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February 22, 2021

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
FOR

SENATE BILL NO. 776

By: Murdock

An Act relating to game and fish; amending 29 O.S. 2011, Section 3-103, as last amended by Section 1, Chapter 24, O.S.L. 2017 (29 O.S. Supp. 2020, Section 3-103), which relates to the Wildlife Conservation Commission; modifying authority relating to the acquisition of land; requiring land to be publicly offered for sale at fair market value; and providing an effective date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 29 O.S. 2011, Section 3-103, as last amended by Section 1, Chapter 24, O.S.L. 2017 (29 O.S. Supp. 2020, Section 3-103), is amended to read as follows:

Section 3-103. A. The Wildlife Conservation Commission shall constitute an advisory, administrative and policymaking board for the protection, restoration, perpetuation, conservation, supervision, maintenance, enhancement, and management of wildlife in this state as provided in the Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation Code.

B. The Director shall consult with the Commission regarding the administration of the affairs of the Department of Wildlife Conservation. The Commission is authorized and empowered to require

1 from the Director complete reports and information relative to the
2 affairs of the Department at the time and in the manner the
3 Commission may deem advisable.

4 C. The Commission shall meet in regular session at least nine
5 times per year not to exceed one meeting per month with not more
6 than two consecutive calendar months between meetings and in special
7 sessions as may be called by the Chair or a majority of the
8 Commission. The Commission may hold any regular or special session
9 at any location within this state. Should a location be chosen
10 other than Commission headquarters in Oklahoma City for a regular or
11 special meeting, notice shall be posted at Commission headquarters
12 in Oklahoma City and advertised in the local newspaper of the city
13 in which the meeting is to be held, at least one time during each of
14 the two (2) weeks prior to the meeting. The advertisements shall
15 include time, date, and address of location of the meeting.

16 D. In addition to the other powers and duties prescribed by
17 law, the Commission shall:

18 1. Institute an affirmative action plan for hiring women and
19 minorities throughout the agency;

20 2. Elect a chair, vice-chair, and secretary, who shall perform
21 the duties required of them by statutes, rules of the Commission,
22 and the Constitution of the State of Oklahoma. The chair, vice-
23 chair, and secretary shall receive no extra compensation;

1 3. Appoint a Director, and determine the qualifications of the
2 Director and all assistants and employees. A Commissioner shall not
3 be eligible for employment in any position within the Department;

4 4. Prescribe rules and policies for the transaction of its
5 business and the control of the Department;

6 5. Develop and implement a plan to provide step raises for
7 Commission employees so that discrepancies of pay levels within a
8 pay grade are eliminated;

9 6. Acquire by purchase, lease, gift, or devise, waters, real
10 property, and personal property incident to the exercise of its
11 functions and to maintain, operate, and dispose of the same;

12 7. Acquire real property by condemnation only when the Attorney
13 General or other counsel deems it an appropriate means of clearing
14 title from willing or unavailable sellers;

15 8. Acquire land at a price that is no more than the appraised
16 value only after the land has been publicly offered for sale for a
17 minimum of six (6) months at a fair market value;

18 9. Supervise the establishment, extension, improvement, and
19 operation of the wildlife refuges, propagation areas or stations,
20 public hunting areas, public fishing areas, game management areas,
21 and fish hatcheries;

22 ~~9.~~ 10. Prescribe the manner of cooperation with the Oklahoma
23 Tourism and Recreation Department, colleges and universities within
24 the state, other state agencies, any agency of the federal

1 government, and any city, town, school district, or any other agency
2 or organization in study of conservation and propagation of wildlife
3 and in the establishment, maintenance, and operation of visual
4 educational facilities, recreational facilities, and hunting and
5 fishing facilities, in the study and propagation of wildlife;

6 ~~10.~~ 11. Supervise the letting of all contracts and purchases
7 for the Department, with all purchases of personal property to be
8 made through the Office of Management and Enterprise Services;

9 ~~11.~~ 12. Authorize all claims or expenditures prior to incurring
10 payment except as otherwise provided in this Code;

11 ~~12.~~ 13. Prescribe rules on the use of Department-owned vehicles
12 by the Director, department heads and other essential employees as
13 the Commission deems necessary in order to perform their duties;

14 ~~13.~~ 14. Prescribe rules for the sale of all regular or special
15 licenses;

16 ~~14.~~ 15. Publicize and encourage the conservation and
17 appreciation of wildlife and all other natural resources;

18 ~~15.~~ 16. Regulate the seasons and harvest of wildlife;

19 ~~16.~~ 17. Promulgate rules to sell fishing and hunting licenses
20 via the Internet;

21 ~~17.~~ 18. Annually report to the Governor and the Legislature on
22 the complete operation, activities, and plans of the Department,
23 together with such recommendations for future activities as the
24 Commission may deem to be in the best interest of the state; and

1 ~~18.~~ 19. Provide the Governor and the Legislature with an annual
2 inventory of all property and equipment.

3 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective November 1, 2021.

4 COMMITTEE REPORT BY: COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND WILDLIFE
5 February 22, 2021 - DO PASS AS AMENDED
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