



2020 Hampton Street ▪ Room 3063A  
 P.O. Box 192 ▪ Columbia, SC 29202  
 (803) 576-2080

**Minutes  
 August 16, 2021**

**Attendance**

Commissioner	District	Present
Charles Weber	1	Yes
Tim McSwain	2	Yes
Sam Holland	3	Yes
Glenice Pearson	4	Yes
Buddy Atkins	5	Yes
John Grego	6	Yes
Robert Squirewell	7	Yes
Deborah Depaoli	8	Yes
Vacant	9	--
Darrell Jackson, Jr	10	No
Gail Rodriguez	11	Yes

Staff & Visitors	Affiliation
Annette House	Building Inspections Division
Quinton Epps	Conservation Division

**Call to Order**

Grego welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order with a quorum at 3:38 pm. Some members met in person at the 2020 Hampton St. 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room and some called in as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Grego introduced DePaoli as the new Commissioner of District 8.

**Approval of Agenda**

⇒ Pearson moved to approve the agenda to change the Richland County Conservation Commission (RCCC) Annual Plan for County Council (second item under the chair) to be the last item discussed and was seconded by Squirewell. The motion passed unanimously.

**Approval of July Meeting minutes**

Grego recommended he make edits to the July 19, 2021 draft minutes in a Word document and submit clean copy to be voted on at the next meeting.

**Report of the Chair**

- **QuikTrip development (Atlas & Shop Rds.) – update:** Grego reported QuikTrip had submitted a site

plan and in order to review it he would need to request it through a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request. He forwarded a FOIA request to the Ombudsman's Office and would pay the processing fee of \$2.48. He wanted to determine if the site plans saved the trees on site which have been an issue.

### **Treasurer's Report**

- **FY21/22 General budget status- update:** Squirewell explained the balance and funds that were encumbered. Epps explained the balance of \$49,000 in Professional Services is a part of the \$143,988.00 transfer in from the General Fund and is used for Special Services for maintenance at Pinewood Lake Park.

### **Conservation Committee Report**

No report

### **Historic Committee Report**

No report

### **Conservation Manager's Report**

- **Survey for RCCC Advocacy Plan – update:** Epps described an exercise which Chanda Cooper, Richland Soil & Water Conservation District (RSWCD) staff, conducted with the RSWCD Commissioners. During this exercise RSWCD Commissioners identified negative and positive items which occurred during the recent FY22 Budget approval process in order to decide how RSWCD Commissioners would like to improve their advocacy going forward. Epps stated he thought RCCC Commissioners should do something similar and suggested we do an online survey which would facilitate gathering information since the RCCC is a larger group than the RSWCD. He stated there will be an online survey coming out before the next meeting to help develop the Commission's Advocacy Plan.

Atkins commented the RSWCD is different because 3 of the district Commissioners are locally elected County wide officials, and 2 of them are appointed by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) and each one of the RCCC Commissioners has been appointed by our council members. He continued the most efficient advocacy plan is for each Commission member to have a personal relationship with their council member, keep them informed on a monthly basis regarding what we are doing, and what we will be asking for in our annual budget before we even submit it.

Pearson commented the Commissioners' advocacy should be much broader than working with Council members and we should promote our connections to the community as well as the communities in the County that do not know what the RCCC does. Commissioners serve residents of Richland County (RC) on behalf of County Council members. Council members are obligated to serve RC residents.

Holland stated he is going to be very busy in the next 6 months and has asked Pearson to take over as Chair of the Historic Committee and she has agreed on a temporary basis.

Pearson stated she wants to have a meeting with the Historical committee as soon as possible.

Pearson also stated she printed out Richland County history from the County website and wanted everyone to read it and give her feedback on their thoughts of the history that is on County's website.

- **Potential property purchase – update:** Epps stated the Cabin Branch appraisal has been started and he has been in discussions with Administration about the potential mitigation bank credit purchases.

- **Hiring of vacant positions – update (Land Program Planner, Conservation Program Analyst and Administrative Assistant):** Epps stated he has applicants for all three positions posted, he has narrowed down applicants for Land Program Planner and Conservation Analyst and is working on narrowing down the applicants for the Administrative Assistant position.

Atkins asked if there would be any input from the executive committee allowed for these applicants.

Epps responded we are going to have input during the interviewing process for the Land Program Planner and Conservation Program Analyst positions. He stated he did not feel that this is necessary for the Administrative Assistant position, and is open for suggestions.

- **RCCC Annual Plan for County Council – discussion:** Epps stated he wanted to include and utilize all the plans which we are already utilizing, we are behind on the annual planning since we haven't done one in the past, and the included draft plan outlines conservatively what we would like to do in FY22. There was much discussion among Commissioners regarding the draft RCCC FY22 Annual Plan including:
  - A lack of direction in the plan for what needs to happen with historical resources in the county (Pearson).
  - The timing around Council's approval of the Lower Richland Tourism Plan (LRTP) as well as the LRTP workshop proposed by Council member Newton. Atkins noted the timing of the workshop has a critical impact on preparation and timely presentation of the RC Annual Plan for FY23.
  - The potential partnership with the Richland County Library for a new library in the next 5 to 7 years. Epps noted the Cabin Branch property could be the site of a library with a cultural/environmental focus.
  - How Hospitality Tax funds are used for historic properties and how they are administered. Epps will provide information to Pearson on the Hospitality Tax.
  - The timeline for submitting the annual plan to Council. The timeline is undetermined, though Epps would like feedback by next month's meeting to finalize the Plan.
  - Budgeting issues surrounding the reserve fund or fund balance and whether budgets should be in the annual plan. Grego asked whether the Historic Preservation and Conservation Committees would have specific projects and budgets in mind, and what level of detail should be included in the Annual Plan. Commissioners would like information on the revenue fund balance as soon as it is available so that we understand how much money we have available for projects. Epps noted that if we do not receive CDBG funding to complete the Mill Creek bridge, our revenue fund balance would be duly encumbered.

The discussion ended with Epps asking Commissioners to please provide him with any advice or language for the draft annual plan before the next meeting.

## **Adjournment**

⇒ **Pearson moved to adjourn which was seconded by Squirewell. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Meeting adjourned at 5:02pm.**

Respectfully,

Annette House.