



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

Minutes May 21, 2018

Attendance:

Members present: Carol Kososki, John Grego, Lee Rambo, Jim Thomas, Charles Weber, Virginia Sanders, Sam Holland, Margaret DuBard, and Glenice Pearson via telephone

Absent: Jennifer Carter

Vacant: District 7

Others present:

Quinton Epps, Conservation Division

Nancy Stone-Collum, Conservation Division

Charlie Fisher, Conservation Division

Chris Hansen, Conservation Division

Ken Driggers, Legal Counsel

Tracy Hegler, Community Planning & Development (CP&D) Department

Meghan Sullivan, Community Planning & Development Department

Chair Carol Kososki welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 3:30pm with a quorum.

Approval of Agenda

John Grego made a motion to approve the agenda and was seconded by Jim Thomas. Motion carried

Approval of April 16, 2018 Minutes

John moved and was seconded by Lee Rambo to approve the April 16 minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Report of the Chair

Carol introduced Chris Hansen, the new Land Program Planner, for the Richland County Conservation Commission (RCCC). Chris explained he is a Clemson Graduate with a degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Biology and most recently worked for the City of Columbia as a Park Ranger. The District 7 vacancy needs to be filled in order to assure full representation and help make a quorum. Glenice has spoken with potential candidates but Councilwoman Kennedy has not made a decision. Carol will remind Ms. Kennedy about the need to appoint someone.

At the last County Council meeting, a motion was made to defer the Transportation Project Development Team recommendation to move \$2.5 million from Gills Creek Greenway B to A in order to lengthen the trail and have it end at a more appropriate location. The allocation for Gills Creek A is \$2.2 million but due to the need for boardwalks and a 14ft. width required by the city, the funds will only

take the trail from Fort Jackson Blvd. to Mikell Lane. The additional funds would allow the trail to be built south to Timberlane Drive or further. Public meetings will be held over the next six months on all of the remaining greenways approved in the referendum.

Treasurer's Report

Virginia Sanders referred everyone to their financial report. Quinton explained that the unexpended funds in Professional Services and Acquisition were largely due to some easements that did not come to fruition and that funding will roll into the Acquisition fund balance.

Community Planning & Development Director's Report

Tracy Hegler reported the Land Development Manual will be ready to take to Council at the end of June. This is a very technical document for developing land that includes requirements for stormwater and roads. Tracy will email RCCC members a copy within the next couple of days so comments can be provided. Consultants are still working on the Code Rewrite so it is timely to submit separate comments to them.

Strategic Plan Implementation

Nancy gave a brief overview of implementation strategies. One of the action steps under Goal 3 for Communications is to give more presentations. Nancy requested each member provide her with the names and contact information for two organizations in their district. John made a motion for RCCC Committees to review the plan monthly and a quarterly review by the full Commission. Margaret DuBard seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Conservation Committee Report

John reported he and Nancy recently visited a potential easement property off Monticello Road. A creek runs the length of the 102-acre tract and feeds into Little Cedar Creek. The landowner plans to maintain the hardwood stands and will convert fallow fields and planted pines into organic production. The Conservation Committee recommended Nancy move forward with negotiations for the easement. Margaret seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Conservation Coordinator's Report

Forest Stewardship Plan

A ten-year forest stewardship plan for the Mill Creek and Cabin Branch tracts needs to be developed to integrate forest management with recreational goals, and to enhance wildlife habitat and soil and water quality. John moved and was seconded by Lee for staff to prepare a Request for Proposals to solicit quotes from professional foresters. Motion carried unanimously. The strategic plan calls for the development of a policy allowing RCCC to keep any revenues generated by activities on conservation lands. Ken Driggers will begin work on a draft policy.

Grants Update

Several more FY18 grant projects have been completed and a number of ribbon cutting events will be scheduled during the summer. The FY19 Grants were reviewed by Council this past Thursday during a work session. Questions were asked regarding incorporated vs. unincorporated projects. Nancy reported that 76% of the grants were in Columbia, 13% in the incorporated areas of Blythewood and Eastover, and 11% in unincorporated areas. Quinton pointed out the reasons why a large percentage of the grants go to incorporated areas is due to higher density, more organizations to sponsor grants, and more historic buildings.

Conservation Manager’s Report

Pinewood Lake Park (PLP) Mgmt. & Operational Plan

Quinton reviewed the major components of a draft management plan that outlines operations and their implementation at Pinewood Lake Park. More hours can be dedicated to the park with the recent hire of the Land Program Planner, Chris. Chris and Quinton have been out there frequently, most recently to determine where a water leak is occurring. Carol requested more specificity for the plan such as signage showing dates and times the park will be open, boundary signs, how to reach a staff person, and who is responsible for security. A new security system has been purchased because the old one won’t link to the internet. Discussion about signage versus fencing to deter access across the unrepaired dam resulted in consensus that construction fencing should be rented. Visitor statistics for daily usage and special events need to be collected to aid in strategic and operational planning. More rental opportunities should be made available. Tracy mentioned the county already has a rental agreement form. An inventory needs to be taken and Carol requested the Pinewood Lake Park Foundation be given a notification of when this would occur. Ken stated the Foundation should go ahead and conduct their own inventory to identify what belongs to them.

John made a motion, seconded by Lee to extend the meeting to 5:15pm. Motion carried.

Virginia asked if the Pinewood Lake Park Foundation would be given a copy of the Management and Operation Plan. Carol replied yes, when it is approved. Virginia explained when she read the plan there were several things she needed clarification on so she called Councilman Jackson. A Response to Proposals was prepared to give to RCCC members. Virginia called attention to the last item on the Response which states the Development and Services Committee deferred any proposal or actions on PLP until an Administrator meets with the community at the park and gives a summation and recommendation. Quinton questioned if the last item/comment was about a specific motion made to council by Councilman Jackson. Tracy indicated she thought this referred to a motion related to RCCC taking over management of all conservation properties; that motion was eventually tabled. Carol said everyone needs to review the document Virginia provided.

Charles asked what action was requested. John felt the Management and Operation Plan needs to be reviewed by committee but he supports the concept of the plan. Charles said this is a good document and the concerns voiced are minor in nature. Lee made a motion to consider the amended revised plan at next month’s meeting. Charles seconded the motion which carried unanimously. The revised plan will be emailed to RCCC members for review when the edits are completed.

Walden Pond

Quinton explained negotiations are under way with the top two vendors in order to receive the best price on the project.

Historic Committee

Sam reported the Committee will meet Wednesday with Debbie Bloom at the Richland County Public Library to go over the Dr. Donaldson’s report/history initiative and discuss creating a website. At the Committee’s last meeting, the possibility of hiring an intern with a background in history was discussed.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Charlie Fisher, Administrative Assistant