



2020 Hampton Street • Room 3063A
P.O. Box 192 • Columbia, SC 29202
(803) 576-2083

Minutes June 20, 2016

Attendance:

Members present: Carol Kososki, John Grego, Jim Thomas, Charles Weber, Sam Holland, Glenice Pearson, Virginia Sanders, and Jennifer Carter

Absent: Ann Furr, Becky Bailey, Margaret DuBard

Others present:

Quinton Epps, Conservation Department
Nancy Stone-Collum, Conservation Department
Charlie Fisher, Conservation Department
Ken Driggers, Contract Legal Counsel
Beverly Harris, Richland County Public Information Director
Ken Clark, Citizen easement holder
Jackie Whitmore, Citizen

Chair, Carol Kososki welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order with a quorum at 3:35pm

Approval of Agenda: Glenice Pearson said she had an item of New Business she wanted to add to the agenda. John Grego made a motion to approve the agenda with the inclusion of New Business and was seconded by Charles Weber. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes from May 16, 2016: John moved and Charles seconded the motion to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Report of the Chair

Carol reported the results of the primary elections mean County Council will have at least four new members in January. Winners of the primary elections are: Yvonne McBride (3), Gwen Kennedy (7), Calvin Jackson (9) and Dahli Myers (10) who still has more elections this summer. RCCC members can follow Ann Furr's recent surgery and recuperation through her Caring Bridge page.

Executive Session

Charles made a motion to enter into Executive Session to seek legal advice. John seconded the motion which passed.

Charles made a motion to come out of Executive Session which was seconded by John. No actions were taken in Executive Session.

Conservation Committee Report

Blue Ribbon Committee

John attended the Blue Ribbon Committee in Carol's absence. He explained the Federal Register notice has come out and staff has not had time to absorb the ramifications for the Community Development Block Grants – Disaster Recovery criteria. Concerns were raised at the Blue Ribbon meeting about why only three dams would receive armoring from disaster recovery funds. John also attended a Resilience meeting at USC. Discussion has been underway with local flood coordinators concerning lessons learned to help responders deal with future disasters. Col. Shwedo, SC Flood Recovery Coordinator, made it clear that Richland County, Lexington County, and the City of Columbia should not receive any of the State's share of disaster recovery funds.

Historic Committee Report

History Initiative

Glenice reported there was a discrepancy in what was requested for the History Initiative and what has been delivered. Glenice recommends extending time on the contract to allow Dr. Donaldson to bring the deliverables in line with the contract. Nancy explained there are several invoices to be paid for the work done by graduate student, Alexandria Russell, on the project. Staff recommends paying the invoices for Ms. Russell and extending the contract for Dr. Donaldson to complete the project this summer. Any invoices for Dr. Donaldson will be held until work is completed. Glenice made a motion seconded by Jim to pay invoices relating to the graduate student. Motion carried unanimously. Glenice made a second motion to extend the USC contract until August 15th to allow for completion of work. Sam Holland seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Historical Marker

Nancy explained in the past when someone called regarding a historical marker she put them on a running list. Once SC Dept. of Archives and History (SCDAH) approves the historical significance and language for a marker, RCCC pays to have the marker manufactured. Would the Historic Committee prefer to take action on requests first, get RCCC approval, and then submit to SCDAH or continue as before? After discussion, it was decided the Historic Committee should come back with a recommendation on the process.

Mr. Jackie Whitmore a descendant of McCord family enslaved Africans wants a historical marker placed at the McCord House on Pendleton Street. The house served as the headquarters for Sherman's second-in-command, Gen. Oliver Otis Howard, who saved it from fire and destruction. Gen. Howard later operated the Federal Freedman's Bureau, an agency that was setup to make the lives of former slaves better; he also organized Howard University.

Conservation Directors' Report

Mungo donation at Longtown

The Mungo Company has asked RCCC to accept a donation of 3 parcels for a total of 5 acres adjacent to the 236-acre donation at Longtown. Quinton suggested one or more of these parcels could provide access/parking for the larger tract that one day could have trails built throughout. John made a motion to defer this matter to the Conservation Committee for a recommendation. Glenice seconded the motion which passed.

Palmetto Utilities

Administration has asked RCCC to look at the latest proposal from Palmetto Utilities concerning additional wastewater discharges to Spears Creek. Quinton requested comments be sent to him by the

end of the week. John has issues with the “factual” background presented by Palmetto Utilities and pointed out that Spears Creek flows back into Richland County so this is not just a Kershaw County concern.

Lower Richland Concept Plan

The evaluation committee selected Asakura Robinson from Texas as the most qualified bidder. Their proposal also had the lowest cost. Procurement is in the processing of awarding the contract.

Mill Creek Upper Tract

Purchase of the 769-acre tract in Lower Richland is on the A & F agenda for June 28. It appears the funding source may be changed to the Hospitality Tax fund balance.

Owens Field

As soon as the City of Columbia completes their legal review of an intergovernmental agreement with the county, RCCC and Stormwater funds will be transferred to the city and work can begin.

Conservation Coordinator’s Report

Nancy reported on final FY16 grant completions. The National Register nomination of Melrose Heights as a historic district will be presented to the state National Register Review Board on July 22. Progressive Network has printed their second booklet – *Harriet Hancock and the struggle for gay equality in SC* which was distributed to members. The B-25 bomber restoration is nearing completion; all grant funds have been spent and the plane will be ready for its debut in October. An energy efficiency workshop will be held at the Thompson Cottage on Saturday, June 25, as part of their grant agreement. Windows at the Ensor-Keenan House have been restored and a grand re-opening is planned for the fall. The Olympia Museum has had permitting problems, including the requirement for an exterior staircase, which delayed progress on the window restoration. A rollover of funds may be requested.

The panels are being finished for the Rocky Shoals Spider Lily project and will be installed at two locations in Riverfront Park with the binocular viewer. An unveiling will be planned for July. Three new kiosks and two ADA picnic tables have been assembled and installed at Harbison State Forest. Sesqui is completing work on the Jackson Creek boardwalk and bridge and a ribbon cutting ceremony is scheduled for July 14. New grantees for FY17 are scheduled to meet July 19 with Nancy. Comments were submitted to DNR regarding the Wateree River Heritage Preserve management plan.

Publicity/Outreach Discussion

This discussion was generated by a letter to the editor in *The State* newspaper by Mr. Ken Clark who does not feel Richland County is doing a very good job of publicizing the conservation easement program. Mr. Clark is a big supporter of conservation easements (RCCC holds two easements on his properties). Quinton pointed out budget constraints affect easement acquisitions unless the easement is donated. Quinton and Nancy recently met with Beverly Harris, Richland County Public Affairs Director, to discuss strategies for generating publicity about RCCC programs. Council needs to understand the breadth and scope of RCCC programs and the amount of funding spent on the easement and grant programs. More effort will be made to publicize the grant programs in local community newspapers especially in unincorporated areas, which may include paid ads. Staff will work with the Neighborhood Improvement Program and a change has already been made to the Richland Soil and Water Conservation District brochure to promote conservation easements through RCCC. Some type of tagline may be inserted into county tax notices. Council members will be solicited for ideas on different groups that could be approached for educational outreach.

Mr. Clark suggested developers, realtors, and bankers be contacted for donations since funding is a problem in obtaining easements. He said a balance between green space and development needs to be considered in order to be good stewards of God's creation. Without RCCC pushing for more easements, all the land will be developed. Carol requested Mr. Clark be available to consult and act as a sounding board. Quinton indicated staff is working on ways to improve the budget and revenues.

New Business

Glenice indicated RCCC needs to tackle the issue of having some professional help on the historic side of RCCC's work. She recommends there be access to regular historic expertise from people better equipped in this area.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlie Fisher, Administrative Assistant