



RURAL AND CRITICAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD

Thursday, July 9, 2015

3:00 pm

Beaufort Jasper Water and Sewer Authority (BJWSA)

Conference Room

6 Snake Rd., Okatie, SC 29909

Phone: (843) 255-2140

Members:

Mark Baker, District 8
Bob Bender, District 4
Selena Brown, District 10
York L. Glover, District 3
Gail O'Kane, District 11
James Livingston, District 7
Michael Mathews, District 9
Ed Pappas, District 5 (Chair)
Norma G. Stewart, District 6
Denise Sullivan, District 2
William H. Ladson, District 1

Staff:

Anthony Criscitiello, Planning Director
Amanda Flake, Natural Resource Planner

1. CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

2. REVIEW OF AGENDA

3. REVIEW OF MINUTES FROM MAY 14, 2015 MEETING ([backup](#))

4. GENERAL DISCUSSION

- A. Educational Package (Lord/Driggers)
- B. Communication Package (Lord/Driggers)
- C. Financial Update (Eisenman)
- D. Passive Park Update (Criscitiello)

5. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- A. Contractual Matters Relating to Land Acquisition:
Review of Specific Parcels (Driggers/Lord)

6. OTHER BUSINESS

- A. Next Meeting: August 13, 2015, from 3:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M. at Beaufort Jasper Water and Sewer Authority (BJWSA) Conference Room, 6 Snake Road, Okatie, SC 29909

7. ADJOURNMENT

Note: If you have any questions, please contact the County Planning Office at (843) 255-2140

BEAUFORT COUNTY RURAL AND CRITICAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD

The Beaufort County Rural and Critical Land Preservation Board Retreat (hereafter known as the Board) was held on May 14, 2015, at the Beaufort Jasper Water and Sewer Authority Board Room at 3:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Ed Pappas (Chairman)
Ms. Selena Brown (Vice-Chairman)
Mr. Bob Bender
Mr. Bill Ladson

Mr. Michael Mathews
Ms. Denise Sullivan
Ms. Norma Stewart

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mr. Mark Baker
Mr. York Glover
Mr. Jim Livingston

STAFF PRESENT:

Mr. Tony Criscitiello, Planning Director
Ms. Amanda Flake, Natural Resources Planner
Mr. Ken Driggers, Beaufort County Open Land Trust Attorney
Ms. Lisa Lord, Beaufort County Open Land Trust

GUESTS PRESENT:

Mr. Brian Flewelling, Beaufort County Councilman
Mr. Eric Larson, Beaufort County Stormwater Department
Mr. Alan Eisenman, Beaufort County Finance Department
Ms. Allison Coppage, Beaufort County Assistant Attorney
Ms. Alice Howard, Beaufort County Councilwoman
Ms. Cindy Baysden, Beaufort County Open Land Trust
Mr. Reed Armstrong, Coastal Conservation League
Ms. Kate Schaefer, Coastal Conservation League
Mr. Jason Mann, MCAS Community Plans and Liaisons Office
Ms. Beth Grace

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Ed Pappas called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

REVIEW OF AGENDA

Chairman Pappas asked if there were any changes to the Agenda and there were two; an update on the consultant process for the Rural and Critical Land Preservation Program and an update on purchased properties (which will be covered in executive session).

REVIEW OF MINUTES

Chairman Pappas asked if there were any changes to the Minutes from the February 19, 2015 Board meeting. Hearing none, Mr. Ladson made a motion and Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion to accept the Minutes as written from the February 19, 2015 Board meeting. **The motion was carried unanimously to accept the minutes as written from the February 19, 2015, Board meeting** (FOR: Pappas, Brown, Bender, Ladson, Mathews, Sullivan, Stewart).

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Ms. Beth Grace made a public comment about the current issue of the Rural and Critical Land Preservation Program being asked to consider purchasing additional land from the Graves/Pepperhall property on Hwy 278. She was a former County Council member from 1990-2000 and was representing herself and Ms. Dot Gnann. She stated that this Board needed to protect the integrity of the Program and the bond referendum and not allow undue political pressure to affect their decision on buying more of the Graves/Pepperhall property. She wanted to thank the Board for all it had done over the years and all the protected lands that the Program had acquired.

Ms. Kate Schaefer with the Coastal Conservation League also spoke against this Program buying any additional land from the Graves/Pepperhall property. She also thanked the Board for what the Program had accomplished to this point. She argued that the additional land proposed to be purchased did not have the same quality as the buffer that the Program already purchased along the Okatie River. She asked that the Board members use the ranking process to help make their decision, not political pressure. She warned that if the Program bought this property at the high price mark, it would set a precedent for future purchases.

Mr. Tony Criscitiello gave an update on the passive park development. At this time the Planning Department is ready to move forward with a bid for Fort Fremont to build an interpretive center, trails, and a pavilion. Crystal Lake is also ready to go to bid for Phase 2 which includes renovation of the building to include an interpretive center and offices for the Beaufort County Open Land Trust and the Soil and Water Conservation District. Okatie Preserve is moving forward and going to be an equestrian/passive park through a partnership with the Heroes on Horseback. The Planning Department is currently working on getting permits from the Town of Bluffton for the Okatie Preserve.

Mr. Criscitiello described the Request for Proposal (RFP) process that recently went out to bid for the consultant to the Program. Beaufort County received two bid proposals and they were currently being reviewed by staff and a selection committee. Once a selection is made, it will go to the Natural Resources Committee for approval. This will hopefully happen by the end of the month.

Mr. Alan Eisenman gave a financial update of the Rural and Critical Land Preservation Program. As of March 31, 2015 there was a total amount of \$11.54 million in funds. Of that, \$10.2 million was unrestricted and \$1.34 million was restricted. These numbers do not include the \$20 million referendum that was approved in November 2014.

Mr. Ken Driggers gave an overview of the property acquisition/easement process. Typically the property is investigated by the consultant to see if it meets the criteria of the Program. Once a worthwhile price point is established, the consultant brings it forward to the Board. If the Board approves the purchase, it then moves forward to the Natural Resources Committee and County Council for approval. At this point due diligence occurs. If everything works out, the transaction is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairman Pappas entertained a motion by Vice-Chairman Brown, seconded by Ms. Stewart, to adjourn the Open Session at 3:45 p.m. and convened Executive Session for the purpose of discussing matters associated with property acquisitions. **The motion was carried unanimously to enter into Executive Session** (FOR: Pappas, Brown, Bender, Ladson, Mathews, Sullivan, Stewart).

Chairman Pappas adjourned Executive Session and convened Open Session at 4:42 p.m.

Ms. Sullivan made a motion; seconded by Mr. Ladson, to recommend to the Natural Resources Committee of County Council to pursue Parcel M under the terms and conditions as recommended by Beaufort County Open Land Trust, as discussed in Executive Session. **The motion was carried unanimously to recommend to the Natural Resources Committee of County Council to pursue Parcel M under the terms and conditions as recommended by Beaufort County Open Land Trust, as discussed in Executive Session.** (FOR: Pappas, Brown, Bender, Ladson, Mathews, Sullivan. AGAINST: Stewart).

Mr. Bender made a motion; seconded by Mr. Ladson, to recommend to the Natural Resources Committee of County Council to pursue Parcel S under the terms and conditions as recommended by Beaufort County Open Land Trust, as discussed in Executive Session. **The motion was carried unanimously to recommend to the Natural Resources Committee of County Council to pursue Parcel S under the terms and conditions as recommended by Beaufort County Open Land Trust, as discussed in Executive Session.** (FOR: Pappas, Brown, Bender, Ladson, Mathews. AGAINST: Sullivan, Stewart).

Mr. Mathews made a motion; seconded by Ms. Stewart, to recommend to the Natural Resources Committee of County Council to pursue Parcel P under the terms and conditions as recommended by Beaufort County Open Land Trust, as discussed in Executive Session. **The motion was carried unanimously to recommend to the Natural Resources Committee of County Council to pursue Parcel P under the terms and conditions as recommended by Beaufort County Open Land Trust, as discussed in Executive Session.** (FOR: Stewart. AGAINST: Pappas, Brown, Bender, Ladson, Mathews, Sullivan.).

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Chairman Pappas entertained a motion at 4:58 p.m. from Ms. Sullivan, seconded by Ms. Stewart, to adjourn the meeting. **The motion was approved unanimously** (FOR: Pappas, Brown, Bender, Ladson, Mathews, Sullivan, Stewart).

Submitted by: Amanda Flake, Natural Resources Planner

Approved:

Ed Pappas, Chairman,
Beaufort County Rural and Critical Land Preservation Board

Date: _____