

MINUTES
RURAL AND CRITICAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD MEETING

October 14, 2021

Crystal Lake Park/Webex

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

ATTENDANCE

Present: Chairman Walter Mack, Ford Bartholow, Mac Bennett, John Maffei, Chris Marsh, Tom Murray, Gail O’Kane, Ryan Stefonic, Beek Webb

Absent: Vice-Chairman Art Baer, Kenneth Frazier

County
Council: Alice Howard

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

Visitors: Kate Schaefer, BCOLT Director of Land Protection; Kristin Williams, BCOLT Executive Director; Stefanie Nagid, Passive Parks Manager; Brittany Ward, Assistant County Attorney; Whitney Richland, Deputy County Administrator; Chuck Atkinson; Assistant County Administrator; Joe Mac, University Bikes

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Walter Mack called the meeting to order at 2:34 p.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. Webb, seconded by Mr. Bennett to approve the agenda as presented. The vote: YAYS – Chairman Mack, Mr. Bartholow, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Maffei, Mr. Marsh, Mr. Murray, Mrs. O’Kane, Mr. Stefonic, and Mr. Webb. The motion passed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

September 9, 2021

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Murray, seconded by Mrs. O’Kane to approve the minutes as presented. The vote: YAYS – Chairman Mack, Mr. Bartholow, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Maffei, Mr. Marsh, Mr. Murray, Mrs. O’Kane, Mr. Stefonick, and Mr. Webb. The motion passed.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Mr. Joe Mack, a member of the Beaufort Trailblazers (mountain bike trails), was willing to donate money and volunteers to try and build mountain bike trails on some of the Beaufort County passive parks. He had submitted a proposal to Beaufort County with details and told the board members to explore the Savannah White Marsh Preserve website to see an example of trails that were built by this group.

MISCELLANEOUS

Ms. Kate Schaefer introduced the two newest board members: Mr. Ford Bartholow and Mr. Kenneth Frazier.

PRESENTATION

The Nature Conservancy

Ms. Katy McWilliams presented information about The Nature Conservancy (TNC) which is a 501 c3 conservation organization and has been in South Carolina since 1969. This organization holds around 160 conservation easements in South Carolina which amounts to around 180,000 acres preserved. The first conservation easement held by TNC in South Carolina was St. Phillips Island in 1983. The mission of TNC is to conserve land with one avenue being conservation easements. TNC’s role is to identify conservation values on properties such as special natural features, habitat for certain species, and rare habitats in South Carolina. Each conservation easement is different and unique and is constantly adapting over time.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Finance Update

Ms. Amanda Flake stated that as of June 30, 2021 the R&C Program had \$19,654,991 available for purchases. However, during the meeting it was discovered that the report was incorrect. The report was dated through December 31, 2020, not June 30, 2021. Therefore Ms. Flake will request that Mr. Hayes correct the report and then a copy will be sent to the board.

R&C Monthly Notes and Updates

Ms. Schaefer welcomed the newest Board members, Mr. Ford Bartholow representing District 9 and Mr. Kenneth Frazier representing District 8 but is from District 9. She asked the board for biographies so they can be posted on the Rural and Critical Land Preservation Board website. Ms. Schaefer was invited to speak in North Carolina because Henderson County would like to create a program similar to the Rural and Critical Land Preservation Program.

Ms. Stefanie Nagid stated that the Fort Fremont Grand Opening would be on November 9, 2021 from 3:00 pm until 5:00 pm and all were invited.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Murray seconded by Mr. Webb to approve to go into Executive Session. The vote: YAYS – Chairman Mack, Mr. Bartholow, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Maffei, Mr. Marsh, Mr. Murray, Mrs. O’Kane, Mr. Stefonick, and Mr. Webb. 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

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Marsh, seconded by Mr. Webb, to recommend approval of Project Bermuda Bluff contingent upon completing all due diligence. The vote: YAYS – Chairman Mack, Mr. Bartholow, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Maffei, Mr. Marsh, Mr. Murray, Mrs. O’Kane, Mr. Stefonick, and Mr. Webb. The motion passed.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Motion: It was moved by Mr. Webb, seconded by Mr. Murray to adjourn the meeting at 4:00 pm. The vote: YAYS – Chairman Mack, Mr. Bartholow, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Maffei, Mr. Marsh, Mr. Murray, Mrs. O’Kane, Mr. Stefonick, and Mr. Webb. The motion passed.

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

Approved: _____
Walter Mack, Chairman
Beaufort County Rural and Critical Lands Preservation Board

Date: _____