



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

Minutes June 27, 2011

Attendance:

Members present: Carol Kososki, John Grego, Glenice Pearson, Gary Atkinson, Jim Lawracy, Margaret DuBard, Becky Bailey, and Sam Holland

Absent: Frank Houston, Virginia Sanders, and Mildred Myers

Others Present:

James B. Atkins (Buddy) Environmental Planning Division
Nancy Stone-Collum, Environmental Planning Division
Chanda Cooper, Environmental Planning Division
Ken Driggers, Legal

Chair Carol Kososki called the meeting to order at 4:01. She announced that Mildred Myers has had a stroke and was passing a card around to send to her. Carol introduced Chanda Cooper, the Education Program Coordinator and newest member of the Environmental Planning Division. Chanda spoke briefly about what she is doing at Clemson University Sandhill Research and Education Center with the Conservation Station and Carolina Children's Garden, as well as her plans to help the Commission with adult education. Glenice Pearson requested that Chanda help develop some community programs on conservation and suggested a clean-up and education activity on Ridgewood Creek. Becky Bailey mentioned that she was looking into the Adopt a Watershed program through Keep the Midlands Beautiful for the creek that runs next to the Monteith School.

Minutes: The minutes for April 25, 2011 were approved as written.

Agenda: The agenda was approved with no changes.

FY 2012 Budget: Nancy Stone-Collum reviewed the budget for FY 2011-12. The available allocation reflects a \$362,500 transfer to the General Fund but is still \$28,000 more than FY 2011, for a total program budget of \$706,673. Jim Lawracy moved and Gary Atkinson seconded the motion to approve the budget. The motion to approve passed by a vote of 8 to 0.

Committee Reports

Conservation Committee: John Grego, Chair

John discussed the beginnings of a new conservation easement policy for the Commission that is more strategic by clustering easements in specific areas of the County. The areas suggested are: Cabin Branch Creek in Lower Richland, Gills Creek, Crane Creek (north of Columbia), and Wateree/Pebble Creek

(Richland Northwest). Buddy expressed the need to use specific criteria to help guide the selection process. Part of the discussion was whether to focus on areas that are in the path of development versus those that are not imminently threatened and hence, more cost effective. Commissioners need maps to review the strategic areas. The limited amount of money for easement acquisition will be the limiting factor in easement acquisition.

Carol told the Commission that the Development Round Table did not complete work on the Land Development Code. In fact major revisions are needed since the current Green Code was incorporated verbatim into the Land Use Development Code and made mandatory. She recommended a thorough briefing on the resulting changes following completion by the Round Table.

Nancy reported that staff had learned after the fact about hazardous waste contamination on the 48-acre Mullis property previously approved by the Commission for an easement. Staff recommended to the Executive Committee that the not yet finalized easement be withdrawn but to compensate Ken Mullis for the \$3,950 in transaction costs he incurred. The Executive Committee had voted to approve the recommendation during its meeting on June 20. Jim moved and Sam Holland seconded the motion to concur with the Executive Committee decision. Margaret DuBard recused herself from voting. The motion was approved by a vote of 5 – 0 (Gary Atkinson and Becky Bailey having left early).

Two more easements in Pebble Creek are moving forward – John Ransom and Debbie Wooster. Nancy distributed a summary of the Effect of RCCC Easements Acquired between 2005 - 2011 on Land and Tax Values she prepared for Councilman Washington. A grant status report for FY2011 grants was presented indicating only one grant will be carried over into FY12. New grantees have been notified of their awards and a fiscal briefing meeting is scheduled for July 12.

Historic Committee: Frank Houston, Chair

Nancy reported for Frank Houston on her recent attendance at the Historic Columbia Award luncheon which recognized Pine Grove, the dedication of the Langford-Nord House by the Blythewood Historical Society, and the 90th anniversary of Historic Bethel AME. All FY2011 historic grants have been completed. Glenice mentioned her concern that readiness of a project should factor into the grant decision making process. Nancy reported that new leadership at International Paper in Eastover has expressed an interest in moving and restoring the slave cabin at Kensington (for which the Commission funded a conditions' assessment and preservation plan in 2007). The State Archaeologist is preparing a proposal. This could be a special project for the Commission.

Publicity Committee: Sam Holland

Sam Holland mentioned the June 13 article in *The State* in which Carol Kososki was quoted about the importance of clean water at the Lake Katherine paddling event sponsored by the Gills Creek Watershed Association. He also explained the need for an overhaul of our website and the fact that the Commission may need to consider external alternatives for website development and hosting.

Division Manager's Report: Buddy Atkins

Buddy reviewed the status of the easement requested by SCE&G to construct a 230Kv transmission line on the RCCC's property near Longtown. He and Anna Fonseca (RC Planning Director) met with Milton Pope and Sparty Hammett to discuss the matter. Mr. Pope requested staff prepare a list of questions

and concerns concerning the transmission for transmittal to SCE&G. Mr. Pope will then arrange a meeting with staff and SCE&G to discuss the RCCC's concerns. This matter is tentatively scheduled to be heard on the July 26, 2011 D&S Committee.

A brief update of the Caughman property purchase was provided. Currently, Richland County is in the process of purchasing the property using the \$100k approved by the Commission last year. Buddy referenced a meeting which was attended by Councilman Jackson, RCCC Commissioner Virginia Sanders and Mr. Brown of the RC Recreation Commission to discuss future plans for the park. Currently the RC Recreation Commission is determining its plans for the park. Beyond the contribution of funds, the consensus of the Commissioners was the Commission will not be involved in the park, if at all, until the purchase is finalized and a management plan completed.

Staff is expecting comments from the US Corps of Engineers Interagency Review Team (IRT) on the Jackson Creek/Decker Mitigation Bank sometime during early July. Buddy stated once the comments are received, staff will need to begin serious negotiations with the landowners in the bank area regarding easement and/or land acquisition. Preliminary estimates indicate the value of the bank credits to be approximately \$400,000.

Time Extension: At 5:30 pm, Jim moved and Margaret seconded the motion to extend the meeting by 10 minutes, which was approved.

New Business:

Several of the Commissioners reviewed the four different map options for redistricting Richland County Council seats prior to the meeting. Carol announced that her residence has been moved out of District #8 into District #6 in all four maps. A public hearing and second reading will be held June 28; third reading is expected on July 26. (Note: Council is expected to approve map option #4.)

Glenice asked members for help in providing information/research on Lower Richland in the mid-1700s for a book she is writing.

Public Input: None

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 5:45.

Next meeting: Monday, July 25, 2011 at 4:00 pm at the Richland County Administration Building

Submitted by
Nancy Stone-Collum
Conservation Coordinator