

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

**May 11, 2023**

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

**ATTENDANCE**

Present: Chairman Walter Mack, Vice-Chairman Art Baer, Ford Bartholow, Mac Bennett, John Maffei, Stodd McEwan, Lucia O'Farrell, Beek Webb

Absent: None

County  
Council: Alice Howard, York Glover

Staff: Amanda Flake, Natural Resources Planner

Visitors: Kate Schaefer, BCOLT Director of Land Protection; Stefanie Nagid, Passive Parks Manager; Rob Merchant, BC Planning Director; Kristen Forbus, BC Long Range Planner; Joe Mac, University Bikes

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Walter Mack called the meeting to order at 2:32 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. The vote: YAYS – Chairman Mack, Vice-Chairman Baer, Mr. Bartholow, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Maffei, Mr. McEwan, Ms. O'Farrell, and Mr. Webb. The motion passed.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**March 23, 2023**

**Motion:** It was moved by Vice-Chairman Baer, seconded by Mr. Bartholow to approve the agenda. YAYS – Chairman Mack, Vice-Chairman Baer, Mr. Bartholow, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Maffei, Mr. McEwan, Ms. O'Farrell, and Mr. Webb. The motion passed.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **Citizen Comments**

Joe Mac, University Bikes came to speak about recreation opportunities, specifically the loss of professional tennis tournaments in the area due to facilities. He also spoke about two mountain biking trails under threat, citing demand for the trails has increased but getting passes is difficult and landowners are threatening to close. Joe reiterated the Beaufort is missing opportunities.

### **Rural and Critical Land Preservation Program 2022 Annual Report**

Kate Schaefer introduced the 2022 Rural and Critical Land Annual report, highlighting the two easements closed in December 2022, Village Creekside and Lobeco Farms. The report also includes information regarding the properties visited throughout the year in order to promote more knowledge of the breadth of the program. Report will be presented to Council in June.

### **Sentinel Landscapes Partnership Program**

Kate Schaefer shared that the South Carolina Lowcountry region was designated as a Sentinel Landscape by the Department of Defense in March 2022. We are the 11<sup>th</sup> landscape in the country. The designation will open up more collaboration and resources with federal partners including the lead agencies the Department of Defense, Department of Interior, and Department of Agriculture. More information can be found online at [www.sentintellandscapes.org](http://www.sentintellandscapes.org)

### **Project Barrell Landing Orr Fee**

Project Barrell Landing Orr Fee was introduced. The landowner, Michael Orr, was present and introduced himself. He purchased the property within the past five years but is interested in selling to the county due to being surrounding on all sides by Barrell Landing, a fee simple property in the Okatie watershed. Staff discussed the merits of owning the property including the opportunity to minimize disturbance from neighbors and the opportunity to improve access to the public property surrounding the subject parcel.

It was moved by Mr. Webb and seconded by Mr. Bennett to recommend to the Community Service and Land Use Committee for due diligence of Project Barrell Landing Orr Fee. YAYS – Chairman Mack, Vice-Chairman Baer, Mr. Bartholow, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Maffei, Mr. McEwan, Ms. O'Farrell, and Mr. Webb. The motion passed

### **Project Boundary Street Logan Fee**

Project Boundary Street Fee was introduced by staff. This application had been held pending until neighboring properties also showed movement: this upper boundary street corridor consists of shallow lots with expansive views of the marsh and if purchased, could offer open views entering

Beaufort and improve access management and traffic challenges along Boundary Street. This would only be possible with a partnership between the landowners, City, County. The OLT has a right of first refusal on the two properties in play. The subject parcel is 1 acre. Art Baer made a motion to approve due diligence, Beek Webb made the second, all in favor.

It was moved by Vice-Chairman Baer and seconded by Mr. Webb to recommend to the Community Service and Land Use Committee for due diligence of Project Boundary Street Logan Fee. YAYS – Chairman Mack, Vice-Chairman Baer, Mr. Bartholow, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Maffei, Mr. McEwan, Ms. O’Farrell, and Mr. Webb. The motion passed.

### **Cotton Hall Fee Update**

Staff updated the Board regarding the Cotton Hall Fee purchase reviewed in March. OSI closed on 231 acres known as Deveaux Hill, secured an option on the remainder and OLT closed on a conservation easement for the homesite property. Beaufort County will entertain purchase of the Deveaux Hill and Option tract for future public access. A site visit is being set up for May 16 and 24 and RCLPP Board is welcome to attend.

### **Miscellaneous**

Walter recognized outgoing Board member Kenneth Frazier and thanked him for his service on the Board. There is now a vacancy in District 8.

Walter Mack said the vote for chairman and vice chairman would be moved to June.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion:** It was moved by Mr. Bennett, seconded by Vice-Chairman Baer to adjourn the meeting at 4:03 pm. YAYS – Chairman Mack, Vice-Chairman Baer, , Mr. Bartholow, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Maffei, Mr. McEwan, Ms. O’Farrell, 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: \_\_\_\_\_