



**2020 Hampton Street · Room 3063A Columbia, SC 29204**  
**(803) 576-2083**  
**Minutes**  
**November 20, 2023**  
**4<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room**

**Attendance**

<b>Commissioner</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Present</b>
Charles Weber	1	Yes
James Young	2	Yes
Wayman Stover	3	Yes
Glenice Pearson	4	Yes
Kip Dillihay	5	No
John Grego	6	Yes
Robert Squirewell	7	No
Deborah DePaoli	8	Yes
Khali Gallman	9	Yes
Darrell Jackson Jr.	10	No
Gail Rodriguez	11	No

<b>Staff &amp; Visitors</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
John McKenzie	Conservation Division
Val Morris	Conservation Division
Quinton Epps	Conservation Division
Aric Jensen	Assistant County Administrator

**Call to Order**

Grego welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order with a quorum at 3:30pm. Members, staff, and guests met in-person or by Zoom.

**Approval of Agenda**

- ⇒ **Grego moved to amend the agenda by adding Greenway Advisory Committee under the Chair report. DePaoli motioned to approve the agenda which was seconded by Weber. Motion passed unanimously.**

**Approval of Minutes**

- ⇒ **Weber moved to approve October minutes with minor modifications recommended by Grego which was seconded by Young. Motion passed unanimously.**

**Report of the Chair**

- **Congaree Biosphere Region (CBR) – update:** Grego reported the group is convening on a monthly basis and he was approached to lend his assistance in amending bylaws the group is currently in the process of refining.

- **Columbia Rowing Club Operating Agreement (CRCOA) – update:** Grego reported he, Jensen, and McKenzie conducted a site visit with the Richland County Recreation Commission (RCRC) staff. He expressed satisfaction with the meeting, describing it as constructive. Grego reported the RCRC staff conveyed that maintaining the site wouldn't pose a significant operational burden, as it appeared relatively easy to manage and was in good overall condition.
- **Strategic Plan – discussion:** Grego reported the Richland County Conservation Commission (RCCC) decided to revise the Strategic Plan. He reviewed the six goals and expressed each goal and strategy is achievable. In addition, he mentioned Epps prepared a brief spreadsheet outlining the status of each strategy and objective, indicating whether they were started, completed, or ongoing.
- **Advocacy – update:** DePaoli shared that she and Councilman Walker attended an event for Richland School District Two, where they engaged in a brief conversation. Weber reported his interaction with Councilman Pugh at the Wood Magic event which was held at Harbison State Forest and Grego reported on his conversation with Councilman Weaver.
- **December RCCC Meeting – action item:** Grego inquired with Gallman if the Historic Preservation Committee (HPC) was prepared to submit recommendations for the Heritage Tourism Marketing Plan (HTMP) to RCCC on 12/18/2023. He requested Gallman to motion for a meeting if necessary. Pearson questioned the need for a motion, given that the HPC had not yet convened to discuss the recommendations. Grego clarified the HPC should convene before 12/18/2023, and present their recommendations during the RCCC meeting on that date. Morris sought clarification on the motion, with Epps questioning if the agenda items would exclusively focus on the HTMP. Grego explained the HTMP would be discussed and there could be additional agenda items.

⇒ **Gallman moved to have a meeting on December 18, 2023 to discuss the Heritage Tourism Marketing Plan (HTMP) recommendations, which was seconded by DePaoli. Motion passed unanimously.**

#### **Report from Community Planning & Development**

- **Land Development Code-Remapping Restart – update:** Jensen reported the Land Development Code was approved.

#### **Treasurer's Report**

- **FY22–23 General Budget status – update:** Epps reported no major changes since the last meeting.

#### **Historic Preservation Committee (HPC) Report**

- **Heritage Tourism Marketing Plan (HTMP) – update:** Gallman reported the HPC met with Experience Columbia, Post No Bills and Historic Columbia via Zoom for a draft presentation of the HTMP.

- **Historic Preservation Plan (HPP) – update:** Gallman reported plan is a work in progress. RCCC staff is still researching for the development of the RFP for the HPP and it is still a work in progress.
- **St. Peters Baptist Church Cemetery (8909 Wilson Blvd) – update:** McKenzie reported he attended a meeting with Richland County Sheriff’s Department and members of St. Peters Overcoming Baptist Church and the investigation of the removal of headstones is ongoing.
- **Cemetery Protection Ordinance – update:** McKenzie reported he has received a draft ordinance from the County Attorney’s office, and it is currently under review by Epps. He indicated the draft ordinance would be shared and discussed during the upcoming HPC meeting.

### **Natural Resources Committee (NRC) Report**

- **Lake Elizabeth Conservation Easement – update:** McKenzie reported the easement is still a work in progress, and there aren't any updates from the County Attorney's office. He recommended the NRC decide during their meeting in December on whether they want to proceed with the easement.
- **Scout Motor – update:** Weber reported there are no updates. Grego reported there was an announcement of Scout Motor’s opening offices in the Bull Street District. Additionally, Young reported new administrative buildings on the site as well.
- **Potential Property Purchase – update:** Epps reported on a recent meeting with the property owner, indicating negotiations are still ongoing.
- **Mill Creek Bridge – update:** Epps reported the bids he received for the project were significantly higher than estimated and he is exploring other avenues for additional funding.
- **Bates Old River – update:** Grego reported he would like to see County Council's perspective on the operating agreement with the Columbia Rowing Club (CRC) before proceeding.
- **Mitigation Bank Credits – update:** Epps reported there has not been much change since the last meeting.
- **Forestry Stewardship Plan – update:** Epps reported no new updates. Work in progress.

### **Conservation Program Analyst’s Report**

- **Fabel Easement:** McKenzie reported he and Young conducted a site visit at the property and they reviewed property and easement boundaries and Fabel’s goals and plans.
- **Benedict College Grant – update:** McKenzie reported no new updates. Work in progress.

- **FY 23-24 RCCC Grants – update:** McKenzie reported all of the grantees are up-to-date with their grants. Some of the grantees have already received their payments, while others have submitted payment requests that are currently being processed.
- **Events – update:** Morris provided an update on the 2024 Ag + Art Tour, including the new dates and times, details for upcoming fundraiser events, and the need for volunteers. McKenzie reported the pop-up event for the grants at Soda City was successful and expressed gratitude to the commissioners for volunteering their time. Additionally, McKenzie described the newspapers and social media outlets currently advertising the grant program.

### **Conservation Manager’s Report**

- **Staff vacancies – update:** Epps reported he has received additional qualified applicants for the Land Program Planner position and will be scheduling interviews.
- **New Business:** None
- **Public Input:** Pearson reported the unfortunate passing of former Commissioner Mildred Myers. Those interested in Mrs. Myers’ obituary can view it at the following link:  
<https://www.pearsonsfunerals.com/obituary/Mildred-Myers>
- **Adjournment:**

⇒ **At 4:20 pm, Weber moved to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Young. Motion passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Val Morris