



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

Minutes September 17, 2018

Attendance:

Members present: Carol Kososki, Jim Thomas, John Grego, Lee Rambo, Sam Holland, Glenice Pearson and Charles Weber via telephone

Absent: Jennifer Carter, Virginia Sanders, Margaret DuBard

Vacant: District 7

Others present:

Quinton Epps, Conservation Division
Nancy Stone-Collum, Conservation Division
Charlie Fisher, Conservation Division
Chris Hansen, Conservation Division
Ken Driggers, Legal Counsel
Tracy Hegler, Community Planning & Development (CP&D) Department

Chair Carol Kososki welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 3:37 pm with a quorum.

Approval of Agenda and July 16 Minutes

John Grego made a motion to approve the agenda and July 16 minutes. Jim Thomas seconded the motion which carried.

Report of the Chair

Carol reported she attended the September 11 Council meeting where hospitality tax funds for Pinewood Lake Park Foundation and inventory items at the park were discussed. Council did not approve waiving the county's grant policy on disbursement and referred the inventory matter to a committee. Newspaper articles were passed around concerning Hyatt Park Pollinator Garden ribbon cutting and issues at Westinghouse.

Treasurer's Report

Nancy said work is just getting started on grant projects so very little money has been spent so far. She mentioned Charlie's concern that salary and benefit line items are not adequate. Quinton will provide an update on resolving that situation at the October meeting.

Community Planning & Development Director's Report

Tracy Hegler said she received the Land Development Manual comments submitted by RCCC and would respond to them. An opportunity for further input is available at the Zoning Public Hearing on October 23. An accompanying ordinance is being drafted. Carol questioned how to present the Lower Richland

Tourism Plan to Council for their approval. Tracy said no action was needed at this time. A decision was made to provide a copy of the tourism plan to council members with a transmittal letter since the plan ties into viable portions of the former Richland Renaissance plan.

Historic Committee Report

Sam Holland, Nancy, and other county staff met with Bill Ellen and his staff of Experience Columbia (formerly the Convention and Visitors Bureau) to discuss the Historic Trail. They offered enthusiastic support for promoting anything the county comes up with and suggested a coordinated effort to get more tours organized with transportation is needed. Historic Columbia recently organized another successful tour of Kensington Mansion. Nancy will check on the possibility of RCCC participating in a future tour. A meeting of various partners will be organized to develop a scope of work for a new website for all things historic in Richland County. Glenice Pearson made the point that all of Lower Richland is a historic site. Sam said the Historic Committee will meet in early October.

Communication Committee Report

Lee Rambo reported the committee is working on their strategy for an Engage Richland event to be held in early December which will focus on RCCC's grants program. A video is being created about the recent Pollinator Garden opening; pictures have already been posted on social media. A list of ten projects has been compiled to highlight on Facebook and Instagram this fall. A meeting summary was provided to RCCC members to help them with keeping their Council representatives up to date on commission activities.

Conservation Coordinator's Report

Updates

Nancy mentioned a new mitigation bank in Lower Richland has been proposed. The Goose Pond Mitigation Bank is a 1,185-acre parcel northeast of the county's Mill Creek property that will restore streams and preserve and enhance bottomland hardwood wetlands. John said the property is known as Rolling Gut; he will send comments to the Army Corps of Engineers.

The dedication for the Benjamin Mack Historical Marker is scheduled for Sunday, October 7 in Ridgewood. An invitation will be sent out with details. Nancy asked an Administration intern to update the Historic Marker Database. The Ag & Art Tour is struggling with fund raising and will be confined to Richland County for the June 2019 tour. Nancy gave a slide presentation of all of the 2018 grant projects.

National Summit for Gateway Communities

John brought to staff's attention the National Summit for Gateway Communities and suggested some people should attend as a first step for implementing pieces of the Lower Richland Tourism Plan. The summit is an opportunity for community leaders/staff to learn strategies for invigorating gateway and rural communities. The names of Virginia Sanders and Councilwoman Myers were mentioned. John made a motion seconded by Jim to approve funding for up to three people to attend the summit. Motion carried unanimously.

Conservation Committee Report

John explained the proposed letter to County Council details RCCC's serious concerns over soil and groundwater contamination by Westinghouse. The letter encourages Council to continue to be good stewards of the county's natural resources. Jim expressed his concern the letter wasn't strong enough

and didn't call for action. John replied that RCCC can respond when DHEC makes its recommendations. John moved to send the letter to Council and was seconded by Lee. Motion carried unanimously.

Conservation Manager's Report

Pinewood Lake Park

Quinton reported that illegal activities continue at the park since the gates remain open 24/7. Therefore, he recommends hiring a part-time Park Ranger to provide additional services/security. Several hiring and funding options were provided for consideration. John made a motion seconded by Lee to hire a part-time Ranger from a Temp agency with funding (\$8,000 - \$14,000) to come from existing Pinewood Lake budget items. The motion carried unanimously. Quinton will request a permanent part-time position for FY20. A Richland County Conservation Division Volunteer Manual has been created to provide volunteers with general information regarding purpose and responsibilities. Jim made a motion seconded by John to accept the concept of the manual and the establishment of the volunteer program. Motion carried unanimously. Chris reviewed two branding options for Pinewood Lake Park signs. After discussion it was decided a more welcoming approach with the sign language is preferred. John made a motion seconded by Jim to approve the colorful kingfisher bird design rather than the silhouette for branding, design, and marketing. Motion carried unanimously. Ken suggested Council be made aware of the new signage.

Walden Pond

Quinton and Nancy met with Ward Marotti, project manager for W.K. Dickson, in August to kick off the feasibility study. Letters about the study were sent to adjacent land owners. A site visit with the up-stream landowners is planned for October. Councilman Chip Jackson has been made aware of the activity.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Charlie Fisher, Administrative Assistant