



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

Minutes April 27, 2015

Attendance:

Members present: John Grego, Glenice Pearson, Jim Thomas, Charles Weber, Sam Holland, Margaret DuBard, Virginia Sanders, and Jennifer Myers (pending appointment)

Absent: Carol Kososki, Ann Furr, Becky Bailey

Others present:

Quinton Epps, Conservation Department
Nancy Stone-Collum, Conservation Department
Charlie Fisher, Conservation Department
Ken Driggers, Contract Legal Counsel
Rob Perry, Richland County Transportation Director

John Grego called the meeting to order at 3:30pm. Nancy introduced Jennifer Myers who will replace Mildred Myers pending her official appointment from Mr. Kelvin Washington, District 10.

Agenda: Glenice Pearson moved and Jim Thomas seconded the motion to approve the agenda. Motion was approved.

Minutes: Glenice commented about the minutes under the Treasurer's Report regarding the Historic Proposal. The project is moving forward but she is concerned about emphasis always being placed on the availability of funds which makes it sound like the project is in jeopardy of not being funded. Since the project was given careful consideration by the Historic Committee and approved by the Commission, it should not be treated any different from other projects. Nancy pointed out a correction she made regarding mitigation for Owens Field *airport expansion*. Jim made a motion to approve the minutes of March 23 with the correction and Glenice seconded the motion. Motion carried.

A copy of the Treasurer's Report was provided to everyone.

Conservation Director's Report Owens Field Park

Quinton reported there have been recent developments regarding the City of Columbia implementing portions of their Master Plan. Originally the City and County planned to work concurrently at Owens Field but since the City wants to fast track their work, it makes economic sense and should save time to use one contractor to do both projects. Nancy and Charles Weber participated in an invasive species work day held Saturday, April 25 with a dozen other volunteers.

Mill Creek Mitigation Bank

Work on the Mill Creek Mitigation Bank is going well and it should be approved by the Army corps of Engineers in the near future. The County has been pro-active in their efforts to help establish the Bank so that Transportation Penny projects will not be slowed down.

Wateree Heritage Preserve

Bob Perry, Environmental Director for DNR, invited Quinton to the Heritage Trust Advisory Board Meeting on May 7. DNR is in the process of hiring additional staff for the property and they will write the management plan draft. The plan is supposed to be completed within 90 days of DNR taking title, which has not yet happened. John inquired if there was a strategy on how to respond to the Management Plan. Charles Weber voiced concerns over the 24-hour response time typical from previous DNR interactions. Quinton sent Commission members several DNR Management Plans to review since the Wateree Plan will resemble what they have done in the past. Glenice questioned how the residents and issues of concern for Lower Richland will be addressed. Nancy suggested having a work session to identify issues important to RCCC.

Transportation Penny Update

Rob Perry, Richland County Transportation Director, explained the Transportation Penny is a \$1.07 billion dollar program unfolding over a 22-year time period. The project will include improvement to highways, road, bridges, and drainage systems (\$656,020,644), continued operation of mass transit (\$300,991,000) and improvements to pedestrian sidewalks, bike paths, intersections, and greenways (\$80,888,356). It has been necessary to procure an agreement with DOT before any work can be done on state roads. A program development team was hired and has prioritized tasks in order to assure the timely and successful completion of the program. Three Rivers Greenway and Vista Greenway will begin construction in 2015 and right-of-way planning is underway for Gills Creek Middle Watershed. Rob discussed the issue of underground utilities for street widening projects, the expense, and the fact that utilities can be in conflict with drainage.

Rural Lands Preservation

Quinton explained meetings were held with the Planning Department and a draft plan may be out this week.

Conservation Coordinator's Report

Kensington Mansion

Nancy referred everyone to a draft letter to County Council regarding International Paper's ownership of the historic home. The letter requests Council use its influence to ensure maximum public access and restoration/interpretation of the slave dwelling. Glenice requested language to emphasize an inclusive interpretation. Charles made a motion to send the letter with the discussed change. Glenice seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Multiple Year Grants Policy

A potential grant funding policy draft with two options has been provided for everyone to consider and vote on at a future date.

Grant Updates

Grant quarterly reports were provided to everyone for review. Nancy will go before a Council work session July 12 to present the FY16 grant recommendations. The ETV screening "Down on Bull Street" is scheduled for April 30 and May 4 with an air date of May 7. A Lower Richland Documentary will be shown at St. John Baptist Church on May 16 at 3pm. Nancy asked about interest in kayaking on the Broad River to view the Rocky Shoals Spider Lilies, a grant funded project for FY16. Friday, May 22nd suited a majority of those willing to go.

Two proposals have been received for the Lower Richland History Initiative Project but only one was deemed responsive. A meeting will be scheduled to evaluate the proposal. If it does not meet the required criteria then it will be rejected and the process will start over.

Conservation Committee Report

John Grego waived the Committee's Report.

Historic Committee Report

Glenice stated she will draft her thoughts about the management plan for Wateree Heritage Preserve that can be presented for consideration at a future meeting.

Reminder – May 18 is the next scheduled meeting which is one week earlier due to the Memorial Day Holiday.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:05

Charlie Fisher, Administrative Assistant