

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

The Beaufort County Rural and Critical Land Preservation Board (hereafter known as the Board) was held on January 11, 2018, at the Beaufort Jasper Water and Sewer Authority Conference Room at 3:00 p.m.

### **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Mr. Mike Mathews (Chairman)  
Mr. Mark Baker (Vice-Chairman)  
Mr. Bob Bender  
Ms. Susie Fripp-Gordon  
Mr. Terry Hill

Mr. Walter Mack  
Ms. Gail O'Kane  
Ms. Dorothy Scanlin  
Ms. Denise Sullivan  
Mr. Richard Walls

### **MEMBERS ABSENT:**

None

### **STAFF PRESENT:**

Mr. Rob Merchant, Beaufort County Acting Planning Director  
Ms. Amanda Flake, Beaufort County Natural Resources Planner  
Ms. Barbara Holmes, Beaufort County Open Land Trust

### **GUESTS PRESENT:**

Mr. Eric Larson, Beaufort County Director of Environmental Engineering  
Ms. Kate Schaeffer, Coastal Conservation League

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Mike Mathews called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

### **REVIEW OF AGENDA**

Chairman Mathews asked if there were any changes to the Agenda and there was one; add the Rural and Critical Land Preservation Annual Report for 2017.

### **REVIEW OF MINUTES**

Chairman Mathews asked if there were any changes to the Minutes from the December 14, 2017 Board meeting and there was one; change Mr. Flake to Mrs. Flake. Mr. Mack made a motion and Mr. Walls seconded the motion to accept the Minutes with modifications from the December 14, 2017 Board meeting. **The motion was carried unanimously to accept the minutes with modifications from the December 14, 2017, Board meeting** (FOR: Mathews, Baker, Bender, Fripp-Gordon, Hill, Mack, O'Kane, Scanlin, Sullivan, Walls).

## **GENERAL DISCUSSION**

### **Financial Update**

Ms. Amanda Flake stated that currently there was a balance of \$13.5 million with \$3.5 million reserved for park infrastructure and \$10 million for property purchase and/or park infrastructure.

### **Passive Park Update**

Ms. Flake stated that the Fort Fremont bids were evaluated and a bidder was chosen. This bid would go forward to the Natural Resources Committee on January 16, 2018 for approval. The Crystal Lake Grand Opening would be scheduled soon. Beaufort County staff was working on final plans to finish the boardwalk around Crystal Lake. Okatie Preserve Park permits were being finalized by the Town of Bluffton. Once permits were obtained the County would put this project out to bid. Mitchellville Park was in the works as well as New Riverside and Widgeon Point. There were two interviews today for the Park Stewardship Manager position and one of those was selected for a second interview in a few weeks.

### **R&C Annual Report for 2017**

Ms. Barbara Holmes presented a report on the progress of the R&C Program during 2017. Four properties were purchased during the year; Paige Point Cemetary, Squire Pope Carriage House, Beaufort Gas Boundary Street, and the Little Point. These four properties may have been small in acreage but were valuable to the Program both strategically and historically. Additional highlights were the Trust for Public Land (TPL) Economic Study and the Board's discussion about a possible 2018 bond referendum. Overall the R&C Program had conserved 23,931 acres in Beaufort County.

### **TPL Economic Study Update**

Ms. Holmes stated that the Trust for Public Land (TPL) Economic study was complete. The study would first be presented to County Council on January 22, 2018 at 6:00 pm. Chairman Mathews encouraged all Board members to attend the meeting to show support for the R&C Program. Ms. Holmes sent out emails about the two stakeholder meetings to be held on January 23, 2018; one north of the Broad River and one south of the Broad River. Three Trust for Public Land (TPL) staff members would be presenting at the stakeholder meetings. The study was 51 pages long, therefore only a limited amount of copies would be printed. Otherwise, the study would be available online at a specified time and summary sheets would also be distributed at the meetings.

### **Bond Referendum Update**

Ms. Holmes stated that the Board was still waiting for the feasibility study and public opinion poll to be completed by the Trust for Public Land (TPL) to determine if there was still public support for another bond referendum. Because of the workload of the feasibility study, the public poll may not be done until March or April. TPL representatives expected to report to the R&C Board in April on whether or not to proceed with another bond referendum.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business, Chairman Mathews entertained a motion at 4:27 p.m. from Ms. O'Kane, seconded by Ms. Scanlin, to adjourn the meeting. **The motion was approved unanimously** (FOR: Mathews, Baker, Bender, Fripp-Gordon, Hill, Mack, O'Kane, Scanlin, Sullivan, Walls).

**Submitted by:** Amanda Flake, Natural Resources Planner

**Approved:**

Michael Mathews  
Mike Mathews, Chairman,  
Beaufort County Rural and Critical Land Preservation Board

Date: 3/8/18