



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

Minutes
January 13, 2020

Attendance:

Members present: Carol Kososki, Charles Weber, Buddy Atkins, Gail Rodriguez, Robert Squirewell, Jim Thomas, Sam Holland, Tim McSwain, and John Grego

Vacant: Districts 4 & 10

Others present:

Quinton Epps, Conservation Division
Nancy Stone-Collum, Conservation Division
Charlie Fisher, Conservation Division
Clayton Voignier, Community Planning & Development Department
Geo Price, Community Planning & Development Department
Meghan Sullivan, Community Planning & Development Department
Chanda Cooper, Conservation Division
Kenny Mullis, Richland Soil & Water Conservation District

Call to Order

Chair Carol Kososki welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order with a quorum @ 3:35pm. Carol requested everyone introduce themselves around the table.

Report of the Chair

Comments will be made as the agenda progresses.

Approval of Agenda

Charles Weber made a motion to approve the agenda and was seconded by Tim McSwain. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

Charles made a motion to approve the minutes of November 18, 2019 and was seconded by Tim. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report

Newly elected treasurer, Robert Squirewell deferred to Nancy Stone-Collum until they can meet and discuss his duties. Nancy reported very little has changed since the last meeting. She referred everyone to the directory of members and staff contact information which will be updated when vacancies are filled.

Election of Officers

Nancy reported the four current officers said they are willing to continue for another year although Carol explained she would be stepping down from the Commission next December when Councilman Jim Manning's term ends. Charles made a motion to re-elect the slate of candidates by acclamation. Tim seconded the motion which carried unanimously. RCCC officers for 2020 are: Chair – Carol Kososki, Vice-Chair for Conservation – John Grego, Vice-Chair for Historic Preservation – Sam Holland, and Treasurer – Robert Squirewell.

Report of the Community Planning & Development Director

Land Development Code (LDC) rewrite update

Clayton Voignier reported staff has reviewed Module 2 and submitted comments to the consultants which they will incorporate into the document. The revised LDC will be sent to Council for review and comment and could be available for public review by late February. Council is expected to vote on the final version before the end of the year. Quinton explained the difference between the LDC and the Land Development Manual (LDM). The LDC is all of the ordinances/regulations dealing with Land Development while the LDM are certain technical aspects referenced in the LDC.

Administrative Assistant Position Change

--Begin Verbatim Transcription--

15:47

Clayton Voignier: Um, so, I know that there has been, ah, some discussion and, ah, concerns about this next one. But, um, I just want to say, ah, on record that, ah, what I've kind of spoken to the chair about and my management team internally in relationship to administrative changes the, the only thing that's changing, um, with regards to um a few of my administrative staff which included, includes, um, Charlie Fisher, is that, um, any, those administrative staff that have some similar tasks across my department would begin reporting to our business manager, um, and, um, so all those administrative staff that report to me would begin reporting to our new business manager Robin Carter, she's not here. Um, but that's the only change that would be taking place; there's no other changes with respect to duties that are occurring right now, no changes with relationship to that. So. I've talked about that with Administration, um, they didn't have any concerns with it at this point, um, so, um, they indicated that this type of change is fairly routine and, um, for a department of my size and so they, they haven't expressed any concerns. So. I know that you all got a document, um, that's an in—that's really a proposal that, um, I didn't even put together. Ah, it's just something that we're reviewing internally. And, it's not a final document. Anything in there is pretty subject to change other than the reporting change.

17:25

Carol Kososki: That's this document here [CK holds up document in question for all to see], this CP&D administrative support team document, I think most of you have seen that in your packets. OK.

Robert Squirewell: So when you say reporting, explain, that means, does that mean that they prioritize what's going to be worked on when?

Viognier: Um, no they're on paper they'll be reporting to our business manager, that doesn't really change the staffing right now.

Charles Weber: What advantage does that bring to Richland County Conservation Commission?

Viognier: Um, advantage to the Commission?

Weber: Yeah

Viognier: Um.

Weber: Am I mistaken that we pay 60% of her salary out of the half mill?

Squirewell: That's correct.

Viognier: It does come out of the, I believe that is correct, yes.

Weber: Okay, so what advantage does that bring to us, contributing that 60%?

Viognier: Um, a reporting change on paper? I, I can't think of any advantages, necessarily, but I can't think of any disadvantages either.

Weber: What efficiencies does it bring?

Viognier: Um, none at the, at this time, it's simply a reporting change.

18:35

Squirewell: Okay, I guess I'm, explain, you say reporting change, because normally when I hear reporting change that means accountability is to the business manager. They would be responsible for the person's performance reviews as well?

Viognier: Correct.

Squirewell: And, they, but they don't prioritize what work assignments they have?

Viognier: Um, I'm sure that would happen at some point, but, uh, what that looks like, I, I don't know.

Squirewell: Well, I [unintelligible on recording] I'm trying to figure out why we're doing it; it sounds like we're going back to a receptionist pool they used to have back in the '50s where you have all persons, administrative persons there and no expertise.

Viognier: Well it's, um, I think there are um, similar tasks that these administrative staff perform and so we want to ensure that they're performing them consistently; there is supposed to be consistency across our department, um, we think there are some smaller departments that have some needs that these staff can help with and um it's not in, out of line with their current duties.

Squirewell: I think I hear what you're saying; the concern that I have personally I can't speak for anybody else; familiarity with the things the Conservation Commission does takes a while to, to develop that expertise and knowledge base, so if she's not reporting to our area, then someone, someone else would have to do that task, and my, so, my thing would be that so there's going to be delays in terms of getting information back, getting things completed on time, as well as being where they are; I see we're losing, we're not winning on this, by putting her in the pool; now the pool might be gaining, more but from an administrative standpoint but other than the fact that she's doing everybody's spreadsheets doing some word processing, I don't see where there's any proficiency improvement in there.

20:30

Viognier: Um, perhaps not with the Conservation Division since they are fully staffed; um, there will be some efficiencies in other areas; I don't think that, um, there will be any loss of anything that Charlie currently brings or adds to the Commission. So.

Sam Holland: Physically, she will stay in the same office?

Viognier: Um, the reporting change is the only thing [unintelligible].

Kososki: For the moment that's the case. If I recall our conversation that you spoke to me about on Thursday, you said at the moment she will not be changing her physical location.

Weber: I'm concerned about the way the ordinance is written. How are you gonna justify keeping the salaries so that it's clear that we're not suffering from that 60% that's coming out of the half mill? That's a, that's a county ordinance, and it seems to me that you're starting to mess with that side of the, of the ordinance.

Viognier: Um, I, I don't, like again her duties aren't going to be changing, so I don't see why there would be, there would be changes to that.

Weber: Well, I hear what you're saying, then, then, the question is, if we're not changing, why are we changing?

Buddy Atkins: Why are we doing this?

Weber: Yeah, why are we doing this?

Viognier: Like I said, um, there's some similarities between, um, some of the tasks that are done; we just want to standardize those procedures, um, when it comes to budgeting, procurement, human resources, and so, there are some other staff that are going to be doing that and taking that reporting change on within our department.

Atkins: But all due respect, having had Quinton's position, and I was Director here from 2010 to 2014, those things should be done without a reorg. If you've got inconsistencies between divisions in terms of how things are done in terms of business practices or accounting or whatever, you need to fix those; that's *your* job, and the division director's job, and that doesn't, that doesn't involve moving anybody or changing anybody's supervisor. What I want to do is, ah, especially for some of the newer commissioners, I want to do two minutes worth of history. When I came here, the Soil and Water Department was a separate entity, and it supplied, supplied staff support to the Soil and Water Conservation District, of which Kenny is chair, and the Richland County Conservation Commission, of which Carol is the chair, and the staff was paid for out of both funds. Both the dedicated funds from the Conservation Commission, the half mill, and the general fund, which was directly allocated in the budgets going all the way back to '04 and '05 for support of the District programs, period. So, when I got here, we became a division of the planning department, and that didn't work out well. And that lasted about a year or so, and then we became a department again, and so I became a department director, simply because we are kind of an umbrella group and we really don't, I mean, we do stuff with stormwater, with public works, ah, we interface with educational parts of solid waste, blah blah blah. So, so as we think about doing this stuff, there is a long history, almost two decades, on Council of a direct allocation to the District. So, what I did when I got here was to make sure those budget allocations from the various sources were made clear, and so I was the one who put Charlie on 60% from the Commission simply because of the *huge* burden of IFAS and of paperwork. But she does a lot of other things besides administration and paperwork for the Commission. The 40% of her job is paid for out of the general fund for the District is very specialized, and there is administrative work in that, but she reports to the District board on that, and that's what's important to remember. When I was here, I had three bosses. One was the assistant county administrator, who I reported to. The other bosses I had were the people in this room and who were on the Commission at the time. And, I had to respond to them. And, to the Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners, who are a political subdivision of state government who outrank County Council, so, and the, and the code that I gave you, yes, think about it for a little while, the code I gave you says that the, District law says that they will determine what the duties are of the employees that they have. Well, Chanda, for example, is an employee of the County, but she serves, and is allocated, all of her salary is allocated, to District activities. They do an annual plan every year. The things that she does are in that annual plan; not necessarily in what Quinton develops in the annual plan. But the entire division is split. Quinton gets money from both sources. Charlie gets money from both sources. Nancy is funded from the half mill; Chanda is funded by the general fund. So that's kind of the way that it works and historically has functioned very well. So, if you're not gonna change any job duties, and you want to consolidate some of this stuff, and standardize it, please do that; but don't move her and don't change her because she is very specialized in terms of what she does and what she brings to both the Commission and the District. And it really is, and some of us, as Carol well knows, we had to spend a

lot of political green stamps to become a department. And Mr. Seals turned us back into a division, and now we're worried about losing Charlie and getting our administrative support getting reorganized, and that is a real problem. So if I were you, and some other people—Kenny and others—can bring in, what I would do is, if we lose her support, and she's critical to Chanda, and critical to the things that we do on the Commission, well who is it going to hurt? Well, educators, teachers, students, parents, Department of Natural Resources, USDA, Clemson Extension, Clemson Sandhill, USC—we have one of the most innovative research alliances with USC, um, ah, on soil health; the whole idea of research, education, and demonstration—and where all of that started, and the reason that Council funded it back in '04 and '05, was because of the drainage projects that were done by this department down in Lower Richland. Who loses with the Commission? Grantees who, you know, can't get financial information on time; City of Columbia, Forest Acres, other municipalities; Historic Columbia, Gills Creek Watershed Association, homeowners associations, neighborhood councils—and so these are the people if, if her abilities are hurt, to provide the support that she does for us now, these are all the people who are going to be calling County Council.

Kososki: I have a financial problem and that is that Richland County Council has approved a budget for us, per our ordinance. It is 60% for the one-half mill which is our designated funding for our programs. 60% of her salary goes from our one-half mill. The other 40% goes, as approved by Richland County Council, for, from the general fund, for support of District. We must by law have a budget approved; to, to say that she is going to do other duties, which I assume that's the case, is that not the case? She will be assigned other duties from other departments or other call centers? Is that in fact the case? Because if she is, there's no provision in our budget for that to be approved.

Atkins: Per the ordinance.

Kososki: The ordinance. The ordinance requires it.

Viognier: Um. I don't know, Quinton, you've mentioned that she already does some other duties for other divisions?

29:47

Quinton Epps: Um, periodically, you know, like, uh, I think you're talking about in Community Development, when people, when they're gone, you know, people come over to us and so, you know, being customer-service oriented, she helps them find what they need. So, yes, you know, in that case, she would be doing something for other divisions.

Viognier: And she also will be helping out with the, uh, Business Service Center [unintelligible] during their renewal season?

Epps: Um, I believe, didn't, you, you followed through with--

Charlie Fisher: Yes, I did volunteer to do that, they are short-staffed.

Atkins: But those are temporary.

Tim McSwain: And they're kind of voluntary, it almost sounds like. So one of the bigger issues that, that I see, and I appreciate that you're saying, hey, this is kind of a guideline and we aren't implementing anything, but, um, anything, when I read this, I look at this like we're creating this administrative assistant pool, and work comes in and now we're gonna pick somebody to allocate it to, that, that can be a huge conflict if we've got priorities with the Conservation Commission, and if you've changed administratively who she reports to, there's the potential for that administrator to go, ah, 'Charlie, I need you to work on this, never mind what the Commission said you need to get out today, because I've decided this is a priority.' That's where we're going to be hurt, if it comes down to something like that. Any time you have an administrative reporting structure that's over here when you're really working over here, that, that's; I know you don't have examples of here's how you can be hurt, but there's certainly the potential there if you're trying to serve a couple of different areas.

Jim Thomas: One of the things that I see, there's a lot of subjective types of words used in your proposal, and the thing that, you know, to me is, how do you quantitatively, ok, measure these? For instance, effectiveness. How do you measure that? And I'm not trying to, you know, irritate or aggravate you...

32:11

Viognier: No, no, I think that's fine. We would have to figure that out.

Thomas: Yeah, that's the thing that, kind of alarms me, you know, proposals, it's a good idea, um, assuming from your vantage point, but from ours, I don't see...I was just looking at your SWOT analysis, and I go, hmm. Weaknesses. Is that all? And, and this is probably rhetorical, not [unintelligible].

Weber: When is this scheduled to implement?

[Multiple responses from several Commissioners.]

Kososki: February 3 is mentioned

Thomas: This is a proposal.

Viognier: It's just a reporting change.

Kososki: Yeah, but the reporting change is central.

Atkins: So if you've got an elected official of the state calling up Charlie to ask her to do something and she says she can't do it because she's got to do some administrative work in the pool, that turns into a real problem, and that's what I want to continue to try to express to you, and I'm hoping Kenny is going to pipe up in a minute, but it is an arrangement that County Council determined back in '03, '04, that they were going to fund the District. Other counties do it because of the benefits that the district brings to the county.

Kenny Mullis: It's definitely not a unique arrangement. It's done all over the nation with districts all over the nation. We're so specialized, it takes a couple of years for somebody to figure out how we operate. We have so many different relationships and, and ah, obligations to different organizations, and how you handle those, who the contacts are, ah, it's, it's very complicated. It's not something that just anybody is just going to grab and go with. Um. Chanda's been here, Chanda and Charlie have both been here a few years and they're still figuring things out.

Atkins: So there won't be any cross-training on the stuff that the District does. That would be...difficult.

Viognier: The intent is not for anyone to lose anything from us. That's, that's certainly not the intent.

Weber: As a manager, I see a real conflict. If she's reporting, if *anyone* reports, to a manager, and their responsibilities can't be dictated by that manager, then that's a huge liability on that individual. Not, not the one reporting, but the one that's managing. And I've done that in the Bell system, and it don't work. Usually what ends up happening is that's the individual that comes up on the short change of the evaluation because nobody's happy, and the manager is in a, put in an unmanageable situation. It's like all of a sudden you having responsibility for the, for evaluating EMT techs. That's the equivalent of what's going to happen. And, ah, the other thing I wanna, I'm looking at the proposal that some-, I, I assume that your team put together, ahm, it looks like to me you've got eight departments—departments under you, but only four people are gonna come in.

35:49

Viognier: Yes, a lot of departments—divisions—don't have, um, any administrators.

Weber: Okay. So, we've got, we have a salary shortfall problem.

Viognier: Is that a question, sorry?

Weber: Yes.

Viognier: Do we have a salary shortfall problem?

Weber: Yeah. We can't afford to hire people in these other divisions.

Viognier: Um. I don't have positions. I mean, uh, I don't know about salaries, but I know, uh, positions have to be, to go through...

36:20

Weber: Okay so you don't have a position for them. Could we not go after positions for those if they need people?

Viognier: Um...

Weber: And I'm just going to pick one out of the bucket here, if, if zoning doesn't have a position,

Kososki: Do you have a position, Geo?

Weber: Yeah, why don't we, well, I said we; why doesn't the County document that's the problem and let's go get somebody for that position.

Thomas: Mmm-hmm. In zoning.

Kososki: Well, maybe zoning isn't an appropriate example. Maybe another call center is, is appropriate; I, you know, I'm looking at Geo, who it's not a problem for.

Weber: I'm looking at the SWOT too and I'm trying to figure that thing out, what are the advantages and disadvantages; and I don't see anything in there that tells me that, that our problem is laKososki of manpower, and that's sort of what I'm hearing, that we don't have the ability to support some department, ah, for xyz function, if you bring them all together, then that task, that assumes that the process we have now, we've got people not doing things, and I'd like to know where that is.

Viognier: We have some non-administrative staff, um, doing tasks that are not within their job classifications.

Weber: Ok. So. So should we be looking at why, why that's happening, if they have extra time, don't answer this, okay, this, this is me speaking out loud. If we have person xyz that can pick up things that are outside of their responsibility then they're not fully loaded, that's another problem, ok. If we have people who are fully loaded who are picking up responsibilities, then we need to be looking at where that shortfall is because we're not using them efficiently. Get my drift?

Thomas: Yeah.

Weber: You understand where I'm going. You know exactly where I'm going.

Thomas: Oh, yes.

Viognier: And I can bring that up with Administration.

Thomas: Because it puts you kind of in a very vulnerable position.

Weber: It puts you in a failing position.

Thomas: Yeah.

Weber: You aren't going to win either way; this is not a win-win.

Holland: Who is the tail wagging this dog? I mean, the upper administration? They want to rearrange it, so?

Weber: Well, do we need to go up there and talk?

Squirewell: If I may, I, think, and I hope you don't think people are beating up on you, it's not.

Holland: I'm not trying to.

39:28

Squirewell: But it, it's a problem that has come about through the evolution of technology, okay. I have an administrative person, but I've probably picked up 60% of the administrative work. By the time I've finished with it, here, all I need you to do is publish it and send it out, I mean, I've proofed it, I've done everything. It, it's; I understand the idea of cross-training, you may be able to treat cross-training among the department without necessarily having to move people out of their department, that's one thing. But it sounds like professional persons are trying to say, 'You know what? I'm doing too much administrative stuff myself; I want to give it to someone else, which means I'm gonna have more time,' that's what it sounds like to me. And, and, as we continue to be involved, and, and as software development [unintelligible], secretaries...I hate to say it, secretaries and administrative assistants, they're disappearing; that's a, that's a, that's a profession that's going away, and it's like you're trying to, people are trying to recreate that and bring it back. It's not coming back. So a pool is not going to do you any good. But if it's cross-training you want, cross-training can be done without having to consolidate everybody in one room.

Atkins: Let's, let's...

Viognier: I think to your point we're, we're not hiring any more administrative assistants.

40:40

Atkins: I want to turn this upside down on its head. What if somebody upstairs, downstairs, on the first floor in the council room, decided that we needed cross-training among the department directors so that you could learn everything that Public Works does, and you could learn everything that the, the tax people do, and you could learn everything that the Emergency Response people do, and vice-a-versa. I mean, that would be really great. Uh. I know when I was here I was involved in way too much and I got into a lot of trouble, uh, because of it because of my training and experience, whether it was solid waste, or stormwater, or flooding, or take your pick. So if, if you use that analogy, yes cross-training works; but by the, and it's really good to understand what the other divisions do, certainly generally and in some level of detail. Like, for example, I know a lot of what Geo does, because I worked with him for four years; but I don't understand everything he does, because I'm not a planner or a zoning administrator. But what has happened, in reality, in, in all of our job functions is specialization. And, so, in reality everybody in the organization, all the way from the administrator to the bottom, needs to be able to understand how the County functions, and as much of the technical and administrative stuff as they can. But nobody can know all of it; and nobody can know everything that goes on in the Planning Department. So, I think that's the case here, is that

Charlie is very specialized, and it's the way that it ought to be. Please develop a pool and take away her IFAS responsibilities so we can use her to do something more productive, although you have to be responsive to us if we want money moved around for a grant, or money moved around for an attorney or money moved around to pave a road or whatever it might be, like, lickety-split; but if you want to do that, that's fine, and that's where the cross-training is. But I don't think that it's possible to have cross-training on conservation, zoning, and planning, and the assessor's office, and blah blah blah.

43:15

Viognier: Yeah, I mean I would agree. And so I'm strictly talking about the duties that you just mentioned. So it may, you know, I don't want to get into hypotheticals, because I, I don't know, but it may turn out that that is less of what she does.

Weber: You don't know now?

Thomas: No, that's the risk; you, you are at risk. You are vulnerable. I, I don't mean that in a crude way, okay? But--

Atkins: Clayton, is there any way that, that you can wave your magic wand without us getting involved and put this off for a little bit?

Thomas: Right.

Weber: Yeah, what's magical about the third on the reporting? What I guess I hear from you is that, none of the duties are gonna change but the reporting is gonna change. What's magical about the third on the reporting? Is that a staffing [unintelligible], is somebody, is a, is a manager at risk because no one is reporting to them?

Viognier: No.

44:22

Weber: Then, then there's nothing magical about this happening on the third.

Viognier: [Unintelligible]

Thomas: Something, what's, what's really the catalyst here, that ... are you getting promoted?

Viognier: Not that I...know of.

[Laughter]

Squirewell: But you can always hope, right?

Atkins: Not yet, until somebody else leaves; there might be some openings soon!

Weber: I mean...I don't understand the driving force.

Thomas: Yeah. There's something...

McSwain: This, this isn't a new concept.

Thomas: Yeah, this isn't new, I've been in-

45:03

McSwain: So, I retired from Wells Fargo bank. There was a concept there around project managers that said, 'a project manager is a project manager is a project manager. Who cares what area; they're going to manage this project.' Which is a bunch of bunk.

Thomas: It is.

McSwain: You need some expertise in the area that you're working, and I think maybe this is that same kind of concept, to say administrative assistants are administrative assistants, and we need to, yeah, as you mentioned, Clayton, you've got some folk—you've got a department or two, or whatever it is, that folks don't have an administrative assistant. So folks doing a regular job are having to pick up that function. And I think maybe the concept here is we take the, quote, "administrative assistants," and it's a pool, and, you know, any task that's considered "administrative," we can pick anybody out of there and, and, I can, tell you from past experience, as we've already mentioned here, there's some specific expertise to the Conservation Department; there certainly is specific expertise to every other department in the County. That, if the right person is doing it, it's going to be very efficient, it's gonna be taken care of, and that kind of thing. So I think, I think, this, this is not an unusual concept.

Thomas: No, no, no.

McSwain: This happens in business every...

Thomas: And it happens in, in, in the federal government!

McSwain: Well, right. But, I mean, and, and we do appreciate you hearing us, though, I mean, hearing us. And, and our biggest concern is we've got a person that's hugely important to us with very distinct knowledge, expertise to our department; and our biggest concern is her being pulled to do other functions, that somebody says, 'oh, it's administrative assistant; who's available? I don't know, but we saw Charlie in the hall, so we're going to get her to do it.'" And, and my biggest concern along that line in addition to that is now we've got something important we need to get out today and her administrative manager says 'nope, nope; this planning thing is more important than you getting that conservation thing out,' because that's who she administratively reports to.

Mullis: And, and I don't know about the Commission so much, but at the District, we're struggling to keep up with those extra duties, other than administrative; it's really a strain on Charlie and Chanda to keep up with. We need more help in that area. [Unintelligible]

Thomas: Charles, you know, hit on a point: is there a void in some divisions about, no that's unfair, no answer required. [Unintelligible]

48:04

Atkins: The County's shorthanded, period. And Council has gotten us into a, you know, we're, we're tight financially, because of the things where money has been spent. And so everybody is shorthanded and needs more help. I think we can understand the whole idea of trying to gain efficiencies and consolidate stuff, but...

Weber: We've got four people coming from four departments gonna support eight. That right there ought to be a big red ball that don't line up.

Atkins: Well, do we want to, I think I'd like to make, make a motion.

Kososki: Alright.

Atkins: Um, since we've had all this discussion. The first part of the motion is I would like for this part of the minutes to be, uh, rendered verbatim, or near-verbatim in the minutes. I think we really need to capture this. I don't want a summary like our normal minutes. And this is a two-part motion, so I'll bifurcate it, um, so that y'all can vote on that, or we can get a second, or not get a second.

Weber: I'll second that, that motion.

Thomas: Go ahead.

Kososki: The first—well, the first. Are you making the first motion?

Atkins: So this is, yeah, this is...

Kososki: Okay, so the first part of your motion is to:

Weber: Verbatim.

Atkins: To, to develop a set of verbatim minutes. We've got the recordings which we have to retain for three years so I'm just saying I think it would be beneficial because we've had a lot of good exchanges and conversations, and I think we need to make sure that we memorialize those in, in a written way.

49:36

Kososki: Okay, so do I have a second to that motion? I have a second. The motion was made by Buddy, and, and, the second is made by Charles. Okay. Is there any conversation about that? Hearing none, all those in favor please say aye.

Commissioners: Aye.

Kososki: Opposed?

[Silence]

49:55

Kososki: Okay, motion passes. The second motion?

Atkins: The second part of the bifurcated motion is, um, I would move that the, um, Richland County Conservation Commission request a meeting as soon as possible or no later than the proposed implementation date of February 3, 2020, with the County Administrator, Assistant County Administrator, and the Planning and Development Director to discuss the proposed administrative support plan and the impacts to the Conservation's Division's budget and its responsibilities. I move that the Chair of the Commission transmit the written request to Administration, as well as to Councilwoman Terracio, who is our liaison to Council (my understanding), and to Kenny Mullis, who's the Chair of the Richland Soil and Water Conservation District, whereby we would request their presence at this meeting. And that is my motion.

Nancy Stone-Collum: Chip Jackson is our liaison.

Kososki: Chip Jackson is the liaison; do you want to amend that to say...

Atkins: Ah, yes. Chip Jackson then.

Kososki: The liaison. Right. Okay.

Stone-Collum: Will you e-mail us that motion?

Atkins: Uh, I will.

Kososki: Okay.

Stone-Collum: Gracias.

Weber: Second.

Kososki: I have a motion and a second.

Atkins: And I can read it again, if anybody needs—

Kososki: Go ahead and read it once more.

Atkins: Move that the Richland County Conservation Commission request a meeting as soon as possible but no later than the proposed implementation date of February 3, 2020, with the County Administrator, Assistant County Administrator, and the Planning and Development Director to discuss the proposed administrative support plan and the impacts to the Conservation Division's budget and its responsibilities. I move the Chair of the Commission transmit the written request to Administration, as well as to Councilman Chip Jackson, who is our Liaison, and to Kenny Mullis, who is the Chair of the Richland Soil and Water Conservation District, whereby we would request their presence at this meeting.

Kososki: Okay; do we have discussion about that motion?

51:58

McSwain: One question for Clayton. Is...how does this impact you? Does this look like we're trying to do an end-around, what, what this? I mean, we're bringing you information, but we're we're making a motion, well, we want a meeting with a bigger audience. What's...?

Viognier: Um, yeah, I've spoken with Administration about it, ah, the Assistant County Administrator, ah, Ashley Powell has said she is willing to meet to talk about it, to answer any questions, so...

McSwain: Will this adversely impact you for us to be trying to pull a meeting like this together?

Viognier: Uh, I can't say.

Thomas: No, no, no; we, we don't want you to take, to take that, that position. Did I hear you say 'I don't care?'

Viognier: No, I said I can't say.

Kososki: No, he said he can't say. He doesn't know.

Thomas: Oh, oh, oh; okay, I'm sorry.

John Grego: Where would the employees be, I mean, they'd be centrally organized, but would they be physically, centrally organized?

Viognier: All of that was part of the proposal, they would be...we would have to look at that and subject to further review and analysis.

Squirewell: [Unintelligible]

Viognier: No, no.

Kososki: I think, I think there was some comments about them being physically organized on the, on the first floor. Not immediately. Not immediately.

Viognier: Well, shared access. It was just a proposal.

Atkins: Well I'd like to go ahead and call for a vote on the motion. We're kind of digressing and talking about the, the essence of some of the other stuff, so, I mean, the purpose of the motion is just to have a broader audience so we can have a discussion because all of us are appointed by County Council, and Kenny serves as the Chair of a political subdivision of the state.

Kososki: All those in favor say aye.

Commissioners: Aye.

Kososki: Opposed?

Commissioners: [Silence]

Kososki: Motion passes.

Atkins: Thank you Clayton.

--End Verbatim Transcription--

Conservation Committee Report

Land Development Manual comments

John Grego reviewed the comments developed by the Conservation Committee and submitted on December 30. Many of the concerns expressed in the July 2018 letter remain unaddressed. Since the LDM is a technical reference document there should be a technical editor to review and modify the document to correct the editing, layout, and technical weaknesses of the current version. Numerous instances of poor grammar, ambiguous references and incorrect technical terms were found. More consistent use of diagrams and figures throughout the manual are needed as well as references/citations to support the standards. Despite having asked to be a stakeholder in July 2018, RCCC was never included in any meetings. The manual provides a hardship exemption for developers unable to meet standards for TSS removal. Since there is no hardship exemption found in the county ordinances, the language should be removed from the manual. The ability to maximize rooftop solar installations and solar generation for commercial, residential, and transportation use is essential. The County should require developers to complete sidewalks prior to County acceptance. Definitions are not comprehensive and should be clear and unambiguous.

Geo expressed his appreciation for RCCC's thorough and straight forward comments over the years which validates the reason comments are requested. The comments and suggestions from RCCC have been forwarded to Woolpert, the consultant, who will be looking at formatting, grammar, definitions

and some of the specifics RCCC mentioned. RCCC and the homebuilders will be able to look at the revisions before it goes to Council. Carol requested more diagrams to explain the narratives. Geo stressed this will be a living document that can be updated as changes occur. Buddy indicated the entire document needs to be re-organized, reducing the commentary and putting it in an introductory chapter with the goals and objectives. The manual would provide guidance on the Best Management Practices (BMPs) with diagrams and technical reference, how they work, removal efficiencies, etc. Engineers need the guidance of what BMPs to use, how they work, and the framework they can be used in and under the broad umbrella of the code that is being rewritten. Gail Rodriguez added the need for flowcharts and checklists.

Due to the lack of time and multiple agenda items left to cover, Carol requested the Action Item be covered next.

Ag & Art Tour sponsorship

Nancy explained the tour was conceptualized in 2018 and RCCC voted to give a \$500 sponsorship at the time. The process took longer to organize than anticipated and the well-attended tour took place in June 2019. Plans are now being made for the tour on June 6 - 7, 2020. RCCC has received a request for a 2020 sponsorship. RCCC's logo was on all printed materials for the tour. John made a motion seconded by Buddy to provide \$500 in funding. Motion carried unanimously.

Historic Committee Report

Heritage Center meeting

Sam Holland reported a meeting was held with numerous stakeholders on November 20 at Richland Library to brainstorm what a Heritage Center could be. The Lower Richland Tourism Plan calls for the center to be co-located with a library for financial and staffing reasons. Discussions looked at the purpose of a Heritage Center, what will it provide and who does it serve, how would a joint purpose facility operate, where will the money come from. Will it have a restaurant, theatre, meeting rooms? The end result would be a tourist destination to launch visitors into exploring Lower Richland. The Library Chief Operating Officer is developing a narrative to address many of these questions. Melanie Huggins, Library Director will take two proposals to her Board for building a permanent library. One option is surplus space at Lower Richland High School; a second is to use county-owned land for co-location of the library and Heritage Center. Quinton has proposed various parcels on Lower Richland Blvd. and Air Base Road.

Charles made a motion to extend the meeting an additional 20 minutes. Tim seconded the motion which carried.

Conservation Division Manager's Report

Legal contract status

Quinton reported one application has been received. The Legal Department has asked staff for comments on who RCCC would like to select. Nancy and Quinton will review the contract and bring it to the Executive Committee to decide what they want to do. The Legal Department by ordinance has final approval. A two week timeline is anticipated for the matter to be brought to the Executive Committee.

Land Program Planner vacancy

Approximately sixteen applications have been received for the position. Several candidates look promising. Clayton has suggested phone interviews to pare the applicants down to 2-3 candidates who will then be interviewed in person by a small group of commissioners and staff. Staff should be organized and ready to proceed by the end of the month.

Urban Ag pollinator grant letter of support

An RCCC support letter on behalf of the Richland Soil & Water Conservation District (RSWCD) was provided for an urban grant application to rehabilitate the Pinewood Lake Park's underutilized community garden into a pollinator conservation demonstration and teaching area. The collaboration between RCCC & RSWCD will ensure the sustainability of the project. A garden manager, Ann Marie Johnson will be hired and she will establish a volunteer corps to assist with long term garden maintenance after the grant expires. The community, teachers, farmers, and gardeners will all benefit from the project. If awarded, implementation will begin in March.

Conservation Coordination Report

Congaree Biosphere Region MOU

Nancy reported the project is slowly moving forward. After 2 ½ years of discussion, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is being circulated among organizations and governmental entities. The MOU creates an organizational structure for members to collaborate on voluntary efforts to protect and promote the cultural heritage and natural resource of Congaree National Park and its wider region. Staff is discussing who should be a signatory for Richland County and who can participate on the Advisory Council. Stormwater, Planning, and Conservation divisions are involved but the county will only have one vote.

Greenways update

Quinton and Nancy met with the Transportation Department staff in December and learned they had scheduled a public meeting for January. They cautioned them the Advisory Committee needed to be involved beforehand so the public meeting has been postponed until March. The first Advisory Committee meeting since the transition was held last week. Transportation staff want a public meeting to present what Council approved with the greenway realignments, making this an informational meeting, not a citizen input session. Staff were given much advice on issues that will come up and how to handle them.

Plastic bag Ordinance

Nancy asked for a show of hands for who has responded to the bag survey and encouraged all to participate. So far, more than 4,000 people have responded but that is only 1/10 of the county's population. The task force is organizing community and stakeholder meetings for the spring.

Grants Update

An update of grant financial activity is in the packet. Allen University is the first grant to be completed; the project was for architectural drawings for the Good Samaritan-Waverly Hospital rehabilitation. They will have a groundbreaking ceremony next week. Historic and Conservation

quarterly reports were provided for the respective committees. The Public Information Office (PIO) is creating a series of events and activities called 2020@2020 to honor a legacy of service at 2020 Hampton Street. Nancy provided PIO with a list of 20 historical projects funded by RCCC. A short video will be made for each project, the first being about the Harriett Barber House.

New Business

Tim announced he had a new item of business about the proposed Fairfield Wastewater Treatment Plant that would discharge into Big Cedar Creek. Fairfield County Council has given third reading to the plan. Kenny Mullis indicated he and Quinton made calls earlier in the day for pertinent information about what is happening. Quinton will attend the Environmental Planning Advisory Committee of Central Midlands Council of Governments on Wednesday and forward information on as it become available. Fairfield will have to get approval to amend the 208 plan and get a NPDES permit from DHEC for the plant.

Charles requested the minutes reflect that Charlie works an 8:00 – 4:30 schedule and this meeting is adjourning at 5:20.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Charlie Fisher