

**MINUTES**  
**RURAL AND CRITICAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD RETREAT**

**June 10, 2021**

Widgeon Point Preserve

The electronic and print media duly notified in  
accordance with the State Freedom of Information Act.

**ATTENDANCE**

Present: Vice-Chairman Walter Mack, Art Baer, Mac Bennett, John Maffei, Chris Marsh,  
Ryan Stefonick

Absent: Gail O’Kane, Beek Webb

County  
Council: Alice Howard, York Glover

Staff: Rob Merchant, Interim Planning Director; Amanda Flake, Natural Resources  
Planner

Visitors: Kate Schaefer, BCOLT Director of Land Protection; Caylor Romines, BCOLT  
Director of Stewardship; Audra Antonacci, Beaufort County Director of Code  
Enforcement; Stefanie Nagid, Passive Park Manager; Joe Mac, University  
Bicycles

**CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Kate Schaefer called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m.

Public notification of this meeting has been published, posted, and distributed in compliance  
with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Motion:** It was moved by Mr. Maffei, seconded by Mr. Marsh to approve the agenda as presented.  
The vote: YAYS – Vice-Chairman Mack, Mr. Baer, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Maffei, Mr. Marsh, and Mr.  
Stefonick. The motion passed.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**April 8, 2021**

**Motion:** It was moved by Mr. Baer, seconded by Mr. Maffei to approve the agenda as presented. The vote: YAYS – Vice-Chairman Mack, Mr. Baer, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Maffei, Mr. Marsh, and Mr. Stefonick. The motion passed.

### **CITIZEN COMMENT**

Mr. Joe Mac presented a proposal to add mountain bike trails to some of the passive parks. He owns University Bicycles and is part of the Beaufort Trailheads group that will be changing to Beaufort Trailblazers. The proposal was mainly for the Pineview property but they would like to see trails on other park properties. The Board suggested that he might contact South Carolina Department of Natural Resources to see if there was any interest in putting bike trails on WMA's (wildlife management areas).

### **PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS**

#### **R&C Financial Update**

Ms. Amanda Flake stated that as of March 31, 2021 the R&C Program had \$19,765,531 available for purchases. The report included acquisition of Longwood PDR and Port Royal Island Battlefield.

#### **R&C Passive Parks Update**

Ms. Stefanie Nagid presented an update on passive parks within the R&C Program. Tier 1 and Tier 2 properties already had funding available for planning and/or construction. These included Fort Fremont, New Riverside, Whitehall Park, Okatie River Park, Ford Shell Ring Preserve, Pineview, Bailey Memorial Park, Okatie Marsh, Station Creek, Jenkins Creek, and Stoney Preserve. The Tier 2 properties will be planned once some of the Tier 1 properties are finished. Tier 3 properties do not have any funding allocated but some are under a timber thinning contract to improve wildlife habitat. Tier 4 properties are either currently open to the public or closed to the public and will remain open space. Currently there are 13 properties open to the public; seven North of the Broad and six South of the Broad.

#### **Funding Partnerships, Resources, Greenprint and Comprehensive Plan**

Ms. Kate Schaefer introduced Mr. Caylor Romines to discuss his role as BCOLT's Director of Stewardship. He stated that in this position it is beneficial to have knowledge of a working landscape as well as be a supportive resource to the land owners. Currently BCOLT owns 51 properties fee simple and holds 94 conservation easements, 80 of which are in Beaufort County. Conservation easements are in perpetuity and BCOLT monitors these properties once a year, nurtures relationships with the owners, and is available as a resource and advocate.

Mr. Rob Merchant discussed the recent Greenprint and Comprehensive Plan update. Beaufort County hired Design Workshop to help with the Comprehensive Plan update and then added an addendum to their contract to create the Greenprint for the R&C Program. The R&C Program is a great tool, but Beaufort County also has existing protections through current zoning standards to

include buffer, open space, and limited development. As Design Workshop researched the Greenprint they started with the natural and cultural resources and then interviewed the public during workshops. The Comprehensive Plan took a look at flooding and sea level rise and marsh migration which was incorporated into the Greenprint. For more information, please visit [envisionbeaufortcounty.com](http://envisionbeaufortcounty.com).

### **Ranking Sheets**

Ms. Schaefer started the discussion that the ranking sheets might need to be modified with new information revealed through the Greenprint update. After some discussion it was determined that instead of changing the ranking sheets, an extra checklist be added to the ranking sheets. This checklist could include the 5 sections of the Greenprint and give a more detailed explanation of why a project meets the criteria of the R&C Program.

### **Monthly Project Update**

Ms. Schaefer presented to the SOLOCO (Southern Lowcountry Committee) Board about the R&C Program. She also met with BJWSA (Beaufort Jasper Water and Sewer Authority) to discuss land protection and water quality. This month there were two new applications for conservation easements and several inquiries.

### **Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman**

Since Chairman Michael Mathews resigned, Vice-Chairman Walter Mack will move into the Chairman position until the end of the year. The Board decided to wait until next month to vote on the Vice-Chairman.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Motion:** It was moved by Vice-Chairman Mack seconded by Mr. Maffei to approve to go into Executive Session. The vote: YAYS – Vice-Chairman Mack, Mr. Baer, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Maffei, Mr. Marsh, and Mr. Stefonick. The motion passed.

**Discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements for acquisition of potential projects and application status**

### **MATTERS ARISING OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**None**

It was motioned by Mr. Baer, seconded by Mr. Stefonick, to recognize Mr. Michael Mathews for his contribution and commitment to the Board. The vote: YAYS – Vice-Chairman Mack, Mr. Baer, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Maffei, Mr. Marsh, and Mr. Stefonick.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion: Motion:** It was moved by Mr. Baer, seconded by Mr. Stefonick to adjourn the meeting at 12:50 pm. The vote: YAYS – Vice-Chairman Mack, Mr. Baer, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Maffei, Mr. Marsh, and Mr. Stefonick. The motion passed.

**Submitted by:** Amanda Flake, Beaufort County Community Development  
Natural Resources Planner

**Approved:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Walter Mack, Vice-Chairman  
Beaufort County Rural and Critical Lands Preservation Board

Date: \_\_\_\_\_