



2020 Hampton Street • Room 3063A  
Columbia, SC 29204  
(803) 576-2080  
August 19, 2024  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room  
Meeting Minutes

**Attendance**

Commissioner	District	Present
Charles Weber	1	Yes
James Young	2	Yes
Wayman Stover	3	Yes
Glenice Pearson	4	No
Kip Dillihay	5	No
John Grego	6	Yes
Robert Squirewell	7	Yes
Vacant	8	
Khali Gallman	9	No
Kendrick Scott	10	No
Gail Rodriguez	11	No

Staff & Visitors	Affiliation
John McKenzie	Conservation Division
Quinton Epps	Conservation Division
Aric Jensen	Administration

**Call to Order**

Grego welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order with a quorum at 3:30 pm. Members, staff, and guests met in-person or by Zoom.

**Approval of Agenda**

⇒ **Weber moved to approve the agenda which was seconded by Stover. Motion passed unanimously.**

**Approval of Minutes**

⇒ **Weber moved to approve the July minutes which was seconded by Stover. Motion passed unanimously.**

**Report of the Chair**

- **Greenway Advisory Committee – update:** Grego reported positive steps with the Gills Creek Greenway, including asking for cost proposals for construction of new portions. Grego shared the Palmetto Trail plan to put the Columbia Passage on the West side of the Broad River and it was noted the trail would cross the Richland County Conservation Commission’s (RCCC) Broad River property.

- **Goodwill Estates Property – update:**

⇒ **Weber moved to enter Executive Session to discuss RCCC involvement in the Goodwill Property which was seconded by Scott. Motion passed unanimously.**

⇒ **Weber moved to leave Executive Session which was seconded by Squirewell. Motion passed unanimously.**

**No motions were made and no actions were taken during Executive Session.**

- **TMDLs Lower Richland watersheds – update:** Grego explained the process associated with Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) and how the State deals with impaired waters according to the U.S. Clean Water Act. There is a current focus on watersheds impacting Congaree National Park and the Congaree River. This issue will be taken up the Natural Resources Committee (NRC).
- **Advocacy – update:** Grego reported a discussion with Councilmember Weaver who passed on a request on behalf of the owners of a dam to have the County accept ownership or an easement.

### **Report from Community Planning & Development**

- **Administration – update:** Jensen reported an offer was made to a potential new Community Planning & Development Director but would wait until the appropriate time to announce.

### **Treasurer’s Report**

- **FY24–25 General Budget – update:** Squirewell stated there are no significant expenditures to report. Epps noted the new budget report he completed will allow for better review by Commissioners.

### **Historic Preservation Committee (HPC) Report**

- **Heritage Tourism Marketing Plan (HTMP) Implementation – update:** McKenzie reported the HTMP is still in the County Council approval stage.
- **Historic Preservation Plan (HPP) – update:** McKenzie stated the Kickoff Meeting with Ethos Preservation occurred on Friday, August 16 and included Epps and Matthew Smith from the Planning Department. There was discussion on the goals of the HPP and public participation by way of stakeholder meetings in the future.

### **Natural Resources Committee (NRC) Report**

- **Ag+Art Tour Donation – action item:** Weber explained The Richland Soil and Water Conservation District (RSWCD) request for \$7,500 in funding from the RCCC to continue and expand Richland County’s participation in the Ag + Art Tour in 2025.

⇒ **The NRC moved to approve a \$7,500 donation to the 2025 Richland County Ag+Art Tour which was seconded by Stover. Motion passed unanimously.**

- **New Penny Letter to TPAC – action item:**

⇒ **The NRC moved to send a letter to the Transportation Penny Advisory Committee to accompany the Penny II Recommendations previously presented to County Council in July which was seconded by Stover. Motion passed unanimously.**

- **Ganus Easement Negotiations – update:** McKenzie stated the request to start negotiations was approved at the July 23, 2024 Administration and Finance Committee meeting and will go on to County Council.
- **Cabin Branch Easements – update:** Epps reported he is waiting for a response from Jason Johnson of the S.C. Conservation Fund.
- **Forestry Stewardship Plan (FSP) – update:** Epps reported work continues with the Forestry Commission on Conservation properties.
- **Rural Tourism and Community Service (RTCS) Zoning for Lower Richland Tourism Plan – update:** McKenzie will start working with the newly selected consultant for the Comprehensive Plan update as soon as possible.
- **Mill Creek Bridge – update:** Epps reported the project is moving forward despite recent weather issues. Large beam bridge sections are to be delivered and road work continues.
- **Mitigation Bank Credits – update:** Epps reported there were no updates. There was discussion of mitigation opportunities in the future.
- **Broad River Property/Bates Old River Landing – update:** Grego contacted S.C. Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) who will share an older cost estimate for a modest landing. Grego believes SCDNR will be supportive of efforts to improve the existing ramp. Dominion Energy has not agreed to be a partner but Grego will contact the Richland County Recreation Commission. Epps will work to resume talks with the City of Columbia concerning the Broad River property.

### **Conservation Program Analyst’s Report**

- **Cemetery/Easement Notifications – update:** McKenzie introduced the effort to have the IT Department assist in creating a “flag” notification to Planning Department reviewers when properties with conservation easements or cemeteries are requesting permits.
- **Fabel Easement – update:** McKenzie reported the easement agreement has been delivered to Fabel for his review.
- **Lake Elizabeth Conservation Easement – update:** McKenzie reported the revised draft of this agreement is currently being reviewed. McKenzie clarified the easement is not a working lands type and is more of a “hands-off”, open space easement.
- **FY23-24 RCCC Grants – update:** McKenzie stated all grant agreements have been signed and all projects can begin.

- **Events – update:** None reported.

### **Conservation Manager’s Report**

- **Staff Vacancy - update:** Epps reported he is continuing to schedule interviews to fill the Administrative Assistant position and the Conservation Education Analyst position.
- ⇒ **Squirewell moved to extend the meeting by 10 minutes which was seconded by Stover. Motion passed unanimously.**
- **Lower Richland Tourism Plan (LRTP) Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Proposal and Memorandum of Agreement – action item:** Epps introduced a project working with the University of South Carolina’s SBDC to begin to implement the small business incubator goals of the LRTP. Epps explained the function of the SBDC and the proposal they recently prepared. A Memorandum of Agreement is being refined to be brought to the RCCC later. Eventually, we will work with Richland County’s Office of Small Business Opportunity when the plan is more developed.
- ⇒ **Weber moved to approve continued negotiations with the SBDC which was seconded by Stover. Motion passed unanimously.**

### **New Business:**

- Stover recommended taking a few minutes in some future meetings to have presentations on subject matters like easements, mitigation, county properties, and County Council interaction.

**Public Input:** None reported

### **Adjournment:**

- ⇒ **At 5:04 pm, Weber moved to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Scott. Motioned passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted, John McKenzie