



Richland Soil and Water Conservation District (RSWCD)
2020 Hampton Street, Room 3063A
Columbia, SC 29204
(803) 576-2084 - Fax (803) 576-2088

www.richlandcountysc.gov/rswcd • soilandwater@richlandcountysc.gov

Meeting Minutes

April 10, 2023 • 6pm

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

Commissioners Present

Kenny Mullis, Chair
Jeff Laney, Vice Chair
Jim Rhodes, Treasurer
Tim McSwain
Mary Burts

Associate Commissioners Present

Charles Weber
Mary Frances Hendrix
Mary Beth McSwain

Others Present

Chanda Cooper
Val Morris
Jennifer Mancke
Quinton Epps
Sarah Burnham
Aric Jensen
Leslie Wilson
Virginia Grace Laney
Austin Saggus
Jason Rohde

Welcome and Call to Order: Mullis called the meeting to order and Rhodes gave the invocation at 6:01pm.

Approve Agenda and Minutes: Cooper proposed amending to the agenda by adding the Mini-Grant Reimbursement Policy under New Business. Rhodes moved to approved the minutes of March 13 meeting and the amended item to the agenda. The motions were seconded by McSwain and passed unanimously.

Special Presentation: Austin Saggus, President, Columbia Green thanked the group for sponsoring \$500.00 to Three for the Bees project. RSWCD's Green Step Schools Mentor, Jennifer Mancke, was the featured presenter for the event. The project attracted 30-35 attendees from different demographic

areas and age groups. Through the project, Columbia Green educated participants about pollinator plants and issued one large planting pot, soil and pollinator plants.

Leslie Wilson, Education Coordinator with Richland County Stormwater, gave an overview of their duties and programs.

Financial Report: Rhodes provided the following financial overview:

Operating Account (03/31/23 Statement)

- Starting Balance: \$71,471.82 (03/01/23)
- Deposits and Credits: \$875.00
- Expenses and Debits: \$7520.90
- Ending Balance: \$64,825.92 (03/31/23)

Credit Card (04/05/23 Statement)

- Starting Balance: \$2585.68 (04/1/23)
- Payments: \$ 2585.68
- Purchases: \$1,890.82
- Ending Balance: \$1,890.82 (04/5/23) <paid in full 4/10/23

Easement Stewardship Account (02/28/23 Statement)

- Starting Account Value: \$51,226.05 (02/01/23)
- Ending Account Value: \$51,303.40 (02/28/23)

SCACD Contribution Agreement Account (03/31/23 Statement)

- Starting Account Value: \$252.51 (03/01/23)
- Ending Account Value: \$12,151.75 (03/31/23)

PayPal Account (04/10/23 Statement)

- Current Balance: \$250.00 (04/10/23)

Friends of RSWCD Report: Since the last board meeting on 03/13/23, three Friends have renewed for a total of \$325. RSWCD has 41 current Friends.

Pinewood Lake Park Pollinator Garden Report: No report available.

NRCS: No report available.

SCDNR: Cooper reported SC Envirothon will be held on 4/28/2023 and Richland County has one team participating, Lexington-Richland 5 FFA from CATS (Center for Advanced Technical Studies). Courtney Bragg is the new Administrative Assistant, she started in March. Please let Courtney know if you haven't received your license tag. Conservation District Day at the Statehouse is on Tuesday, May 2, 2023.

Richland County Conservation Commission (RCCC): Weber reported Natural Resources Committee (NRC) and Columbia Rowing Club have come to an agreement and the Rowing Club will start construction on the dock near the Broad River location.

Education Report:

- RSWCD E-newsletter: 3,524 subscribers
- RSWCD Facebook: 1,171/393 following
- RSWCD Instagram: 680 follows
- Ag + Art Facebook: 796 likes/893 following
- Ag + Art Instagram: 489 follows
- Ag + Art Tour June 10-11, 2023
- Ag + Art Tour has 10 local sponsors
- Ag + Art Tour has received \$12,100 of the \$15,000 sponsorship goal
- Ag + Art Tour has \$12,241 in matching funds as of 4/6/23
- Fifteen tour sites will be featured on the Richland County tour. Twelve will participate all weekend; two are Saturday only; one is Sunday only.
- As of 04/06/23 we've received 55 artisan applications. The goal is to have three artisans at each site. Artisan recruitment is ongoing; artisan applications are due 4/28/23 at 5pm.
- An Ag + Art Tour Kickoff Event will be held at Clemson Sandhill Research and Education Center from 2-6pm on Tuesday, 5/30/23. The event will feature the Sandhill Farmers Market, Ag Combine Simulator, crafts and games for kids, and two wagon-ride farm tours at 2:00 and 3:30pm. The farm tours have reserved seating.
- The Seed Sanctuary has received 530 requests for seeds-by-mail since 2/1/23. There have been two volunteer packing parties with East Columbia Rotary & Sustainable Carolina and 56 individual volunteers. Seeds are still being distributed at 2020 Hampton Street, Richland County Administration building and Richland Library Eastover. There will be three upcoming Pop-Up Seed Sanctuary exhibits on the next three Saturdays of this month.
- Cooper reported Dutch Fork High School used their mini- grant money install mat-like flooring to improve accessibility into their greenhouse for students with special needs.
- Mancke reported she is continuing to work with the students and staff at PACE Academy to grow their Nature Club. Webber Elementary farm stand is a great success and the children are enjoying the lettuce of their labor. In addition, Webber was able to purchase a few fruit trees and grapevines with the left-over monies they received from the mini-grant. Lastly, Mancke reported she assisted the students at Spring Valley High School with creating two compost bins.
- Entries are now coming in daily for RSWCD "One Water" poster contest. The deadline for entries is 4/14/23.
- RSWCD's Adopt-A-Stream kit is being used by three community groups each month.
- RSWCD is providing planning support for the Environmental Education Association of SC's annual conference, which will be held 6/21/23-6/24/23 at the Penn Center in Beaufort, SC.
- Cooper was the recipient for the National PLT (Project Learning Tree) Leadership award during the conference on March 27, 2023 in Stevenson, WA.

County Council: Lower Richland Tourism Plan (LRTP) has been adopted into Richland County Strategic Plan.

Advocacy Report: Councilwoman Cheryl English has invited RSWCD to take part in the community garden launch/celebration at Zion Benevolence Church, 201 Meeting House Rd, Hopkins, SC on Saturday, April 15, from 10am-noon.

Old Business: NA

New Business: Associate Commissioner Application

Rhodes motioned to approved Sarah Burnham as Associate Commissioner, which was seconded by T. McSwain. Motion passed unanimously.

New Business: Budget Review

Cooper gave the updated budget review report as of March 23, 2023 and budget recommendations through the end of FY22-23 year. Cooper recommended the following budget amendments:

- Seed Sanctuary budget increased from \$3,000 to \$4,000
- Ag + Art Tour budget increased from \$5,000 to \$7,000
- Conservation District Foundation budget increased from \$100 to \$1,000
- Intern travel budget increased from \$600 to \$1000
- Memorials & honoraria budget increased from \$100 to \$300

Rhodes motioned to approved the budget amendments, which was seconded by Burts. Motion passed unanimously.

New Business: Mini-Grant Reimbursement Policy

Cooper recommended adding three alternatives to the Mini-Grant Reimbursement Policy (Attachment A). Rhodes motioned to approve adding the three alternatives to the Mini-Grant Reimbursement Policy, which was seconded by T. McSwain. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Input: NA

Next Meeting: The next board meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 8, 2023 at 6pm at Lizard’s Thicket, 7938 Garners Ferry Rd, Columbia, SC 29209.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 7:42 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kenny Mullis, Chair

Val Morris, Conservation Administrative Assistant

Attachment A: Mini-Grant Reimbursement Policy



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**Richland Soil and Water Conservation District (RSWCD)
Conservation Education Mini-Grant Reimbursement Policy**

Unless other arrangements are made, Conservation Education Mini-Grant funding will be issued to grant recipients as a reimbursement for project expenses. To receive reimbursement, grantees must submit a completed grant payment request form (template provided by RSWCD) and copies of any receipts to the RSWCD by fax, e-mail, or US Mail. Upon review, RSWCD will issue a reimbursement check to the grantee for the amount approved, up to a maximum amount of \$1,000. Partial reimbursements are allowed.

As an alternative to reimbursement, RSWCD may, at the request of the grantee:

- Purchase requested grant-related materials/supplies online and have them shipped to the grantee.
- Pay a local vendor directly for grant-related materials/supplies.
- Issue up to 10% of the approved Conservation Education Mini-Grant funding to grantee as a gift card. Grantees must submit receipts for items purchased with the gift card, and items should be appropriate for the purposes of their Conservation Education Mini-Grant.