



**Richland Soil and Water Conservation District (RSWCD)**

2020 Hampton Street, Room 3063A

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**Meeting Minutes**

April 8, 2024, 6 pm

Lizard's Thicket, 7938 Garners Ferry Road, Columbia, SC 29209

**Commissioners Present**

Kenny Mullis, Chair

Jeff Laney, Vice Chair

Jim Rhodes, Secretary/Treasurer

Mary Burts, Commissioner

Tim McSwain, Commissioner

**Associate Commissioners Present**

Sarah Burnham

Mary Frances Hendrix

Mary Beth McSwain

Logan Richardson

Charles Weber

**Councilmembers Present**

Don Weaver

**Additional Attendees**

Chanda Cooper

Will Culler

Quinton Epps

Chelsea Holliday

Aric Jensen

Virginia Grace Laney

Jennifer Mancke

Jackie Moore

John Newman

Barbara Padget

Jessica Thompson

Sharon Weber

Jim Young

**Welcome, Introductions & Invocation:** Mullis called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm and J. Laney gave the invocation. Introductions were made by Councilman Don Weaver; Barbara Padget, Chair of Lexington Soil and Water Conservation District and South Carolina Association of Conservation Districts (SCACD) East Piedmont Director; John Newman, Richland County Ag + Art Tour Planning Committee Vice Chair; and Jackie Moore, Director of Agritourism with SCDA and Richland County Ag + Art Tour Planning Committee Tour Site Coordinator. Councilman Weaver announced he has given \$15,000 in hospitality tax towards the Ag + Art Tour.

**Approve Agenda and Minutes:** Rhodes moved to approve the agenda and Burts seconded the motion. The motion was brought to a vote and passed unanimously. J. Laney moved to approve the minutes and Rhodes seconded the motion. The motion was brought to a vote and passed unanimously.

**Special Presentation:** Director of the South Carolina Ag + Art Tour, Dr. Will Culler, gave a presentation on the evolution of the tour and what to expect from this year's event. This self-guided tour is the largest free Ag + Art Tour in the nation and this year's event will feature 20 counties. The goals of the tour are economic development, community development, and education. The tour kicks off in McCormick County on May 4 and will be in Richland County on June 8-9.

### **Reports:**

**Financial:** Rhodes provided the following financial overview:

#### **Operating Account (03/31/24 Statement)**

- Beginning Balance: \$80,166.91 (03/01/24)
- Deposits and Credits: \$1012.00
- Expenses and Debits: \$7,330.49
- Ending Balance: \$73,848.42 (03/31/24)

#### **Credit Card (04/05/24 Statement)**

- Beginning Balance: \$1,270.53 (04/05/24)
- Payments: \$1,270.53
- Purchases: \$3,763.98
- Ending Balance: \$3,763.98 (04/05/24) <paid in full (04/08/2024)

#### **Easement Stewardship Account (02/29/24 Statement)**

- Starting Account Value: \$53,151.26 (02/01/24)
- Ending Account Value: \$53,172.51 (02/29/24)
- Ending Account Value with Accrued Income: \$53,774.74

#### **SCACD Contribution Agreement Account (03/31/24 Statement)**

- Starting Balance: \$11,902.66 (03/01/24)
- Credits: \$12,651.08
- Debts: \$11,650.15
- Ending Balance: \$12,903.59 (03/31/24)

### **PayPal Account (03/31/24 Statement)**

- Beginning Available Balance: \$250.00 (03/01/24)
- Ending Available Balance: \$300.00 (03/31/24)

Mullis explained that the Easement Stewardship funds are held in trust for potential legal expenses associated with the Mill Creek Mitigation Bank.

**Administrative:** Cooper reported RSWCD has one commissioner position on the November 3 General Election ballot and completed petition forms must be provided to the County Board of Voter Registration and Elections by noon on July 15. Additionally, SCDNR will host a Forestry Field Day workshop as part of the weeklong celebration of the 2024 NACD stewardship theme, May the Forest Be with You Always on May 1 at Harbison State Forest from 10 am to 2 pm. This event is open to the public.

**NRCS:** N/A

**SC Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR):** Cooper reported that the SC Envirothon Competition is on April 26 at Sandhills REC. Volunteers should have already been contacted with details. Stewardship Week is April 28 through May 4 and the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) Southeast Meeting is June 16-18 in Gainesville, Florida.

**Richland County Conservation Commission (RCCC):** C. Weber reported he was pleased RSWCD was able to view the RCCC-funded restoration project at Stormwater Studios at the Celebration of Water event. He asked RSWCD to be aware of RCCC's Cemetery Ordinance that is going before County Council on April 9. He also reported RCCC has completed its Forest Stewardship Plan. The proposal is with Administration for feedback and he hopes to have talking points to share at the next RSWCD meeting. He asked RSWCD to be ready to communicate the importance of the proposal to council members.

**RSWCD Programs:** Cooper reported that effective immediately, attendees will be provided with copies of detailed program reports outlining program updates. Cooper instructed attendees to review the program reports and contact her with questions. RSWCD staff worked with Richland County's Public Information Office to develop a promotional video for the Richland County 2024 Ag + Art Tour and Cooper showed the video to attendees.

**Conservation Items Before County Council:** Epps and C. Weber reiterated the importance of RSWCD being aware of the Cemetery Ordinance.

**Commissioner Advocacy:** Mullis reported on his participation in the NACD's Spring Fly-In on March 20 in Washington, DC where he advocated for the Farm Bill. Councilmember Terracio attended Celebration of Water and Art at Stormwater Studios. Councilmember Weaver attended RSWCD's April board meeting.

### **Old Business**

**Friends of RSWCD:** Cooper reported that in response to Hendrix's request for a Friends of RSWCD graphic with a QR code, Thompson designed a graphic for distribution. Paper and digital forms of the graphic were distributed along with existing marketing materials.

### **New Business**

**Budget Amendment – SE NACD Conference:** Cooper reported there are five individuals interested in attending the NACD Southeast Meeting, four of whom RSWCD would be responsible for paying for; Holliday, M. McSwain, T. McSwain, and Thompson. Funds were not allocated for this event because the last meeting was held in August, resulting in two meetings during the current fiscal year. Total costs for the four individuals are estimated at \$4,086.00. Rhodes made a motion to cover the full amount from reserve funds. J. Laney seconded the motion. The motion was brought to a vote and passed unanimously.

**Budget Amendment – Promotional Materials:** Cooper recommended moving \$1,000 allocated for Seed Sanctuary to Promotional Items and Branded Marketing Materials. Burts moved to approve the budget amendment. Rhodes seconded the motion. The motion was brought to a vote and passed unanimously.

**Executive Session:** N/A

**Public Input:** Mullis referenced the upcoming events listed on the agenda.

**Next Meeting:** The next board meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 13 at 6 pm at Lizard's Thicket, 7938 Garners Ferry Road, Columbia, SC 29209.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 6:48 pm.