

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

The Beaufort County Rural and Critical Lands Preservation Board (hereafter referred to as the Board) was held on Thursday, April 11, 2019, at the Beaufort-Jasper Water and Sewer Authority Conference Room, 3:00 p.m.

### **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Mr. Mike Mathews (Chairman)  
Mr. Bob Bender  
Mr. Terry Hill  
Mr. Arthur Baer

Ms. Gail O’Kane  
Ms. Dorothy Scanlin  
Mr. Richard Walls  
Mr. Douglas Koop

### **MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Mr. Walter Mack  
Mr. Beekman Webb (Vice Chairman)

### **STAFF PRESENT:**

Mr. Eric Greenway, Beaufort County Community Development Director  
Ms. Amanda Flake, Beaufort County Natural Resources Planner  
Ms. Barbara Holmes, Beaufort County Open Land Trust  
Ms. Diane McMaster, Beaufort County Community Development Senior Admin

### **GUESTS PRESENT:**

Ms. Alice Howard, Beaufort County Council  
Mr. York Glover, Beaufort County Council  
Ms. Kate Schaefer, Coastal Conservation League  
Mr. Blewett Wright, St. James Baptist Church  
Mr. Lawrence Brown, St. James Baptist Church  
Ms. Cary Brown, St. James Baptist Church  
Mr. Lewis Rivers, St. James Baptist Church  
Mr. Josh Bell, Lowcountry Land Trust  
Mr. Charles Cousins, Town of Hilton Head

### **CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME (STAFF / GUEST INTRODUCTIONS)**

Chairman Mike Mathews called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m.

The Board chose Tuesday, May 7, 2019, as the tentative date for the Port Royal Maritime Center visit and Board meeting. Thursday, May 2, 2019, was set as the fallback date. Ms. Amanda Flake will report back to the Board next week regarding a confirmed date/time.

## **REVIEW OF AGENDA**

Chairman Mathews asked if there were any changes or additions to the agenda. There were none. Chairman Mathews did state that due to time constraints, Agenda item 5.F., and possibly item 5.E., would be moved to the May R&C Board meeting. He noted that the parcels noted at Agenda item 5.F. “Projects” were discussed at the March 18, 2019, Natural Resources Committee meeting, and said discussion could be accessed via the County Channel.

## **CITIZEN COMMENTS**

There were none.

## **REVIEW OF MINUTES**

Chairman Mathews asked if there were any changes to the meeting minutes from the March 8, 2019, Board Retreat, and there were none. He asked for a motion to accept said minutes. Ms. Gail O’Kane made a motion, seconded by Mr. Terry Hill, to accept the minutes as written. There was unanimous support for the motion.

## **REGULAR SESSION**

### **Procedural Changes and R&C Board’s Role**

Chairman Mathews stated that he and other Board members have been disturbed in the past five or six weeks regarding proposed policy/procedural changes involving the R&C Board. Mr. Eric Greenway, Beaufort County Community Development Department Director, addressed those present and explained that the procedural changes under consideration by Beaufort County administration are not intended to diminish the R&C Board’s current role. He stated that it will be important to receive the proper authorization from County Council before funds are expended on potential acquisitions. If anything, the Board’s role will become stronger in the future and they will be afforded more information and time when considering potential projects. There is a need for clarity regarding responsibilities/interaction internally involving County staff and current third-party contractor, Beaufort County Open Land Trust. A new agreement between the two parties is presently being drafted, addressing the formal process for potential acquisitions and conservation easements. A new application process may be developed, allowing more public participation in presenting land projects to the Board for consideration.

Ms. Alice Howard, Beaufort County Council, explained that the two-step land review process, project consideration first by the R&C Board and then secondly by the Natural Resources Committee would not change as initially proposed. She is looking to the Board as an advisory body to provide more public transparency and public opportunity during the review process.

Chairman Mathews stated that after today’s clarification, it does not appear as though the R&C Board’s Resolution will be altered by the proposed procedural changes. He did note that a review and update to the current Resolution should occur in the near future.

### **\$25M Bond Referendum Funds**

Mr. Greenway explained that currently, County Council is being asked to determine a percentage of the November 2018 Bond Referendum funds be set aside for the development of parks. This

request does not create any legal issues in relation to the Resolution the R&C Board is working under. A Resolution does not carry the weight of law.

### **Beach City Road Land Sale (4 parcels)**

The FAA has requested relocation of the St. James Baptist Church and Cherry Hill School due to the structures located within the flight path at the Beaufort County Airport in Hilton Head. Four (4) parcels co-owned by the Town of Hilton Head and Beaufort County are being considered as the rebuild/relocation sites, allowing the church and school to remain near the historic Mitchelville Park area. The four (4) parcels total 4.45 acres and were jointly purchased for \$752,436. The parcels in question appraised for \$880,000 in August 2018. The Church and the School are located on 1.77 acres. Town of Hilton Head Council recently voted to negotiate a selling price for the four (4) parcels which would be agreeable with Beaufort County Council and the FAA.

J. K. Tiller and Associates, Inc., has been commissioned to evaluate the site regarding current Town of Hilton Head guidelines for tree retention, parking, setbacks, etc. This project will also require archeological testing and an updated land appraisal. The Beaufort County Natural Resources Committee is requesting a recommendation from the R&C Board for the sale of the four (4) parcels to St. James Baptist Church.

Mr. Douglas Koop asked about the possibility of adding a reverter clause or a right of first refusal to the conditions of sale regarding the four (4) parcels.

Chairman Mathews requested a Motion stating that the R&C Board approve the sale of four (4) land parcels, property ID's R510 005 000 010A 0000, R510 005 000 010I 0000, R510 005 000 0329 0000, and R510 005 000 010B 0000, located at Beach City Road to St. James Baptist Church for the purpose of relocating outside the runway protection zone and remaining within the Mitchelville historical corridor. Mr. Art Baer made said motion, seconded by Ms. Gail O'Kane. There was unanimous support for the motion, 8:0. Mr. Douglas Koop stated for the record that his vote in favor of the sale stipulates that a contingency, as previously mentioned, be placed within the final conditions of sale wording.

### **Financials Update**

Chairman Mathews noted that the current fund balance is \$4.856M with the possibility of \$785K, representing the Cleland project, being added back to the current balance. He requested clarification from Mr. Greenway that there were no restrictions on the \$4.856M. Mr. Greenway confirmed there were no spending restrictions on the current fund balance but did note due diligence currently in progress for projects which could potentially be presented to the Board in the near future. The available funds could be used for those pending projects.

Chairman Mathews requested more detailed financial reporting in the future from County staff and asked R&C Board members to review and compare an old financial to the new report format and give their feedback at the next meeting. Councilwoman Alice Howard stated that she would set up a meeting between Chairman Mathews and new County Administrator, Ms. Ashley Jacobs, regarding this request.

### **Explanation and Ranking Sheets**

Chairman Mathews asked for feedback from Board members regarding revisions to the Critical Lands and Rural Lands Explanation and Ranking sheets. Ms. Dorothy Scanlin raised concern regarding ambiguous wording the Critical Lands sheet. He explained that the ranking sheets are tools created years ago to be used on the Board's behalf by County staff and the land trust contractor when evaluating a piece of property.

Chairman Mathews asked for a Motion that the Board approve the Ranking form, including a companion Criteria Explanation document, one set each for use with Critical Lands and Rural Lands evaluations as presented to the Board on April 11, 2019, and stipulated these forms are to be adopted and used for all future Rural or Critical Lands projects. Mr. Art Baer made said Motion, seconded by Mr. Terry Hill. The Motion passed with a vote of 7:1 with Ms. Dorothy Scanlin voting No.

Chairman Mathews requested that the "04/11/19 Adoption Date" be noted on each document.

### **Greenprint Discussion**

Chairman Mathews stated that his position regarding the Greenprint update is to not move forward until directed to do so by the Natural Resources Committee. Mr. Art Baer suggested approaching the new County Administrator, Ms. Ashley Jacobs, for the directive to move forward with the update. Councilman York Glover confirmed for the Board that County Council does not want to diminish their current role. He asked that the Board move forward with their Greenprint update efforts. In light of Councilman Glover's comments, Chairman Mathews requested that County Council be made aware of the R&C Board's plan to begin the Greenprint update.

Chairman Mathews stated that he would draft a Greenprint document for the Board's review at the next meeting.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business, Chairman Mathews requested a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:03 p.m. Ms. Gail O'Kane made a motion, seconded by Mr. Richard Walls, to adjourn the meeting. The motion had unanimous approval.

**Submitted by:** Diane McMaster, Beaufort County Community Development  
Senior Administrative Specialist

**Approved:** Michael Mathews  
Mike Mathews, Chairman,  
Beaufort County Rural and Critical Lands Preservation Board

Date: 5/7/19