



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

**Minutes  
 May 18, 2020**

**Attendance**

Commissioner	District	Present
Charles Weber	1	Yes
Tim McSwain	2	Yes
Sam Holland	3	Yes
Vacant	4	--
Buddy Atkins	5	No
John Grego	6	Yes
Robert Squirewell	7	Yes
Carol Kososki	8	Yes
Jim Thomas	9	On leave
Vacant	10	--
Gail Rodriguez	11	Yes

Staff & Visitors	Affiliation
Quinton Epps	Conservation Division
Nancy Stone-Collum	Conservation Division
Charlie Fisher	Conservation Division
Michael Ellison	WK Dickson

**Call to Order**

Chair Carol Kososki called the meeting to order with a quorum at 3:30pm. All members and staff participated by video conference due to the closure of county offices and the shelter in place order as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Approval of Agenda**

John Grego moved to add an action item to the Conservation Committee report concerning reallocation of grant funds for Camp Discovery. Charles Weber seconded the motion which was approved. John moved and Tim McSwain seconded the motion to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried.

**Approval of Minutes**

John made a motion to approve the minutes of April 20, 2020 and was seconded by Gail Rodriguez. Motion carried.

**Treasurer’s Report**

Robert Squirewell reported the financial statement shows no change of significance and spending is limited in part due to staff working from home.

**Report of the Community Planning & Development Director**

Clayton Voignier was not able to attend but sent an email with the following updates:

1. [The CDBG-MIT Timeline has been updated further as we’ve received additional guidance from HUD. Our plan is to provide the updated version to the BRC this Friday.](#)

2. The BRC meeting is scheduled for May 28 from 1-3 pm through a virtual Zoom meeting.
3. This month's Administration and Finance Committee meeting is scheduled from 2-3 pm on May 21. The contract amendment for the Walden Pond Feasibility Study Item is on this agenda and Administration has requested a member of the RCCC join this meeting to address this item.
4. At this time, new hires are only authorized by Administration for vacant public safety-related positions. Other positions may be considered by the County Administrator on a case-by-case basis depending on whether or not it can be justified as an essential position.
5. Related to re-opening, the County Administrator brought together an internal staff committee to devise a re-opening plan for the county using on relevant data and research. Thus far, information gathered by the committee has not been presented to the Ad Hoc Coronavirus Committee. The re-opening of County facilities will ultimately be a policy decision made by Council.

### **Report of the Chair**

Carol reported she had requested copies of the comments received on the Action Plan for CDBG-Mitigation and any responses before the next Blue Ribbon Committee. The comments will be sent later this week before the meeting on May 28. Carol also referenced the letter she sent to Administrator Brown on April 27 following an email Quinton received from Robin Carter, Business Manager for Community Planning & Development, that supervision of Charlie Fisher had been transferred to Robin effective immediately. Carol expressed unhappiness in the means of communication, lack of explanation, and the lack of collaboration and transparency Mr. Brown has spoken about. There has been no response from the Administrator. Kenny Mullis, Chair of the Richland Soil & Water Conservation District, is also sending a letter to Mr. Brown which Carol will share with Commissioners.

### **Conservation Committee Report**

#### Grant Reallocation

Because schools were closed mid-March for the pandemic, Camp Discovery was not able to hold two Family STEM Curriculum Nights as planned for in the grant. Discussions between the camp director and Nancy Stone-Collum resulted in a decision to use unexpended funds for providing activity kits to Homeless No More families to help them connect with nature. Nancy neglected to get Conservation Committee approval for the reallocation of funds which totaled \$1,615.87 (exceeding the \$999 cap for staff approval). The committee recommended after-the-fact approval of the reallocation which was approved unanimously.

#### Land Development Code Rewrite

John has drafted a re-iteration of RCCC June 2019 comments on Module 1 that were not addressed in the consolidated draft. He is working on a list of new issues which the Conservation Committee will review and consider when they meet on May 22. The zoning map is not yet available and will be important for the review. The consultants, Clarion, and Planning staff held several virtual meetings last week that John, Quinton, and Nancy participated in. Comments should be submitted within 3-4 weeks. Carol asked about next steps and it was decided RCCC would meet on Monday, June 1 at 3:30 for the purpose of voting on the final comments.

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

#### Walden Pond Feasibility Study Amendment

In February RCCC approved a scope of work amendment to allow WK Dickson to provide survey work for the feasibility study at Walden Pond that was to have been provided through Transportation Penny funds for the widening of Spears Creek Church Road. The amendment to the scope of work would have cost \$17,500; a request to Council for approval of the contract increase was prepared and submitted. In further discussions between Quinton and the new project manager Michael Ellison, it was determined that the study can proceed using county LIDAR data which will result in some loss of precision but will be accurate enough to develop

alternative analyses. If RCCC decides to proceed with a specific alternative, at that point more precise survey data will be needed. Charles moved and Gail seconded a motion to withdraw the request for a scope of work amendment that goes before the Administrative and Finance Committee later this month. The vote was unanimous. Quinton will email Clayton to request the withdrawal.

#### Mill Creek bridge RFQ

Quinton requested approval to proceed with issuing a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for engineering design services to evaluate and develop options for a damaged bridge and road at Upper Mill Creek. The scope of work includes two distinct activities: 1) evaluation of the existing bridge to determine if the bridge should be repaired or replaced given future plans for the property as well as design options for repair or replacement; and 2) evaluation and design options for improvement of the silvicultural road leading to the bridge. Carol asked about the source of funding for the repair/replacement; Quinton replied funds would come from the Conservation Fund. Charles moved and Tim seconded the motion to proceed with issuing an RFQ; the motion carried unanimously.

#### Tractor & Implements for Mill Creek

Quinton presented a quote from Richland County Fleet Manager Bill Peters for \$36,996.91 for a tractor and implements (bush hog, box blade, trailer, axle brakes, and ramps) and the offer for a donation of a decommissioned backhoe. Based on the last contract for mowing and clearing, the tractor will pay for itself in two years excluding fuel, labor and other costs. It will also allow for more frequent maintenance and quicker response time when problems arise. Funding is available through unspent funds in the Professional Services line item for Pinewood Lake Park. Charles made a motion, seconded by Tim to:

- Accept the package presented by Bill Peters for the purchase of a tractor and implements
- Accept the donation of a decommissioned backhoe
- Recommend a budget transfer from Pinewood Lake Park/Professional Services for the tractor purchase.

The motion carried unanimously.

#### Updates

Quinton is getting quotes for tree trimming at Pinewood Lake Park but it has taken longer than expected due to COVID-19 complication. The FY21 budget session on grants went smoothly with only questions from Mr. Malinowski about the disproportionate share of RCCC grants going to projects in the incorporated areas. There is discussion about 10% budget cuts but nothing definite has been presented. In addition to the letter RCCC sent to the Army Corps of Engineers encouraging use of the Mill Creek Mitigation Bank for the Holy Grail project, Gills Creek Watershed Association also recommended use of the bank and against permittee-responsible mitigation. Columbia Rowing Club has not signed the memorandum of agreement since there has been no clarification from Legal. There is no report on the status of the legal services RFQ. The Preliminary Engineering Report has not been completed for the Fairfield Wastewater Treatment Facility so no action will be taken at the Central Midlands Environmental Policy Advisory Committee in May as had been expected.

#### **Conservation Coordinator's Report**

Nancy reported all FY20 grants are on target to be completed by June 30 except for the six grants for which extensions have been requested.

The meeting adjourned at 4:59.

Respectfully submitted,  
Nancy Stone-Collum

