



2020 Hampton Street • Room 3063A
Columbia, SC 29204
(803) 576-2080
July 15, 2024
4th Floor Conference Room
Meeting Minutes

Attendance

Commissioner	District	Present
Charles Weber	1	Yes
James Young	2	Yes
Wayman Stover	3	Yes
Glenice Pearson	4	No
Kip Dillihay	5	Yes
John Grego	6	Yes
Robert Squirewell	7	Yes
Vacant	8	
Khali Gallman	9	Yes
Kendrick Scott	10	No
Gail Rodriguez	11	Yes

Staff & Visitors	Affiliation
John McKenzie	Conservation Division
Quinton Epps	Conservation Division
Aric Jensen	Administration

Call to Order

Grego welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order with a quorum at 3:33 pm. Members, staff, and guests met in-person or by Zoom.

Approval of Agenda

⇒ **Young moved to approve the agenda with changes which was seconded by Stover. Motion passed unanimously.**

Approval of Minutes

⇒ **Weber moved to approve June minutes which was seconded by Young. Motion passed unanimously.**

Report of the Chair

- **Commission - update:** Grego announced the resignation of commissioner Deborah DePaoli for reasons of a challenging schedule.
- **Greenway Advisory Committee – update:** Grego reported on public comments about greenways during the recent Transportation Improvement Public Hearing from members of the Greenway Advisory Committee and the Gills Creek Watershed Association. Many suggested the hiring of a greenway professional to move projects along better. Weber noted the support of other speakers after he delivered comments and recommendations on behalf of the Natural Resources Committee (NRC). Weber stated he and others noted the unfinished greenways proposed in 2012 need to be prioritized in the new Penny II list.

- **Congaree Biosphere Region – update:** Grego reported the scheduled meeting was postponed but work on the new website continues. It was agreed upon there would be no change to the status of Epps and Grego as members of the group.
- **Goodwill Estates Property – update:** Gallman and Young shared reports of recent discussions and the involvement of Kendrick Scott to begin to create support of partnerships with the State and potentially the National Park Service to acquire and protect the property.
- **Advocacy – update:** Young reported his participation in a recent Cedar Creek community meeting where approximately 150 residents attended to address growth concerns.

Report from Community Planning & Development

- **Administration – update:** Jensen provided an update on the progress in selecting a consultant for the Comprehensive Plan update. County Council approved the selection and now there is a 10-day public notice period before we can actively engage with the consultant.

Treasurer’s Report

- **FY24–25 General Budget – update:** Epps reported we are still working on a better budget printout and stated there are no significant expenditures to report.

Historic Preservation Committee (HPC) Report

- **Heritage Tourism Marketing Plan (HTMP) Implementation – update:** Gallman reported the HTMP is still in the negotiation stage before it can go to Procurement.
- **Historic Preservation Plan (HPP) – update:** Gallman reported County Council approved the HPP and Procurement is currently preparing the contracts.
- **Olympia Museum Grant Project – action item:** Gallman explained the request of the Olympia Granby Historical Foundation to use grant funds for the repair, preparation, and repainting of the museum rather than roof repair.
 - ⇒ **The HPC moved to approve grant funds for repainting the Olympia Museum which was seconded by Young. Motion passed unanimously.**
- **Palmetto Cemetery historical marker – update:** McKenzie stated Cory France, the point person on the project, has started the order and will send in the invoice for payment.

Natural Resources Committee (NRC) Report

- **New Penny/Penny II recommendations – discussion:** Weber reported about his delivery of remarks and recommendations at the Transportation Improvement Public Hearing and the positive response. He noted commissioners should be prepared to answer questions and provide support for their councilmembers and the letter will be provided to commissioners following the

meeting. It was agreed to prepare a letter from the Richland County Conservation Commission (RCCC) to the Transportation Penny Advisory Committee.

- **Ganus Easement Negotiations – update:** Jensen stated the request for negotiations will be presented at the July 23, 2024 Administration and Finance Committee meeting.
- **Cabin Branch Easements – update:** No updates were reported.
- **Forestry Stewardship Plan (FSP) – update:** Epps reported Pat Ferral has started implementation of the FSP.
- **Potential Property Purchase – update:**
 - ⇒ **Weber moved to go into Executive Session to discuss contractual matters of a potential property purchase in Lower Richland which was seconded by Young. Motion passed unanimously.**

No decisions or votes were made in Executive Session.

- **Rural Tourism and Community Service (RTCS) Zoning for Lower Richland Tourism Plan – update:** McKenzie reported he will start working with the selected consultant for the Comprehensive Plan update as soon as possible.
- **Mill Creek Bridge – update:** Epps reported the project is moving forward and he is working on access issues for large equipment. Permitting issues have apparently been resolved by the contractor.
- **Mitigation Bank Credits – update:** Epps reported 3 credit sales were approved by County Council. Epps explained all funds generated by mitigation go back to the Penny program funding source. Jensen explained the potential need for more mitigation bank properties in the future with Penny II projects.
- **Broad River Property – update:** No updates were reported.

Conservation Program Analyst’s Report

- **Fabel Easement – update:** McKenzie reported the easement agreement has been refined and reviewed. It was agreed the agreement should be delivered to Fabel for his review.
- **Lake Elizabeth Conservation Easement – update:** McKenzie reported the first draft of this agreement is currently being prepared by the Assistant County Attorney.
- **FY23-24 RCCC Grants – update:** McKenzie stated there is a fiscal briefing meeting on Thursday, July 18 to explain forms and procedures to grant awardees.

- **Events – update:** McKenzie reported there will be a Friends of Harbison annual board meeting on Thursday, July 18 at 6pm.

Conservation Manager’s Report

- **Staff Vacancy - update:** Epps reported scheduling two interviews for the Administrative Assistant position which were both cancelled. The Conservation Education Analyst position, recently vacated by Chanda Cooper, has been posted and we have received applications.

New Business:

- There was discussion on preparing business cards for commissioners who would like to have them.

Public Input: None reported

Adjournment:

⇒ **At 4:54 pm, Young moved to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Stover. Motioned passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted, John McKenzie