

**BEAUFORT COUNTY RURAL AND CRITICAL LAND
PRESERVATION BOARD**

The regular meeting of the Beaufort County Rural and Critical Land Preservation Board (hereafter known as the Board) was held on March 12, 2009 in the Conference Room at Beaufort Jasper Water and Sewer Authority Building at 3:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Steve Riley (Chair)
Ms. Gloria Cartwright (Vice-Chair)
Mr. Pete Dawson
Mr. York Glover
Mr. Malcolm Goodridge
Ms. Janice Johnson
Mr. Ed Pappas
Mr. Ray Tudor

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Ms. Selena Brown
Mr. Jacob Preston
Mr. Joseph Vercellotti

STAFF PRESENT:

Ms. Amanda Flake, Natural Resources Planner
Mr. Glenn Stanford, Mr. Slade Gleaton, Mr. Raleigh West - Trust for Public Land (TPL)
County Councilman Paul Sommerville

GUEST PRESENT:

Reed Armstrong, Coastal Conservation League
Barrett Budds, Coastal Conservation League

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Steve Riley called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Chairman Riley asked if there were any changes to the Agenda and three items were added to the General Discussion; the status of TPL, an update on a current RCLB board member, and National Association of Counties Award.

Chairman Riley asked if there were any changes to the Minutes from the January 8, 2009 Board meeting. Hearing none, Mr. Goodridge made a motion and Mr. Tudor seconded the motion to accept the Minutes from the January 8, 2009 Board meeting. **Motion carried.**

Chairman Riley asked if there were any changes to the Minutes from the February 12, 2009 Board meeting. Hearing none, Mr. Pappas made a motion and Mr. Tudor seconded the motion to accept the Minutes from the February 12, 2009 Board meeting with corrected typos. **Motion carried.**

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Chairman Riley announced that Joe Vercellotti's daughter recently passed away in California. He offered to send a card to the Vercellotti family on behalf of the board.

Chairman Riley introduced Councilman Paul Sommerville who replaced Councilman Skeet Von Harten as the Chairman of the Land Management Committee.

Mr. Glenn Stanford gave an update on the status of TPL and the County. So far, there has been no formal agreement. Mr. Stanford said that he has submitted a formal business plan and contract, with a revised fee, and is meeting with Mr. Ladd Howell, the county attorney, next week. Mr. Stanford is encouraged and hopes that things will work out well with a smooth transition, but as for now, he is still a member of TPL until March 31st. However, Mr. Slade Gleaton stated that the March 31st date is not set in stone and that if needs be the date can be extended. At this point, Chairman Riley asked the staff of TPL to leave the room for a few moments. Chairman Riley asked the Board if they were interested in endorsing Mr. Stanford in his endeavor to take over the contract subject to the County's negotiation. Councilman Paul Sommerville stated that Mr. Stanford has approached Mr. Russ Marane, a former employee of TPL, and Mr. Raleigh West to join him in his new organization. Chairman Riley also said that there should still be opportunities to partner with TPL in the future. Chairman Riley asked for a motion for him to write a letter, on behalf of the Board, to endorse Mr. Stanford in continuing to be the RCLP non-profit contractor subject to negotiations with the County, to urge a quick and smooth transition, and to express the satisfaction of the work that Mr. Stanford has accomplished to date. Ms. Cartwright made a motion and Mr. Goodridge seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

Mr. Reed Armstrong introduced Mr. Garrett Budds who is the new director of the Beaufort office of the Coastal Conservation League.

Mr. Stanford stated that the National Association of Counties makes a Conservation Achievement Award every year to three different categories of counties. For each category, one county out of the entire country wins the award. This year, Beaufort County received this award for its category and Councilman Paul Sommerville accepted the award in Washington, D.C. last week. Councilman Sommerville said that Beaufort County is a leader in preserving vital areas and that this was something we should all be proud of as Beaufort County citizens.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairman Riley entertained a motion by Mr. Goodridge, seconded by Mr. Tudor, to adjourn the Open Session at 3:18 p.m. and enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing matters associated with property acquisitions. **The vote was unanimous to enter into Executive Session.**

The Board re-entered Open Session at 4:31 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Amanda Flake gave updates on the progress of opening parks at Widgeon Point and Okatie Preserve. The County in association with the Beaufort County Open Land Trust, the Lowcountry Institute, and the Master Naturalists has been working hard to open Widgeon Point. There was a prescribed burn performed last week by the South Carolina Forestry Association to rid the area of invasive species and promote native habitat growth for painted buntings and other species that we want to attract to the area. Also, the plans for the Okatie Preserve park are moving forward. Ms. Flake is submitting an application to OCRM for a boardwalk and observation deck. She and other members of the County Planning Department have also met with the Town of Bluffton to stake out the parking lot and lay out the trail.

Mr. Slade Gleaton stated this was his last meeting and he has enjoyed working with the Board. The Board thanked him for his services and expressed their appreciation.

Mr. Ed Pappas made a comment about what we should do for the next referendum? Chairman Riley said at this stage we just need to move some things along before the next transaction. Mr. Stanford stated that the County has to decide how to move forward and that right now it is just a little premature to know where to head.

With no further business, Chairman Riley entertained a motion at 4:30 p.m. from Mr. Tudor, seconded by Mr. Pappas, to adjourn the meeting. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

Beaufort County Rural and Critical Land Preservation Board meeting
March 12, 2009

Submitted by: Amanda Flake, Natural Resources Planner

Approved: _____
Steve Riley, Chairman, Beaufort County Rural and Critical Land
Preservation Board

Date: _____