

## **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 August 11, 2011 in the Conference Room at Beaufort Jasper Water and Sewer Authority at 3:00 p.m. However, no official minutes were recorded since there was no quorum. Instead the following memo was drafted.

Ms. Ann Bluntzer stated that opportunities had arisen for her family and they were moving to Texas. Ms. Patty Kennedy will be her replacement starting September 1, 2011. The Board acknowledged what a great job Ann had done and wished her the best of luck in her future endeavors.

Mr. David Starkey, from the Beaufort County Finance Department, gave an update on the Beaufort County Rural and Critical Land Preservation budget. As of June 30, 2011 there was \$4.2 million dollars left in the budget. Since then some more properties have closed and that number was around \$2.9 million dollars.

Mr. Garrett Budds presented Region V and VI Watershed Planning areas to the Board. Region V consisted of the west end of Broad River, Chechessee River, Colleton River, and Okatie River. Region VI consisted of the headwaters of Okatie River, May River, and the Bluffton area. Mr. Budds showed a history lesson of development in this area from 1988 to 2007. Even though this area has been greatly developed, there were still some opportunities for preserving some wildlife corridors and remaining cropland and forestland. Beaufort County Open Land Trust (BCOLT) and Beaufort County staff will be working with the Town of Bluffton and development communities in the renegotiation process to save some areas of open space within development agreements.

Mr. Budds presented an update of the property classification system. An idea was proposed to codify this document by putting it into the Beaufort County Comprehensive Plan and reference it in the new Form Based Code as a Special District so it would not actually be in the Code. The Board was asked to think about this idea and have further discussions during the next meeting.

Ms. Bluntzer gave an update on the Request for Proposal (RFP) for use of the Beaufort County Rural and Critical Land Preservation properties. Recently, people had approached the BCOLT and Beaufort County staff for possible public/private partnerships for use of these properties deemed for passive park use. After discussion by BCOLT staff, Beaufort County staff, and the Beaufort County Legal Department, it was decided to do a general RFP for any public/private partnership within Beaufort County Rural and Critical Land Preservation passive park property. The staff has been working with the Beaufort County Finance Department to finish the RFP and send it out for bid.

Ms. Bluntzer discussed the drawdown of the last \$10 million dollars of the \$50 million dollar bond referendum. The request from the Board went to the Natural Resources Committee and has

Beaufort County Rural and Critical Land Preservation Board meeting  
August 11, 2011

been forwarded to the Beaufort County Finance Department. County Council is now ready to move this request forward and hope to get it done by this fall.

Ms. Bluntzer gave an update on recently closed properties. Orange Grove Plantation, 800 acres, just closed. This is the largest single agricultural easement for the program and the largest amount of funds that USDA has ever offered for one project.