will leave it open until our  
19 fishermen can harvest a thousand sacks out of the Bay in  
20 the area that you determine.

21 It's just because we had relayed about a  
22 thousand sacks in there from Pascagoula, so we are really  
23 not tapping into the thirty percent.

24 Like I say, I would like to make that motion, if  
25 I can get a second on it.

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

Commission on Marine Resources

1 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Joe, have you got  
2 something you want to say?

3 JOE JEWELL: I do.

4 A couple of things, Commissioner Gollott. The  
5 Commission's vote and approval last Commission meeting, I  
6 think it stipulated that a thousand sacks before  
7 Christmas, or whichever one comes first.

8 Technically, it doesn't look like it will open  
9 again. We've had bad weather, rainfall, and there is  
10 going to be a lot more rainfall predicted this week. You  
11 are correct that they likely will not meet that thousand  
12 sack quota by Christmas. It's not the end of December.

13 Then, for technical sake in line with our  
14 management program, with the weather that it is, this  
15 could be drawn out for quite some time.

16 I would respectfully ask that you modify your  
17 motion to say a thousand sacks until the end that the  
18 management criteria stipulates because it could go past  
19 April technically.

20 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Sounds good.

21 JOE JEWELL: Thank you.

22 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: What would the motion be,  
23 then, Commissioner Gollott?

24 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: It would be that we  
25 extend the season until the end of the --

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 JOE JEWELL: (Interposing) Until the management  
2 criteria normally ends the season. A thousand sacks, or  
3 when the management criteria ends the season.

4 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Do we have a second for  
5 Richard's motion?

6 COMMISSIONER HARMON: I'll second that motion,  
7 Mr. Chairman.

8 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: We had one public speaker  
9 that would like to speak. I don't know if it's on this  
10 issue, but on oysters, and that would be Mr. John Livings.

11 JOHN LIVINGS: Good morning. My name is John  
12 Livings. I'm just coming back today to talk about two  
13 different things.

14 For dredging, the fishermen still would like to  
15 try to go to St. Joe, if y'all would consider that.

16 The other is tonging. Between the Bridges, it  
17 didn't get worked very much. There were four boats that  
18 tried to go in there, but it was the wrong time. I think  
19 only one, or two, boats actually went in there to work.  
20 We would like to try to see if we can get that back open  
21 for tonging, Between the Bridges.

22 We would like for the St. Joe dredging reef to  
23 open after Christmas, before Christmas.

24 The map shows that, like, Pass Marianne, the  
25 only spots that are open are the spots that don't have

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 anything on them. The reefs that have oysters are all the  
2 ones that are closed.

3 I think their estimation was under on some reefs  
4 and over on others. If it takes until 3:30 to catch four  
5 sacks dredging, then, it's pretty safe to say there was  
6 nothing there.

7 At St. Joe, we were done at 9:20 in the morning.  
8 That's what I'm asking for.

9 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I guess we will call you  
10 back up, when it comes to stock assessment time.

11 JOHN LIVINGS: Thank you.

12 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I don't think there is  
13 any further public comment.

14 We have a motion and a second.

15 Any further discussion?

16 (No response.)

17 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: All those in favor say  
18 aye.

19 (Commissioner Bosarge, Commissioner Harmon,  
20 Commissioner Gollott, Commissioner Trapani in favor.)

21 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Opposed?

22 (Commissioner Havard opposed.)

23 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Motion carries.

24 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: One more thing, Mr.  
25 Chairman.

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 When will those two areas close in the Pass?  
2 Do we need to put an extension on that to keep  
3 it open?

4 ERIK BROUSSARD: No, Commissioner. It closed  
5 yesterday to rainfall. There are, again, eight hundred  
6 and thirty-five sacks left on Pass Marianne to catch and a  
7 hundred and thirty-one left at Pass Dredge, based on the  
8 thirty percent quota.

9 The area will remain open until the quota is  
10 reached, or the Commission closes the area. It is closed  
11 temporarily for rainfall. We will be sampling and we will  
12 issue reopening orders, when the water quality meets the  
13 criteria.

14 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Thank you, Erik. That's  
15 what I wanted to make sure of.

16 ERIK BROUSSARD: That would conclude my  
17 presentation.

18 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Thank you, Erik.

19 JOE JEWELL: Thank you, Erik.

20 Next up for the Commission's consideration is  
21 the Stock Assessment Update by Mr. Matt Hill.

22 MATT HILL: Thank you, Joe.

23 Good morning Commissioners, Director Miller,  
24 Sandy.

25 I will try to make this as brief as possible,

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 but I would like to start with some comments about  
2 Director Miller, or Jamie, as we know him.

3 First off, I would like to thank you for the  
4 many things that we talked about, but mainly I would like  
5 to thank you for giving a sincere effort to understand all  
6 the programs that we carry out and the benefits gained  
7 from these programs and how they benefit the resource and  
8 the fishermen. You were always concerned about that.

9 JAMIE MILLER: Thank you.

10 MATT HILL: I would also like to thank you and I  
11 always appreciated your acknowledgment of how closely I  
12 did follow the dress code on a daily basis. I was always  
13 impressed with your attention to these small details. I  
14 will try to do the best I can today to make you proud.

15 JAMIE MILLER: Thank you for wearing a suit  
16 today.

17 MATT HILL: You're welcome.

18 We will get into a brief stock assessment  
19 update. The CMR approved the stock assessment schedule in  
20 May. I believe it was May of 2015.

21 The order began with Spotted Seatrout. We did  
22 do a full stock assessment on Spotted Seatrout. It has  
23 been peer reviewed. It is accepted. We made regulation  
24 changes based on this. We have been tasked through the  
25 CMR to do annual updates on Spotted Seatrout.

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 Right now, the big topic and it's in progress is  
2 the Sheepshead, and we are going to get a little bit more  
3 into that, but this is pretty far along in the process.

4 Black Drum. We are in the initial data analysis  
5 stage, and I'm also going to talk a little bit more about  
6 that in the next few slides.

7 We expect to be able to do the full assessment  
8 of Red Drum in 2019 and, hopefully, have that completed.

9 Southern Flounder will occur in 2020.

10 These assessments take a long time. They take a  
11 lot of resources, and it is very impressive, right now,  
12 that we are actually conducting two assessments  
13 simultaneously, Sheepshead and Black Drum. Hopefully, as  
14 time goes by, we will continue to do better on the time  
15 line.

16 First I want to talk about the Spotted Seatrout  
17 Annual Update. I just gave this annual update a few  
18 months ago, and we saw a slight bump in the SPR. We saw  
19 some encouraging signs.

20 The Stock Assessment Panel will continue to  
21 provide an annual Spotted Seatrout update, giving the  
22 stock status and projected trends. This will occur until  
23 2021, at which time a full stock assessment with a new  
24 base model run will be initiated, and this will also go  
25 through another peer review process. This will give the

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 regulation a full five years to take hold and we will be  
2 able to see exactly what is happening with this new base  
3 model run.

4 The big topic, right now, is our Sheepshead  
5 Assessment. Our Sheepshead draft assessment has been  
6 completed. The document has gone through the internal  
7 MDMR review process and has been returned to Dr. Robert  
8 Leaf, with comments attached to be re-edited. The  
9 finalized stock assessment document will be ready to send  
10 out for peer review in the next four to six weeks.

11 Usually, we try to place a six to eight week  
12 time line on that peer review. Hopefully, after this  
13 time, maybe late summer we can give a full stock  
14 assessment report on Sheepshead and begin to make some  
15 resource decisions.

16 Next will be the Black Drum Assessment. The  
17 data analysis for the Black Drum assessment is currently  
18 underway. This process involves merging data sets from  
19 MDMR and GCRL into the format required to run the base  
20 model for the stock assessment. This process also helps  
21 in identifying data deficiencies to possibly be addressed  
22 in sampling protocols.

23 What I'm trying to say by that is if we see  
24 where we are lacking data possibly in the future, we can  
25 modify some of our sampling to specific species, whenever

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 we get ready to do some of these assessments.

2 I'm not going to go into the Red Drum and the  
3 Southern Flounder because they are just so far off, and  
4 our plate is pretty full, right now.

5 I do want the Commission to understand that we  
6 have our full focus on Sheepshead. However, we are also  
7 tasked to continue to do an annual Spotted Seatrout update  
8 which also takes a pretty good amount of our time. For  
9 the next several years, I see us completing one full  
10 assessment of the species and the Spotted Seatrout update  
11 as was requested by the Commission.

12 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: On most of these species,  
13 these will be the first runs we have ever done.

14 Correct?

15 MATT HILL: That is correct, and I would like to  
16 say that these assessments will only get better. The  
17 initial base model assessment is what takes so long, and,  
18 then, what we would do after that is what we are doing  
19 with Spotted Seatrout. We will just do annual updates.  
20 We call it the turn of the crank. We just put new data in  
21 it. The base model has already been peer reviewed. It  
22 has been accepted. It doesn't take near the amount of  
23 time.

24 Once we can get to that point, then, we can  
25 start maybe looking at some other species to do some of

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 these base model runs.

2 However, I do see us pretty much every four to  
3 five years having to rerun the base model for the Spotted  
4 Seatrout, or any species for which we have a significant  
5 regulation change.

6 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: At some point in the  
7 future if there is a different model -- I know another  
8 species that I have experienced in other times where the  
9 model that we were using wasn't the best model.

10 MATT HILL: That is correct. We don't see this  
11 as a static process. This is a very dynamic process.  
12 Even the model that we are currently using, the ASAP  
13 model, is a dynamic model. The more data you put into it  
14 -- and what we saw with the update, I think you saw it  
15 changed some of the historical numbers.

16 If there is another model that comes out, like I  
17 said, we're not stuck with one model. We are very  
18 flexible and this is a dynamic process, and we have some  
19 of the best modelers around, and we will continue to look  
20 at some of these newer techniques.

21 If a new model comes up and we feel like, in the  
22 next three years, we should use that for Spotted Seatrout,  
23 we will run that base model. We will come to the  
24 Commission and request to run that base model.

25 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Good.

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Matt, can I ask you a  
2 question?

3 MATT HILL: Yes, sir.

4 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Sorry, Mr. Chairman.

5 One of the problems we had, when we went to  
6 fifteen-inch fish, is we got a tremendous amount of  
7 fishermen starting to fish for speckled trout.

8 Have we seen the amount of people fishing for  
9 trout going down, since we put this fifteen-inch limit on  
10 it?

11 MATT HILL: No. The effort is going to continue  
12 to increase. The effort is increasing for all species.  
13 We are up close to ninety thousand recreational licenses  
14 sold. When we started this process, I think we were  
15 around thirty-two thousand licenses. Logic tells you that  
16 we are going to continue.

17 That is one thing that we try to harp on as much  
18 as we can. The one thing we cannot control in the  
19 recreational fishery, right now, is effort. We cannot do  
20 it. We do not have the ability to put a moratorium on  
21 licenses, or anything. We are going to continue to see  
22 more recreational fishermen, and they are mainly going to  
23 target the sport fish such as Spotted Seatrout, Red Drum  
24 and Southern Flounder to some degree.

25 We do not see any slowdown in the effort any

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 time soon, just from the trends that we have seen.

2 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: I had a guy call me the  
3 other day. He said he was in Fort Bayou and he caught  
4 sixty-four speckled trout and he kept one. He was  
5 disappointed, but that's just part of it.

6 MATT HILL: I think it's a good time for some  
7 public comment. We did have a Charter For Hire Task Force  
8 meeting last Wednesday. No official motions, or votes,  
9 were recorded.

10 However, we have members in the audience that  
11 would like to speak on some of the issues discussed  
12 pertaining to Sheepshead and Black Drum specifically. We  
13 gave a report to them. They have some ideas.

14 The Sheepshead is not finalized. We are still a  
15 little ways away from that, but we are open to ideas now  
16 because the process that will happen is the Commission,  
17 I'm sure, will ask us to run some scenarios, and we are  
18 starting to put some of the scenarios together that user  
19 groups would like to see, bag limit, size limits, some  
20 different things so maybe we can come with options, once  
21 the assessment is done and the model is done, and we can  
22 run the projections through there just as we did the  
23 Spotted Seatrout.

24 We did encourage them to maybe start thinking  
25 about it, and I think we do have a few of them that would

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 like to speak today.

2 COMMISSIONER TRAPANI: Matt, I have a question.  
3 What is your time line on looking at the  
4 flounder assessment?

5 MATT HILL: The flounder assessment, we are  
6 looking at 2020, right now. There are only so many of us.  
7 We are doing the best we can.

8 COMMISSIONER TRAPANI: In my industry, one of  
9 the species that we are having the hardest time to get is  
10 flounder. It has never been like this, and it is really  
11 hard for us.

12 MATT HILL: We have already looked at the  
13 independent data that has come in on flounder, and there  
14 is a lack of independent data. Our sampling methods have  
15 never been targeted for flounder. That is one of the  
16 things, when I start talking about data deficiencies, that  
17 we are really going to have to look at to start targeting  
18 these to get enough.

19 One of the most important things that we have to  
20 build, when we do this, is an age-to-length key, and we  
21 have to have a pretty good number of fish from our  
22 independent sampling, and we just do not have that to be  
23 honest with you.

24 We are beginning to look at some different  
25 protocol. I have talked with Joe. We have talked with

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 some of our commercial fishermen. We have talked with  
2 them a lot on some ways to maybe change some of our  
3 protocols to target flounder specifically. That is one  
4 reason it is pushed down the line a little bit.

5 We have plenty of data on the Red Drum, so we  
6 can push it through pretty quickly, but the flounder is  
7 going to give us some problems, and it gives every state  
8 problems. It's just that the sampling protocols aren't  
9 there. It's a very specialized protocol to target  
10 flounder.

11 COMMISSIONER TRAPANI: Thank you.

12 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: We see flounder as  
13 continuing to decline.

14 Can we, as a Commission, implement -- in other  
15 words, 2020 is a long way down the line.

16 MATT HILL: Yes, sir.

17 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Everything I see and  
18 everything I hear and everybody I talk to indicates there  
19 is a problem with flounder, whatever that problem may be.

20 MATT HILL: We hear it a lot and we lean heavily  
21 -- I do take a lot of the recreational fishermen's input,  
22 but, when you start seeing the commercial numbers, I lean  
23 heavily on those, and when I see how low they are and we  
24 talk to them a lot, there is definitely an issue, and it  
25 is just something that we don't have a good answer for,

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 right now, and we do need an assessment, but we want to  
2 have a good assessment.

3 We would like to get at least the Sheepshead and  
4 Black Drum pushed through. I don't think we are going to  
5 have a big problem with the Red Drum. We have the data.  
6 Hopefully, when that one starts, we can start focusing the  
7 main part of our efforts on flounder and see what we can  
8 do.

9 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: All right.

10 JOE JEWELL: Commissioner Bosarge, I want to  
11 address the question -- well, one, that is correct. We  
12 are seeing overall population declines in the entire Gulf.  
13 All states are reporting declines, significant declines in  
14 flounder populations.

15 I do want to reiterate what Matt said that we  
16 are going to modify our methodology in the field to try  
17 and target flounder. We work with our representatives at  
18 GCRL. They have established some independent stations,  
19 and we are going to do the same. We are hoping to address  
20 some of the data poor issues that we are having with that.

21 Then, specifically your question about can the  
22 Commission take action without clear data that is  
23 appropriate, I think our legal counsel probably should  
24 answer that, but I feel confident the Commission has, in  
25 the past, taken action on a data-poor species. The

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 Tripletail would be a good example of that, but our legal  
2 counsel should comment.

3 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Well, if it comes to a  
4 point where you guys -- you are the ones looking at the  
5 data -- see it where we don't need to wait until 2020,  
6 then...

7 MATT HILL: Commissioner Bosarge, I know you are  
8 very familiar when we say the words "data-poor species",  
9 and we feel like flounder is a very data-poor species for  
10 us, right now. We are trying to correct that somehow.

11 It's not going to be as strong as the Spotted  
12 Seatrout assessment. I'm very confident in that, but we  
13 need to be able to try to make it as strong as we possibly  
14 can. It is a data-poor species, right now. We need to  
15 try to get it out of that category somehow.

16 COMMISSIONER TRAPANI: I just wanted to add that  
17 y'all can try to work on that because, again, like I said  
18 before, I have sold flounder for twenty-three years. In  
19 the last two years, the decline has been substantial. It  
20 is so substantial that literally in January we are  
21 changing our menu and I'm taking flounder off because we  
22 cannot get flounder. I have never seen it do this.

23 I understand we don't have the data, but we need  
24 to try to look at that and see. I think that is a sign  
25 that there is a problem out there with flounder.

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Matt, let me ask you  
2 something.

3 Would it be unreasonable to ask you to put the  
4 Southern Flounder ahead of the Red Drum?

5 From everything I understand, there is no  
6 problem with the Red Drum and there is with the flounder.

7 MATT HILL: I don't think it would be  
8 unreasonable to do that. I think it would be inefficient  
9 to do that because we just don't have a lot of -- we're  
10 not going to have difficulties running the Red Drum  
11 assessment. It's not going to take a lot of work on our  
12 part to get the data together.

13 While Robert is running the assessment for Red  
14 Drum, we can fully focus on -- the Red Drum data is ready  
15 to go. We just don't have the modeler, right now, in  
16 place to do that, so we would like to get the Sheepshead  
17 and Black Drum.

18 If you remember, we did not do a full Red Drum  
19 assessment. We did the escapement rate. So that data is  
20 still available and that's the data that we need to be  
21 able to run the full assessment. It's at our fingertips.  
22 We just need the modeler in place to do that.

23 I will not recommend doing that currently from  
24 efficiency sake, but if it's the Commission's will for us  
25 to do that, we can do that.

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788



1 JOE JEWELL: Commissioners, I agree with Matt.  
2 The issue is not that we're not trying to do an assessment  
3 on the Southern Flounder. It's that we just don't have  
4 the data. If we moved it up, it wouldn't increase the  
5 data. We need to have data to drive that model.

6 The other thing I wanted to point out, back in  
7 May of 2015, if y'all recall, I gave that presentation to  
8 the Commission and asked the Commission to prioritize the  
9 species for the stock assessment.

10 If the Commission did choose to do that -- and I  
11 agree. I wouldn't recommend that -- you would have to  
12 vote for that to reorder the prioritized list.

13 Does that make sense?

14 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Yes.

15 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: It just seems rough to  
16 have to wait.

17 MATT HILL: Commissioner Bosarge did point out  
18 that this is our first run on all of these. Once we get  
19 all these in place, it is going to be a much easier  
20 process. We are just going to have to go through the  
21 growing pains for a little while.

22 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I remember you and I  
23 having that conversation and Southern Flounder was the one  
24 that I said that I felt was probably in the most need.

25 MATT HILL: Once we get through these growing

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 pains and we have these base models in place and these  
2 base assessments, I think we're going to be in a much  
3 better place, but we're going through the growing pains,  
4 right now, and it is probably going to take four to five  
5 years to get through them all.

6 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Well, if you just  
7 continue to see it tank, then, in my opinion, you guys  
8 need to come to us and let's see what we can do to try to  
9 shake it up, or hold it.

10 MATT HILL: Yes, sir.

11 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: We've got some public  
12 comments from folks that want to speak on this.

13 To start off with is Mike Foto.

14 MIKE FOTO: Good morning. My name is Mike Foto.  
15 I want to speak on the Sheepshead and the Black Drum.

16 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Pull that mike over just  
17 a little bit closer to you.

18 MIKE FOTO: How is that?

19 Is it better?

20 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Yes, sir. Thank you.

21 MIKE FOTO: Sheepshead to start off with, and I  
22 know they are doing a stock assessment. Talking to Matt,  
23 the stock assessment is supposed to be good. There is  
24 supposed to be a lot of fish out there, but we would love  
25 to see -- I say "we" -- the charter boat and recreational

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 fishermen would like to see some kind of regulations put  
2 in place before it is overfished, before we get in a  
3 problem like the flounder.

4 I think she said it best (indicating  
5 Commissioner Trapani). She has been serving flounder for  
6 twenty-something years in her restaurant and, now, she  
7 can't get them.

8 What is the next fish she is going to serve?

9 Is it going to be Sheepshead?

10 Is it going to be Black Drum?

11 Are we going to be in the same situation with  
12 these fish that we are now with the flounder, if we don't  
13 put some kind of regulations in place?

14 What kind of creel limit, size limit?

15 I'm not sure. We will leave that up to Matt and  
16 Joe.

17 Me personally, I would love to see a five fish  
18 limit per person on the Sheepshead. That is plenty of  
19 fish.

20 Size limit. You catch small ones, but you don't  
21 catch the little tiny ones.

22 You catch more of the small Black Drum, and  
23 social media lets everybody see what everybody is  
24 catching. Everybody posts pictures. If anybody looks on  
25 Facebook at people's catch, you will see the little tiny

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 Black Drum. That's a fish that grows to sixty pounds.

2 Why is everybody keeping them?

3 The reason people are keeping them is go back to  
4 the Spotted Seatrout. We upped the limit on them. We  
5 went to fifteen inches. Nobody can catch them anymore.

6 Commissioner Gollott said it. Sixty-four fish  
7 and you keep one.

8 That puts pressure on the other species of fish,  
9 Black Drum and Sheepshead. They are easy to catch.

10 What I'm doing here is asking y'all to do  
11 something before we get in a crisis mode with these fish.

12 Black Drum needs something. I know the stock  
13 assessment is way off. If you could do something, if it's  
14 wrong when the stock assessment comes in, maybe we can  
15 adjust it.

16 You did something on the Tripletail, like Joe  
17 said. Without a stock assessment, we did something.  
18 There are plenty of fish, now. There are larger fish to  
19 catch. Everybody is catching them. It was great.

20 How come we can't do something on the Black Drum  
21 and stop those little fish?

22 How come we can't do something with the  
23 Sheepshead, before we get in this period with the spawn  
24 which is coming on in March and everybody goes out there  
25 and keeps twenty, or twenty-five, fish per person?

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 I would just love to see something done before  
2 it gets overfished, before we get in that situation like  
3 we've got with the flounder.

4 Also, before I leave, I would like to thank Mr.  
5 Miller for his services. He's a great guy. He's got a  
6 lot of respect from the charter boats and the public.  
7 Thank you.

8 JAMIE MILLER: Thank you.

9 COMMISSIONER HAVARD: Mr. Foto, in your  
10 professional experience in being out here fishing every  
11 day, are you seeing an increased effort on Sheepshead  
12 fishing?

13 MIKE FOTO: Yes, sir, we are.

14 Back when I started this business in 1997, there  
15 were very few people fishing Sheepshead, very few. Now,  
16 today everybody is fishing Sheepshead, and I feel it's  
17 because you can't keep the other fish that's got limits.  
18 There are no limits on Sheepshead and Black Drum. That's  
19 why they are getting overfished.

20 Again, social media. Four, or five, years ago  
21 you never saw boxes full of Sheepshead. Now, you can go  
22 on there any day and you see large coolers -- people  
23 posting pictures -- full of Sheepshead.

24 It goes back to the same thing. If you stop  
25 them from catching one fish, they are going to catch

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 another one.

2 This effort, like Matt said, ninety thousand  
3 recreational licenses, and everybody can't fish speckled  
4 trout. They are going to go fish other fish.

5 COMMISSIONER HARMON: Mr. Foto, as we progress  
6 into the spring months, don't we also have an issue of  
7 these Sheepshead being full of eggs?

8 MIKE FOTO: Yes, they are, and that's when they  
9 are most vulnerable, and they get on the wrecks and they  
10 get in places, and you can go sit there and catch a  
11 hundred of them with no problem, and that's really when  
12 they are getting overfished, in my opinion.

13 I'm not saying stop it. I want everybody to go  
14 catch fish, but let's put a limit on it that everybody can  
15 live with. Everybody can go catch fish. They can take  
16 fish home to eat. They can bring their kids and go enjoy  
17 it, and, when their kids get older, the stock will still  
18 be there for everybody to go catch some.

19 COMMISSIONER HARMON: So, basically, what we  
20 need to do is take a proactive stance on this, instead of  
21 reacting like usually happens on a lot of other species.

22 MIKE FOTO: Yes.

23 You don't see a lot of small Sheepshead. I  
24 guess they are kind of like a pigeon.

25 Did you ever see a baby pigeon?

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 We don't see the baby Sheepshead. We don't  
2 catch them. When you catch them, they are twelve inches,  
3 or ten inches. You don't see the real small ones.

4 The Black Drum do bite when they are little.  
5 There is no size limit on them, and people will keep them.  
6 I really think something needs to be done pretty quick,  
7 not two or three years from now.

8 COMMISSIONER HARMON: Thank you, Mr. Foto.

9 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I'm sure Matt and Joe are  
10 paying attention.

11 Mr. Bryan Cuevas.

12 BRYAN CUEVAS: with a name like Cuevas, you know  
13 I live here.

14 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: That's right.

15 BRYAN CUEVAS: I was born here. I've been  
16 fishing here since I was about three years old.

17 Have I seen a decline in fishing?

18 Absolutely, and I agree with her (indicating  
19 Commissioner Trapani). Her livelihood is flounder.

20 My livelihood for the last nine years has been  
21 chartering, guiding. I have seen a major decline in the  
22 overall catch of every species, including species we don't  
23 assess, or talk about, things like Florida Pompano,  
24 Spanish Mackerel, things like this. A big decline.

25 My biggest concern is, of course, Sheepshead,

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 Black Drum and the flounder.

2 I have very few clients that really come to  
3 fish, believe it or not, speckled trout. They know the  
4 population is low. They know they can't keep them, or  
5 can't get their limits, and for most tourists it is kind  
6 of hard for them to catch speckled trout. It does take a  
7 little bit of practice.

8 The easiest fish to catch are the Sheepshead and  
9 the Black Drum. Their bites are different. Their catch  
10 is different.

11 I would suggest and ask the Commission to take,  
12 as you said, a proactive stand on this. We need to  
13 conserve. Conservation should mean doing something before  
14 the species is gone.

15 I agree with Mike. He covered a lot of good  
16 areas.

17 With ninety thousand recreational fishing  
18 licenses, if one person kept fifteen speckled trout,  
19 that's over one point three million fish harvested from  
20 the water. I don't think any fish, or any species, are  
21 reproducing that fast. The time to do something is now.

22 No flounder. We are going to be faced with that  
23 with Black Drum and Sheepshead. People fish these  
24 Sheepshead pretty aggressive. As Mike said, when they are  
25 spawning, they are very prone to being caught. They are

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 hanging on the wrecks, the pilings.

2 I just think it's time to do something. Stock  
3 assessments and data are great. That informs us as to  
4 what the species are doing. We can track the species and  
5 see where the species future is headed, but I think we all  
6 know that we do have a problem with flounder.

7 I can remember getting my limit on flounder. I  
8 think some of the limits may be too high on flounder.

9 Look what we did with Red Drum. Three per  
10 person. I can catch Red Fish all sizes. They are just  
11 abundant. That was the right move.

12 I think that maybe the Commission may also look  
13 at recreational gigging. Let's limit that a little bit  
14 more. I think that's where a lot of the flounder are  
15 being caught, before they move into the Bay. They are  
16 being caught on the beach and the islands, prior to coming  
17 into the Bay to spawn. Thank you.

18 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Thank you.  
19 Mr. Sonny Schindler.

20 SONNY SCHINDLER: Good morning.

21 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Good morning.

22 SONNY SCHINDLER: I'm pretty much in agreement  
23 with Mike.

24 After we heard they were possibly bringing this  
25 up, I called, or texted, or emailed, eighteen charter

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 captains from Long Beach to Bay St. Louis, or Waveland,  
2 and I just wanted to let you know what they were thinking.  
3 I'm included in this.

4 Fifteen would be in favor of size and bag limits  
5 on Sheepshead.

6 Fourteen would be in favor of size and bag  
7 limits on Black Drum.

8 Fifteen would be in favor of a no take for  
9 captain and crew, if it were to go into effect.

10 One operator would be in favor of a bag limit,  
11 but no size limit on Sheepshead and Black Drum.

12 One of the operators would be in favor of the  
13 captains being allowed to keep.

14 Two of the eighteen did not respond.

15 I just wanted to let you know that we are pretty  
16 much in favor of limits on them.

17 I think Mr. Harmon said it best, a proactive  
18 approach.

19 That's pretty much all we fish for the next  
20 three months is Sheepshead and Black Drum, and we do a lot  
21 with them. They carry us through the winter. It's pretty  
22 much the only thing we do.

23 If y'all could, please help us with that  
24 fishery. We just want to protect it and have it for many  
25 years.

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 Before I go, I just wanted to say thank you  
2 Director Miller. You always treated us with fairness and  
3 respect. Best of luck to you up in Jackson.

4 JAMIE MILLER: Thank you.

5 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Thank you, Sonny.

6 Joe, you listened to all of this?

7 JOE JEWELL: Absolutely. We have a lot of input  
8 from the charter boat community through our Charter For  
9 Hire Task Force. They certainly have made it clear and  
10 made those same comments to us at a couple of our recent  
11 meetings. They are on the front lines. They see it every  
12 day. They understand the dynamics of the movement into  
13 the estuarine systems and that sort of carrying capacity  
14 of the overall Mississippi Sound and the north central  
15 Gulf.

16 We understand their perspective and we  
17 appreciate that, and we are going to keep monitoring the  
18 resource in advance of stock assessments.

19 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Well, these are guys that  
20 do it every day and they have done it for years and years.  
21 When they see a problem, it's good to have their voice.  
22 They have that knowledge.

23 JOE JEWELL: Absolutely.

24 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I think we really need to  
25 take a hard look at what is going on and maybe get you

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 guys to come back to us with not blanket regulations and  
2 not totally restrictive regulations, but something that we  
3 can, like they said, be a little proactive and be sure we  
4 have the resource for years to come, until we get our  
5 stock assessment.

6 JOE JEWELL: We absolutely can do that. Like I  
7 said, we have a tremendous amount of input from both the  
8 recreational and charter community.

9 If the Commission wants us to come back maybe  
10 next month, or February, with a presentation, or an update  
11 on this issue, I would strongly suggest we take a vote on  
12 that, and we can certainly do that.

13 COMMISSIONER TRAPANI: Joe, I would like to  
14 request from the staff to provide the regulations for  
15 flounder and Black Drum from the other Gulf states for the  
16 size and bag limits for those two so we can look at that.

17 I know we don't have data to move forward, but  
18 if we can compare this to what the other states are doing,  
19 maybe move forward from there and try to tweak this to try  
20 to, again, be proactive and maybe help this fishery,  
21 before we get into the shape that are with the speckled  
22 trout.

23 JOE JEWELL: Sure. I understand the  
24 Commission's request. We absolutely can do that.

25 I would like the Commission to vote for that so

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 you are a unanimous voice directing us. We would suggest  
2 maybe February, or March. Give us a little latitude in  
3 that because, then, we can update the landings data, the  
4 new weight data will come in, and we absolutely can  
5 include those suggestions, Commissioner Trapani, in our  
6 report when we come back to the Commission.

7 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Mr. Chairman, I would  
8 like to make a motion.

9 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I appreciate that, but  
10 let's get the rest of the public comments.

11 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: I'm sorry.

12 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Mr. F. J. Eicke wants to  
13 comment, and, then, one more behind him.

14 F. J. EICKE: You have already said what I was  
15 going to talk about. We have a major concern about  
16 flounder in the recreational community. We are hearing it  
17 all the time. I will leave that at that and comment later  
18 on something else.

19 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Thank you.

20 Mr. John Livings, I believe, wants to speak on  
21 speckled trout, also.

22 JOHN LIVINGS: Good morning. I know that the  
23 speckled trout are down, from what they say. Personally,  
24 I went fishing the other day, and I caught fifty-one  
25 speckled trout, and one of them was fifteen inches. There

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 were a bunch of them ten, nine, twelve; a bunch of them  
2 fourteen.

3 I just ask if it can be even on the commercial  
4 and recreational, same size limit, instead of commercial  
5 being fourteen and recreational being fifteen.

6 I mean, if the recreational saves them, what are  
7 they saving them for?

8 For commercial to catch them later.

9 That's the only thing I'm asking if they could  
10 do the same size limit for both.

11 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Well, that's something we  
12 will have to get the staff to look at. Thank you, John.

13 Now, Commissioner Gollott.

14 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Hang on just a minute,  
15 please. I'm getting some legal counsel here.

16 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: There are a lot of issues  
17 with game fish, fish that are targeted by recreational  
18 fishing, and we've got a lot of folks that want to fish  
19 and have the right to fish, but that effort is continuing  
20 to increase. We have to look at that, and I don't know of  
21 a way to control the effort. I don't really want to  
22 control the effort, but we've got to make sure that we  
23 don't go overboard and really over fish these species.

24 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: I'm going to let  
25 Commissioner Harmon make the motion.

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 JOE JEWELL: I will address some of your  
2 concerns, Commissioner Bosarge, while we are waiting for  
3 the motion.

4 I think one of the fishermen said it quite  
5 eloquently. Our main game fish in the Mississippi Sound  
6 here in the northern Gulf of Mississippi is Red Drum,  
7 Spotted Seatrout and flounder. When those for whatever  
8 reason, regulation, or the populations are reduced, the  
9 fishermen have to go to other species, and there are so  
10 many species that we have in Mississippi that have no  
11 regulations, no size and no bag limits, and I hear the  
12 fishermen. They are concerned about those other fish that  
13 they feel are being overfished, and those include  
14 Sheepshead, flounder and Black Drum.

15 We have been aware of that. We've been talking  
16 with the fishing community. They have pointed that out.

17 Like I said, the staff's responsibility to the  
18 Commission is to provide them the best scientific data  
19 available to base their decisions on, and that generally  
20 is through our stock assessments.

21 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: When we restrict one  
22 species, well, then, folks want to fish and they want to  
23 catch fish, so they move to another species.

24 I know we've had this conversation before, but  
25 everything is driven off data, and ninety thousand, that's

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 the number that scares me.

2 Most recreational fishermen -- I think Mr. Eicke  
3 would agree -- would not mind reporting their catch. I  
4 know that would be a major undertaking. That's a lot of  
5 folks.

6 Have you given any more thought to a means of  
7 capturing that data for fishermen that want to report  
8 their data?

9 JOE JEWELL: Well, we are looking at other  
10 species. I think one of the species we are contemplating  
11 -- all the Gulf states are -- is an exempted fish permit  
12 and that would include Red Snapper and Gray Triggerfish.  
13 We are attempting to expand Tails n' Scales to include  
14 other species. It's certainly an option.

15 It's just with potentially ninety thousand  
16 inputs at any point, it can be overwhelming. Those are  
17 things that we would have to address and address them in  
18 the system.

19 We are looking at other species.

20 COMMISSIONER TRAPANI: I think a good point made  
21 today that kind of brought this to the surface -- and I  
22 appreciate all the fishermen that came forward talking  
23 about it -- as a recreational fisherman myself, the Black  
24 Drum, they are right. People are keeping Black Drum of  
25 every size.

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 That has been brought to our attention and it's  
2 something that we do need to look at, having some type of  
3 limit, or size.

4 JOE JEWELL: The Commission has, in the past, in  
5 advance of a stock assessment, or analysis of our  
6 independent and dependent data, taken action. One of  
7 those species is the Tripletail. We do know that the  
8 Commission did set size and bag limits on the Tripletail.

9 It's sort of a regulatory process. The  
10 Commission does have authority to do that.

11 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Commissioner Harmon.

12 COMMISSIONER HARMON: Mr. Chairman, I would like  
13 to make a motion, please.

14 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: All right.

15 COMMISSIONER HARMON: I would like to direct the  
16 staff to report to the Commission regarding the species  
17 identified as Southern Flounder, Sheepshead and Black Drum  
18 and the possible recommendations regarding adjusting  
19 quotas and bag limits pending the official stock  
20 assessment no later than March 2018.

21 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: I will second that  
22 motion, Mr. Chairman.

23 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: We have a motion and a  
24 second.

25 I see Matt rolling his eyes. Calm down. It's

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 just a little more work. It's okay.

2 Any further discussion?

3 (No response.)

4 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: We have a motion and a  
5 second.

6 All those in favor say aye.

7 (All in favor.)

8 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Opposed?

9 (None opposed).

10 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Motion carries.

11 Yes, sir, Mr. Joe.

12 JOE JEWELL: We have one final item on the  
13 agenda for the Commission's consideration.

14 I want to make a couple of comments about that,  
15 before Jon gets started. We did have a lot of input from  
16 the charter for hire, the charter fishermen, the  
17 recreational fishermen, and the CCA commented on this  
18 particular issue.

19 Jon is going to present to the Commission a  
20 process for establishing a youth category for State fish  
21 records.

22 The Commission has talked about this in the  
23 past. We haven't taken a lot of action because we had to  
24 do a lot of homework, particularly in how we implement the  
25 program.

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 Jon is going to get into some of those details  
2 for the Commission, but we chose this time of the year  
3 because all fishing tends to drop off because of the cold  
4 weather.

5 For your consideration, Jon is going to present  
6 a State Records Category for Youth.

7 JONATHAN BARR: Thank you, Joe.

8 Good morning Commissioners, Ms. Chestnut,  
9 Director Miller.

10 Thank you for everything that you have done,  
11 Director Miller, and best of luck to you in your future  
12 endeavors.

13 JAMIE MILLER: Thank you.

14 JONATHAN BARR: Marine Fisheries would like to  
15 add a category to the current State Fishing Records aptly  
16 titled Youth Division.

17 The Bureau feels that adding this division  
18 provides an excellent opportunity for young anglers to  
19 achieve fishing goals and accomplishments.

20 It gives young anglers an opportunity to obtain  
21 State records, and it also promotes stewardship and  
22 conservation of Mississippi's Marine resources.

23 We plan on following the exact protocol that we  
24 have in place for our current State records, with a few  
25 main differences. The first being this is a category for

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 anglers under the age of sixteen.

2 As y'all are aware, in the State of Mississippi,  
3 when you turn sixteen, you have to purchase a fishing  
4 license.

5 Also, we are going to require a minimum weight  
6 limit which would be fifty percent of the current State  
7 record. This is to soften the blow of the overwhelming  
8 number of submissions.

9 For example, the current Spotted Seatrout state  
10 record is ten pounds ten ounces. That means that we would  
11 be accepting applications of five pounds five ounces and  
12 over.

13 We will have both conventional and fly tackle  
14 categories just like the current State records.

15 These are the rules. They have a little less  
16 words than the ones already posted on our web page, just  
17 to make it a little more reader friendly for the younger  
18 ones (indicating slide).

19 The initiation of the program. The proposed  
20 startup date would be January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018. As Joe mentioned,  
21 we wanted to start in the winter when fishing efforts are  
22 down.

23 It will be administered by members of the Marine  
24 Fisheries staff.

25 It's open for all species of marine finfish

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 landed in the State of Mississippi.

2 Just like our current State records, once the  
3 records have been submitted, they will go through a formal  
4 review process and come to y'all for adoption.

5 This is an example of the certificate that we  
6 would award to the State record holder (indicating slide).

7 What is required is a motion to adopt the Youth  
8 Division.

9 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Why the fifty percent?

10 JONATHAN BARR: Because, in the State of  
11 Mississippi, our records are open to all marine fish.  
12 Because we don't have anything on the record, it is going  
13 to be a little overwhelming.

14 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Once you get that first  
15 one, you've got a benchmark.

16 JONATHAN BARR: That is something that we have  
17 discussed maybe revisiting. Once they get established,  
18 maybe pulling that, but, as of right now, we are going to  
19 stick with fifty percent. We have discussed that maybe in  
20 the future down the road.

21 JOE JEWELL: Part of the reason why we are  
22 anticipating a dramatic increase in workload for our  
23 fisheries staff.

24 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: That's terrible.

25 JOE JEWELL: Isn't that terrible?

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 We are trying to put a little bit of boundaries  
2 around it. A couple of things that we considered is  
3 establishing it at this time of the year and putting a  
4 weight category in there.

5 As Jon mentioned, as we establish records and  
6 the youth are awarded these, if we look at other  
7 categories and see that the fish are not being captured,  
8 or records are established in those categories, we would  
9 reconsider that.

10 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Can you imagine a five  
11 year old, or six or seven year old kid catching a little  
12 ground mullet?

13 JOE JEWELL: I'm sure we're going to have four  
14 or five Spotted Seatrout records that will be broken and  
15 resubmitted, in the first five, or six, months. I'm sure  
16 we will be coming forth before the Commission pretty much  
17 every month, once we do this.

18 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: What other states?

19 JONATHAN BARR: Currently, Texas is the only  
20 other Gulf state that has a separate division for youth.

21 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: How did this come about I  
22 guess is my question?

23 JOE JEWELL: It came about through a  
24 recommendation through the Charter For Hire Task Force and  
25 almost simultaneously the CCA mentioned that they would

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 like to see it established as a part of their PR output,  
2 and it's a good PR for getting youth engaged in the  
3 fishery.

4 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I'm with you and it  
5 sounds like a great program, but we just got through  
6 talking about effort. Here we are with effort going  
7 through the roof, and this looks like a program that would  
8 increase effort more.

9 JOE JEWELL: That's a legitimate concern and it  
10 is certainly something that we considered, that among  
11 other things, but we try to find a balance between  
12 participation in the fisheries effort and trying to  
13 promote conservation in the fisheries.

14 I do understand that it will likely increase  
15 effort, but I think once the records are established, it  
16 will weigh out, and the benefits of the program will far  
17 outweigh the deficit in the program.

18 COMMISSIONER TRAPANI: That was my question,  
19 too, but it's a great idea for kids. I understand the age  
20 variation because of the license, but a fifteen year old  
21 can catch the same fish as a twenty-something year old.

22 I think it's a neat idea, but establishing it,  
23 y'all are going to be very busy people. You are going to  
24 get about ten to twenty calls a week.

25 JONATHAN BARR: We are prepared for that. If we

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 have to put a little more effort in, that will be okay.

2 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Where do you see the  
3 conservation side of it?

4 JOE JEWELL: Well, youth will be required to be  
5 aware of the rules and regulations and understanding how  
6 those are implemented.

7 I think just the general knowledge of the  
8 program and the general knowledge of the recreational  
9 fisheries, the size and bag limits, they would have to  
10 have this knowledge first hand to submit a record.

11 I don't think a lot of the children that are in  
12 the program, when they catch a fish when they are fishing  
13 with their parents, or with their grandparents, or a  
14 family member, or a friend, understand the rules and  
15 regulations that are in place, but this will require them  
16 to be active participants in the fishery and to have that  
17 knowledge.

18 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Do we have a motion?

19 COMMISSIONER HAVARD: I would like to make a  
20 motion that we adopt the State Records for the Youth  
21 Division.

22 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: We have a motion.

23 Do we have a second?

24 COMMISSIONER HARMON: I'll second that, Mr.  
25 Chairman.

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

Commission on Marine Resources

1 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: We have a motion and a  
 2 second.  
 3 Any further discussion?  
 4 (No response.)  
 5 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: All those in favor say  
 6 aye.  
 7 (All in favor.)  
 8 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Opposed?  
 9 (None opposed.)  
 10 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Motion carries.  
 11 Thank you, Jonathan.  
 12 JONATHAN BARR: Thank you.  
 13 JOE JEWELL: Thank you, Commissioners. That  
 14 concludes the Office of Marine Fisheries presentations.  
 15 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Thank you, Joe.  
 16 I think up next would be Ms. Kacey Williams,  
 17 Office of Finance.  
 18 KACEY WILLIAMS: Good morning Commissioners, Ms.  
 19 Chestnut and Director Miller.  
 20 On behalf of the Office of Finance, I wanted to  
 21 thank you for your leadership, Director Miller, and we  
 22 appreciate your support and your trust in us.  
 23 I'm not sure if I ever told you this, but you  
 24 are affectionately referred to as Coach by my team, and we  
 25 will miss you and wish you all the best.

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
 COURT REPORTER  
 (228) 396-8788

1 JAMIE MILLER: Thank you.  
 2 KACEY WILLIAMS: These are the financial results  
 3 as of November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017.  
 4 At the end of November, our State Revenue was  
 5 four point two million. Our Total Agency Revenue was one  
 6 point two million. Our State Net Income was fourteen  
 7 point seven million. Our Total Agency Net Income was  
 8 seven point three million.  
 9 After five months of fiscal year 2018, we have  
 10 seventy-nine point four percent of the operating budget  
 11 remaining and eighty-seven point five percent of the  
 12 Tidelands budget remaining.  
 13 Any questions on the financial results?  
 14 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Any questions?  
 15 (No response.)  
 16 KACEY WILLIAMS: I do not have beautiful  
 17 artwork, or weapons, but I do have a clean audit. We just  
 18 recently received our third-party independent audit  
 19 results, and we can provide the Commissioners with a copy  
 20 of that, if you have not been provided one yet. We just  
 21 got them in the mail last week.  
 22 DMR received an unqualified, or clean, opinion  
 23 on our FY 17 audit results, and this means our audit  
 24 showed that our financial statements were free of any  
 25 misrepresentations and it is the highest audit opinion

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
 COURT REPORTER  
 (228) 396-8788

1 that can be issued.  
 2 BKD is our independent auditor and their report  
 3 states that the MDMR financial statements present fairly  
 4 in all material respects and respective financial position  
 5 of the treasury of the governmental funds and are in  
 6 conformity with the generally accepted accounting  
 7 principles.  
 8 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: That is good news.  
 9 JAMIE MILLER: That's the best gift you can give  
 10 me.  
 11 KACEY WILLIAMS: Thank you.  
 12 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Now, we go on to Ms.  
 13 Melissa.  
 14 MELISSA SCALLAN: Good morning Commissioners,  
 15 Director Miller, Ms. Chestnut.  
 16 I also would like to thank Director Miller for  
 17 his leadership over the past four-and-a-half years. I do  
 18 have a little story, and he does know about this. I'm not  
 19 telling anything he doesn't know.  
 20 I met Jamie the first time, no matter what  
 21 anybody else thought, on April the 8<sup>th</sup> of 2013. It was his  
 22 first day at the DMR. I was having dinner with a friend,  
 23 and Jamie showed up at the same restaurant.  
 24 My friend said, "I want to introduce you to  
 25 somebody".

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
 COURT REPORTER  
 (228) 396-8788

1 I turned around, and when he said his name, I  
 2 said, "I'm not sure whether I should congratulate you, or  
 3 pray for you."  
 4 And Jamie said, "why don't you do both?"  
 5 I guess because of fate, or God, or whatever, we  
 6 ended up working together here, and it has been my  
 7 pleasure to work with him, and we appreciate all you have  
 8 done for us.  
 9 JAMIE MILLER: Thank you.  
 10 MELISSA SCALLAN: Of course, the agency was  
 11 mentioned about thirty times since the last meeting, and  
 12 the item most mentioned was Jamie going to the MDA as a  
 13 deputy director. We wish him luck in that endeavor. If  
 14 you ever need anything, you can give us a call.  
 15 We also have some good news for Fisheries. The  
 16 agency was recognized last month by the U.S. Environmental  
 17 Protection Agency's Gulf of Mexico Program. The award was  
 18 for exceptional leadership in Gulf Coast preservation  
 19 efforts. The agency received first place in the 2017 Gulf  
 20 Guardian Award in the Partnerships Category. That award  
 21 is for the agency's collaboration with GCRL to establish  
 22 the Derelict Crab Trap Program.  
 23 The award was given last month in Mobile, and  
 24 Traci Floyd, Rick Burris and Harron Wise attended the  
 25 ceremony to receive the award, along with several other

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
 COURT REPORTER  
 (228) 396-8788

1 members from GCRL. That was a very nice award.  
 2 Also earlier this month, we had twelve employees  
 3 from Marine Fisheries who passed the Coast Guard Captain's  
 4 Class. Those are Kristina Broussard, Dylan Kessen,  
 5 Scottie Reid, Jack Husley, Michael Sweda, Miles Barras,  
 6 Emily Satterfield, Wade Hardy, Jon Barr, Trevor Moncrief,  
 7 Andrew Meinzinger, Thomas Bustamante. For the first time  
 8 in the agency's history we have two women who have passed  
 9 this course, and that was Kristina Broussard and Emily  
 10 Satterfield. We are very excited about that.

11 Marine Patrol, so far in fiscal year 18, has  
 12 held eight boat and water safety classes and certified a  
 13 hundred and twenty-four students, and they also  
 14 participated in twenty-three marine events so far this  
 15 fiscal year.

16 Any questions?

17 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: That's a lot of  
 18 information.

19 MELISSA SCALLAN: I also want to say Merry  
 20 Christmas and Happy New Year.

21 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Thank you, Melissa.  
 22 Other business.

23 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Yes, sir. Mr. Chairman,  
 24 I would like to make a motion that we go into closed  
 25 session to determine the need to go into executive session

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
 COURT REPORTER  
 (228) 396-8788

1 to consider personnel matters.

2 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: We have a motion.

3 Do we have a second?

4 COMMISSIONER HARMON: So seconded, Mr. Chairman.

5 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: We have a motion and a  
 6 second.

7 All those in favor say aye.  
 8 (All in favor.)

9 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Opposed?  
 10 (None opposed.)

11 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Motion carries.

12 We are going to step out for a little bit and  
 13 see if we can straighten a few things out. We will be  
 14 back. Thank you.

15 MEETING STANDS IN RECESS

16 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I would like to call the  
 17 meeting back to order.

18 At this point, I think we need a motion to go  
 19 back into regular session.

20 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: I'll make that motion,  
 21 Mr. Chairman.

22 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: We have a motion.

23 Do we have a second?

24 COMMISSIONER HARMON: So seconded, Mr. Chairman.

25 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: We have a motion and a

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
 COURT REPORTER  
 (228) 396-8788

1 second.

2 All those in favor say aye.

3 (All in favor.)

4 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Opposed?

5 (None opposed.)

6 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Motion carries.

7 Now, I think we will go to Ms. Chestnut for a  
 8 report on the meeting.

9 SANDY CHESTNUT: At 10:30, a motion was made by  
 10 Commissioner Gollott to go into closed session to discuss  
 11 the need for executive session to discuss personnel  
 12 matters. That motion was seconded by Commissioner Harmon.

13 At 10:35, Commissioner Havard made a motion to  
 14 go into executive session to discuss personnel matters,  
 15 specifically setting the new Director's salary. That  
 16 motion was seconded by Commissioner Gollott.

17 Commissioners present were Steve Bosarge, Ron  
 18 Harmon, Richard Gollott, Mark Havard and Jolynne Trapani.  
 19 Legal counsel Sandy Chestnut, Executive Director Jamie  
 20 Miller, legal counsel Faye James, and Human Resource  
 21 Director Christy Royals were present at the executive  
 22 session.

23 At 10:37, a motion was made by Commissioner  
 24 Gollott and seconded by Commissioner Trapani recommending  
 25 the starting salary for Joe Spraggins for the incoming

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
 COURT REPORTER  
 (228) 396-8788

1 Director of the Mississippi Marine Resources. This motion  
 2 was passed unanimously.

3 At 10:52, Commissioner Gollott made the motion  
 4 and it was seconded by Commissioner Trapani to approve the  
 5 executive session minutes. That motion passed  
 6 unanimously.

7 At 10:53, Commissioner Trapani made a motion to  
 8 end executive session, that motion was seconded by  
 9 Commissioner Harmon, and that motion also passed  
 10 unanimously.

11 That's the end of the report.

12 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Thank you, Ms. Chestnut.  
 13 We move on to our last agenda item, public  
 14 comments.

15 I think we've got Mr. Gilbert Ramsey.

16 GILBERT RAMSEY: Good morning.

17 I've been networking in the community to  
 18 introduce a veteran's outreach program for the disabled  
 19 community.

20 The City of D'Iberville has got Tidelands funds  
 21 coming into play for a new park on the Bay, and I would  
 22 like to introduce a new program at that location for the  
 23 disabled community for a public service for our patrons  
 24 and our tourists to come in to get associated with their  
 25 own personal water crafts, retrofitted water crafts with

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
 COURT REPORTER  
 (228) 396-8788



1 stabilization to lift them up out of the water, to put  
2 them in it and let them control it and drive.

3 I have these three prototypes initiated, and I'm  
4 coming forward with this introduction because I need  
5 assistance with the counsel to help me with a proposal.

6 At the bicentennial event at the VA Hospital in  
7 Gulfport, I had a booth set up. Mr. Joe Spraggins helped  
8 me out with that application to get me a booth set up at  
9 the bicentennial event.

10 During that bicentennial event, Senator Roger  
11 Wicker approached me with Andrew Higginbotham, and, then,  
12 they asked me to submit a proposal with their office.

13 What I would like to do is I would like the  
14 counsel's approach with the National Heritage Program to  
15 initiate an opportunity for all residents and tourists,  
16 the disabled community to get an opportunity to enjoy  
17 nature and go fishing and whatever they might want to do  
18 at their leisure, the activities like we all do in our  
19 lives.

20 It is something I'm very passionate about. The  
21 state has seven hundred and fifty million dollars for  
22 economic development opportunities, along with the BP  
23 money.

24 I have a BP contract that identifies educate,  
25 recreate, employ and facilitate appropriately, and that's

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 what my BP contract identifies.

2 That's what I'm rolling into, gentlemen and  
3 ladies. I am here to make sure it is handled with our  
4 capability with all fifty-two counties in the State of  
5 Mississippi. Pilot location is City of D'Iberville.

6 I'm coming forth with the University of Southern  
7 Mississippi and Mississippi State. Gulf Coast Research  
8 Laboratory, they all know me.

9 Gulf Coast National Seashore with the  
10 development opportunity out there, I've seen that  
11 initiative there as well because I've seen different  
12 applications there to incorporate with this outreach.

13 The Veterans Day representatives are with me and  
14 the VA Hospital is with me, and are all concerned about  
15 what I have to offer for all our actions and opportunities  
16 within our community.

17 I'm very passionate and concerned with this  
18 initiative, and I've been overwhelmed throughout the years  
19 and Governor Barber days.

20 It's very intriguing and I'm humbled to have  
21 this opportunity to recognize Mississippi more  
22 appropriately.

23 I am here to make sure it is handled with  
24 international recognition for the hospitality state. I  
25 already have that. I found that with the World Leisure

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 Congress in 2014 in Mobile, Alabama. All tourism  
2 associations around the world came to the United States.  
3 First time ever. I reached that organization to assess  
4 the tourism opportunities in Europe.

5 All of these countries are coming to me, right  
6 now, to inquire what type products and services I have to  
7 offer.

8 I'm going to be initiating manufacturing  
9 opportunity and economic development opportunity within  
10 the community. It's big. They have all been asking what  
11 I want and what I need, all these counties.

12 Now, I'm going with the National Heritage  
13 Program because I felt like it was more appropriate means  
14 to handle things with our capabilities.

15 I cannot emphasize this enough. It is very  
16 intriguing to have this opportunity to recognize us with  
17 our capabilities in our community, our waterways and  
18 everything else, pollution control and everything, water  
19 quality and everything. I looked at all of this.

20 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: That's great information  
21 there, Gilbert. You definitely have a passion. I can say  
22 that, and it looks like you are making some good headway  
23 with it.

24 GILBERT RAMSEY: Yes, sir. It is coming  
25 together very well. The City of D'Iberville has a new

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 park on the Tchoutacabouffa River and a sports complex on  
2 Highway 15, and we have a new outreach capability park on  
3 the Bay being developed.

4 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Get with our new  
5 Executive Director and he will bring it to us.

6 GILBERT RAMSEY: Look forward to working with  
7 you.

8 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Thank you.  
9 Is there any other business before this  
10 Commission?

11 (No response.)

12 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Seeing none, I ask for a  
13 motion to adjourn.

14 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: I'll make that motion,  
15 Mr. Chairman.

16 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Do we have a second?  
17 COMMISSIONER HAVARD: I'll second it, Mr.  
18 Chairman.

19 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: We have a motion and a  
20 second.

21 All those in favor say aye.

22 (All in favor.)

23 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Motion carries.

24 Meeting adjourned.

25 (Whereupon, at 11:09 o'clock, a.m., the December

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788

1 19, 2017, meeting of Commission on Marine Resources was  
2 concluded.)

3 C E R T I F I C A T E

4  
5 I, Lucille Morgan, Certified Shorthand Reporter, do  
6 hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true and  
7 correct transcript of the December 19, 2017, meeting of  
8 the Commission on Marine Resources, as taken by me at the  
9 time and place heretofore stated in the aforementioned  
10 matter in shorthand, with electronic verification, and  
11 later reduced to typewritten form to the best of my skill  
12 and ability; and, further, that I am not a relative,  
13 employee, or agent, of any of the parties thereto, nor  
14 financially interested in the cause.

15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
  


Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251  
COURT REPORTER  
(228) 396-8788