



**2020 Hampton Street · Room 3063A**  
**Columbia, SC 29204**  
**(803) 576-2080**  
**March 18, 2024**  
**4<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room**  
**March Meeting Minutes**

**Attendance**

<b>Commissioner</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Present</b>
Charles Weber	1	Yes
James Young	2	Yes
Wayman Stover	3	Yes
Glenice Pearson	4	No
Kip Dillihay	5	No
John Grego	6	Yes
Robert Squirewell	7	No
Deborah DePaoli	8	Yes
Khali Gallman	9	Yes
Darrell Jackson Jr.	10	No
Gail Rodriguez	11	No

<b>Staff &amp; Visitors</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
John McKenzie	Conservation Division
Val Morris	Conservation Division
Jessica Thompson	Conservation Division
Chelsea Holliday	Conservation Division
Quinton Epps	Conservation Division

**Call to Order**

Grego welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order with a quorum at 3:31 pm. Members, staff, and guests met in-person or by Zoom.

**Approval of Agenda**

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

**Approval of Minutes**

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

**Report of the Chair**

- **Congaree Biosphere Region (CBR) - update:** Grego reported their monthly meetings have resumed, although he was unable to attend the last one due to conducting Adopt a Stream training with Lower Richland residents. Additionally, he spoke with Greg Sprouse from the Central Midlands Council of Governments, who informed him that they have a new intern from Benedict College, Joanna Rouse, who will assist with meeting notes and follow up on the Lower Richland Tourism Plan (LRTP).
- **Greenway Advisory Committee - update:** Grego reported there hasn't been a recent meeting with the Greenway Advisory Committee. He mentioned the Penny Two projects were listed and

discussed in the news. Weber encouraged the commissioners to become more familiar with the projects in case their input is needed.

- **March 19<sup>th</sup> Council Report – update:** Grego reminded the Commission about his presentation scheduled for tomorrow, March 19, 2024, regarding the Annual Plan, which he will present to County Council. Young suggested it would be beneficial if Commissioners could attend Grego’s presentation for a show of support.
- **Advocacy – update:** DePaoli reported she spoke with Councilmember Overture Walker.

### **Report from Community Planning & Development**

- **Administration – update:** No report.

### **Treasurer’s Report**

- **FY23–24 General Budget – update:** Epps reported there have been no significant changes in the budget, and the full dollar amount allocated for the bridge has been encumbered.

### **Historic Preservation Committee (HPC) Report**

- **Hettie Anderson Grave Marker:** Gallman reported she was contacted by Karen Strickland of the South Carolina African American Heritage Commission requesting the placement of a grave marker on the grave of Hettie Anderson’s mother, located in Elmwood Cemetery. Gallman stated Hettie Anderson was an acclaimed African American art model from Columbia, SC who is well known for her likeness on the \$20 gold coin and one of the most sought-after models and muses of the Gilded Age.
- **Heritage Tourism Marketing Plan (HTMP) – update:** McKenzie provided an update on the solicitation dates for the HTMP. It began on February 26, 2024, at 4:30 pm, and is set to close on March 26, 2024, at 3:00 pm. The deadline for evaluating project submissions is April 2, 2024, at 3:00 pm.
- **Historic Preservation Plan (HPP) – update:** McKenzie reported the HPP solicitation opening date will start March 20, 2024 at 4:00pm and close on April 22, 2024 at 4:00pm. The deadline for evaluating project submissions will take place on April 29, 2024 at 4:00pm. Epps stated Matthew Smith, who is part of the evaluation team and serves as the Comprehensive Planner in the Planning Department, was excited to hear that the HPP is moving forward and could be integrated in the County new Comprehensive Plan.
- **Cemetery Protection Ordinance – update:** McKenzie reported the Cemetery Protection Ordinance is on the Administration and Finance Committee (A&F) agenda for the March 26, 2024 meeting.

### **Natural Resources Committee (NRC) Report**

- **Rural Tourism and Community Service (RTCS) Zoning for LRTP – discussion:** Weber discussed having an overlay in certain zoning areas of the county in which he has asked McKenzie to work with Geo Price, Deputy Director of Planning to construct guidelines for the overlay.
- **DPW interest in utilizing land in Lower Richland for public service – work in progress:** Weber reported there was a discussion about the utilization of land in Lower Richland in their NRC meeting but there was no action taken.
- **Forestry Stewardship Plan – update:** Epps reported the plan has been submitted to Administration.
- **Potential Property Purchase – update:** Epps reported continuing to negotiate a price for the property.
- **Mill Creek Bridge – update:** Epps reported it's in the procurement process.
- **Bates Old River – update:** Grego reported still a work in progress. He suggested they may need to arrange a meeting with other organizations who are interested in the Bates Old River and the Broad River property.
- **Mitigation Bank Credits – update:** Epps reported no changes since the last monthly meeting.

#### **Conservation Program Analyst's Report**

- **Fabel Easement – update:** McKenzie reported he is currently drafting the easement agreements and will pass them on to Chris Zeigler, the county attorney, for review.
- **Lake Elizabeth Conservation Easement – update:** McKenzie reported he is currently drafting the easement agreements and will pass them on to Assistant County Attorney, Chris Zeigler, for review.
- **FY23-24 RCCC Grants – update:** McKenzie reported all of the grantees are moving along. Cottontown Historic District will complete their grant obligations by June but the project will not be approved by the State until later.
- **Events – update:** McKenzie reminded the group about the unveiling of the kiosk tomorrow, March 19, 2024, at 11:00 am, at Hyatt Park located at 950 Jackson Avenue, Columbia, SC 29203. Additionally, Thompson reported on the award ceremony for the poster contest scheduled for March 28, 2024, at 4:30 pm, at Stormwater Studio located at 413 Pendleton Street, Columbia, SC.

#### **Conservation Manager's Report**

- **Staff Vacancy - update:** Epps reported staff is adapting well to the new employees, Thompson and Holliday. There are ongoing efforts to fill the Land Program Planner position, with interviews already scheduled.

- **FY24-25 Budget - update:** Epps reported he is preparing for an upcoming meeting with County Administration to discuss the FY24-25 budget.
- **New Business:** McKenzie reported that County Council approved Good Friday as an employee holiday. Epps reported there is new work software with the County that will begin on March 23, 2024.
- **Public Input:** None reported
- **Adjournment:**
  - ⇒ **At 4:36 pm, Weber moved to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Young. Motioned passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted, Val Morris