



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

Notes June 22, 2015

Attendance:

Members present: Carol Kososki, John Grego, Jim Thomas, Charles Weber, Becky Bailey

Absent: Ann Furr, Margaret DuBard, Glenice Pearson, Virginia Sanders, Jennifer Myers, and Sam Holland

Others present:

Nancy Stone-Collum, Conservation Department
Charlie Fisher, Conservation Department

Chair, Carol Kososki called the meeting to order at 3:35pm without a quorum present.

Report of the Chair

Carol extended her congratulations to RCCC members who spoke with their County Council representatives regarding Administration's intent to fund two Facilities and Grounds positions from RCCC's budget for FY16. Carol and Glenice Pearson both spoke during the public hearing. Council subsequently voted not to fund the positions from this source. Ann Furr has completed her radiation and chemo treatment but is in considerable pain; she thanked RCCC for the flowers that arrived at a welcome time.

Treasurer's Report

Nancy reviewed the balances of the current FY15 budget. There is \$22,000 remaining in Professional Services after the funds for the history initiative were encumbered. The \$90,065.00 left in Construction for Owens Field Trail will roll over to next year's budget. Fuss & O'Neill is providing the final design work for the stormwater improvements. The City of Columbia will then bid out the project for the city's first phase of park improvements, the trail, and the stormwater improvements. One company will manage the work which should be more economical and a more efficient use of time.

Carol mentioned that Spring Valley Homeowners Association has finally signed the Memorandum of Understanding with Richland County to allow mitigation work to proceed for the extension of the Owens Field Airport taxiway. Quinton has been very involved with these negotiations which include the County's commitment to work on the upditch and the dredging of Entrance Lake. The mitigation work will take place within the easement RCCC holds on the Spring Valley property.

Historic Committee Report

Glenice and Nancy met with Procurement Director, Cheryl Patrick after the issue of no award for the history initiative and Ms. Patrick agreed to a sole source procurement. A contract will be signed with Dr.

Bobby Donaldson of USC for \$52,450.00. The funds have been encumbered for FY15 and will be rolled over. Staff will meet with Dr. Donaldson this week to discuss process and an implementation schedule.

Conservation Committee Report

Easements

John Grego reported the committee met last Thursday to discuss three potential easements. The recommendation of the committee is for staff to begin negotiations with Mr. Hopkins on both his farmland and wetlands properties for a reduced price for the easements. John is interested in what incentives can be given to maintain farmland as farmland and how timber rights can be handled. The Hollis Pond property off Wilson Blvd is a small headwaters property with a lot of development to the east and woodlands to the west. Nancy should try to negotiate for a lesser amount since the property is dominated by a pond.

Conservation Grant Project

The Bethlehem Nature Wildlife Area has had an inspection on the dam which determined substantial work is needed for its stabilization. Looking at grant expenses, the \$19,115.00 allocated for the Barclay School will not be spent since the school has relocated to Fairfield County. Gills Creek Watershed was only able to install two kiosks instead of the three proposed, leaving \$7,801 unspent. The committee recommends the unused funding from these grants be rolled over and reallocated to Bethlehem Nature Wildlife Area to assist with repairs to the dam and creating the trail.

Wateree River Heritage Preserve

A biologist is being hired and should be in place in July; preparation of the management plan will be his first priority. To ensure DNR staff is aware of the role Council designated for RCCC in the development of the management plan, a cover letter from Carol with the November 2014 Administrator's letter to Bob Perry will be sent to the preserve manager.

Conservation Properties

Recently, members & staff of Friends of Congaree Swamp, RCCC, Congaree Land Trust, Trust for Public Land, and Congaree National Park met to discuss acquisition of various parcels in Lower Richland, including 1,950 acres NE of the Park owned by Plum Creek. They also discussed final disposition of the county's Mill Creek tract. Park staff indicated they are interested in only the lower portion of the Plum Creek tract and some parcels within their authorized boundary. The Plum Creek property would require Congressional approval of a boundary expansion. Ken, John, and Quinton have been working hard to locate parcels RCCC may be interested in protecting through acquisition or easement.

A conservation committee meeting will be scheduled for the week of July 13 or 20.

Conservation Coordinator's Report

Nancy passed around the booklet from St. Peter's Catholic Church documenting their stained glass windows. Copies of the "Down on Bull Street" documentary were distributed. Grantees for FY16 are scheduled to meet with Nancy on July 15. Nancy reported information from Robin Waites with Historic Columbia that International Paper has hired a project manager for Kensington Mansion who is out of Texas. He has had three architects inspect the damage to determine what the scope of work should be. There have not been any recent discussions about public access of the property.

Gills Creek Watershed Association organized a tour of Little Sugar Creek Greenway in Charlotte, NC. Quinton and Nancy participated, as did David Beatty, Penny Project Development Team Manager. They

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got a good understanding of this very impressive linear park and stream restoration project that has tremendous public use and has been an economic development driver.

Nancy mentioned she'd received an email from a librarian from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign about the Exploring Richland County on Foot brochure. When asked why it was being catalogued, he said they acquired maps because of their aesthetic appeal and to preserve the cultural record.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05.

Charlie Fisher, Administrative Assistant