

**MINUTES
RURAL AND CRITICAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD**

August 8, 2024

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

ATTENDANCE

Present: Chairman Art Baer, Vice-Chairman Mac Bennett, Walter Mack, Stodd McEwan,
Lucia O’Farrell

Absent: Ford Bartholow, Beek Webb

County
Council: York Glover

Staff: Amanda Flake, Natural Resources Planner

Visitors: Kate Schaefer, BCOLT Director of Land Protection; Rob Merchant, Beaufort
County Planning Director; Stefanie Nagid, Passive Parks Director, Kristin
Williams, Executive Director Open Land Trust

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Art Baer called the meeting to order at 2:30 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 Vice-Chairman Bennett, seconded by Mr. McEwan to approve the
agenda. The vote: YAYS – Chairman Baer, Vice-Chairman Bennett, Mr. Mack, Mr. McEwan,
and Ms. O’Farrell. The motion passed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

March 14, 2024

Motion: It was moved by Vice-Chairman Bennett, seconded by Mr. McEwan to approve the
minutes. The vote: YAYS – Chairman Baer, Vice-Chairman Bennett, Mr. Mack, Mr. McEwan,
and Ms. O’Farrell. The motion passed.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Project Boundary Street Logan

Ms. Schaefer stated that Project Boundary Street Logan was voted on at the March meeting for purchase and was ultimately approved by County Council. As part of the closing process, the property must be cleared of all items and debris. Currently there are still sheds on the property and they are in the process of moving them from the property. Hopefully this project will close in September.

Project Beach City Road

Ms. Schaefer stated that this project was approved in August of 2022, however it never went to the Land Use Committee due to title issues. Currently the owner of the property has not resolved the title issues and will therefore be up to County Council on how to move forward.

Project Station Creek

Ms. Schaefer stated that this project is located off of Seaside Road on St. Helena. An updated survey shows that the property is 141 acres and consists of agricultural fields, river frontage, and a small hummock island. The property appraised for \$965,000. The owner is requesting two 5 acres ponds to be dug on the property. After discussion the Board decided to carve out the two ponds from the property and revise the acreage before moving forward with due diligence.

It was moved by Vice-Chairman Bennett and seconded by Mr. McEwan to confirm the survey acreage after removing the ponds and continue with due diligence. YAYS – Chairman Baer, Vice-Chairman Bennett, Mr. Mack, Mr. McEwan, and Ms. O’Farrell. The motion passed..

Project Davis Road

Ms. Schaefer stated that this project appraised in 2022 for \$780,000 and the sellers were given an offer but never accepted it. Now the owners are interested in selling the property again. The sellers bought the property in 2019 for \$1.4 million. There is an option to pay 10% above appraised value which would be \$858,000. Chairman Baer would like to see a ranking before voting on a 10% approval. Therefore this project will be ranked and brought back to the Board in September.

Project Rawstrom Road

Ms. Schaefer stated that this project is 11.66 acres located on Old Bailey Road next to Altamaha Preserve with river frontage. The survey is being updated from 2019 and the property appraised for \$1.87 million. Ms. Stefanie Nagid, Passive Parks Manager, is interested in the property to add

to Altamaha Preserve. There is a family cemetery located on the property that will need access by the family. Vice-Chairman Bennett requested that language be included that the County is not responsible for the maintenance of the cemetery if the County purchases the property.

It was moved by Mr. McEwan, seconded by Vice-Chairman Bennett to purchase Project Rawstrom Road subject to the completion of the final survey and Phase I ESA. YAYS – Chairman Baer, Vice-Chairman Bennett, Mr. Mack, Mr. McEwan, and Ms. O’Farrell. The motion passed..

Project Seaside Road

Ms. Schaefer stated that the landowner is only interested in the conservation easement property, not the fee simple property that contains the cemetery. The survey is in process, but the title work needs to be completed before the survey can be finished. The Board agreed to move forward with the title work to finish due diligence.

Project Wallace Creek

Ms. Kate Schaefer explained that this project is a combination of a boat landing and 27 acre island that would be a partnership between the Rural and Critical Land Preservation Program and Public Works. It is located at 245 Sam Doyle Road on St. Helena Island. When Public Works did an inventory of all county boat landings, they found that this one was privately owned. It is widely used by the public but not very safe. Therefore, Public Works brought it forward to the Rural and Critical Board as a potential project. However, during the appraisal process, title issues were found with the property. During this investigation it was found that the landing could possibly already be owned by the County. If that is the case, the Board is not interested in purchasing the island. The owners were tasked with finding out who exactly owns the landing and bring this information back to the Board.

Summary

Ms. Kate Schaefer stated that if Project Beach City Road and Project Wallace Creek fall through then the Program is left with \$1.3 million to spend. There are some potential projects that could be explored; property adjacent to Widgeon Point, Waterama, Barnard Tire, Horse Island, and an outparcel lot in New Riverside. The Board asked Ms. Schaefer and Ms. Flake to evaluate these properties and bring the back to the Board in September as possibilities to pursue

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: It was moved by Vice-Chairman Bennett, seconded by Mr. McEwan to adjourn the meeting at 4:20 pm. YAYS – Chairman Baer, Vice-Chairman Bennett, Mr. Mack, Mr. McEwan, and Ms. O’Farrell. The motion passed..

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

Approved: _____
Art Baer, Chairman
Beaufort County Rural and Critical Lands Preservation Board

Date: _____