



Richland Soil and Water Conservation District (RSWCD)

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Meeting Minutes

May 13, 2024, 6 pm

Lizard's Thicket, 7938 Garners Ferry Road, Columbia, SC 29209

Commissioners Present

Kenny Mullis, Chair

Jeff Laney, Vice Chair

Mary Burts, Commissioner

Associate Commissioners Present

Kirstin Bullington

Sarah Burnham

Mary Frances Hendrix

Charles Weber

Additional Attendees

Jessie Egan

Quinton Epps

Chelsea Holliday

Aric Jensen

Jennifer Mancke

Val Morris

Brooke Myres

Welcome & Invocation: Mullis called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm and Laney gave the invocation.

Approve Agenda and Minutes: Burts moved to approve the agenda and Laney seconded the motion. The motion was brought to a vote and passed unanimously. Laney moved to approve the minutes and Burts seconded the motion. The motion was brought to a vote and passed unanimously.

Special Presentation: Brooke Myres, Field Operations & Program Development Manager for the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR), gave a presentation on the history and evolution of SC Envirothon, a competition for high school students on soil, water resources, forestry, wildlife, and current environmental issues.

Reports:

Financial: Epps provided the following financial overview:

Operating Account (04/30/24 Statement)

- Beginning Balance: \$73,848.42 (04/01/24)
- Deposits and Credits: \$325.00
- Expenses and Debits: \$6,495.60
- Ending Balance: \$67,677.82 (04/30/24)

Credit Card (05/05/24 Statement)

- Beginning Balance: \$3,763.98 (05/05/24)
- Payments: \$3,763.98
- Purchases: \$4,716.17
- Ending Balance: \$4,716.17 (05/05/24) <paid in full (05/06/2024)

Easement Stewardship Account (04/30/24 Statement)

- Starting Account Value: \$53,321.99 (04/01/24)
- Ending Account Value: \$53,635.27 (04/30/24)
- Ending Account Value with Accrued Income: \$53,989.44

SCACD Contribution Agreement Account (04/30/24 Statement)

- Starting Balance: \$12,903.59 (04/01/24)
- Credits: \$14,746.58
- Debts: \$12,657.58
- Ending Balance: \$14,992.59 (04/30/24)

PayPal Account (04/30/24 Statement)

- Beginning Available Balance: \$300.00 (04/01/24)
- Ending Available Balance: \$0.00 (04/30/24)

RSWCD staff will look into the District's credit card reward points system.

NRCS: N/A

SC Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR): Egan reported SC Envirothon was held on April 26 and Spartanburg Day School won the competition. SCDNR was heavily involved with the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) Stewardship Week. Staff provided a social media toolkit, attended the governor's proclamation of Soil and Water Stewardship Week in Anderson, and hosted a Forestry Field Day event at Harbison State Forest. The field day was successful and SCDNR intends to hold the event annually to correspond with NACD themes. Egan also reported the SCDNR Monthly Report is delayed due to IT issues.

Richland County Conservation Commission (RCCC): Weber reported the Cemetery Ordinance passed its second and third reading and is now a part of the County Ordinance. Jensen reported the Forestry Stewardship Plan did not need council approval and is now ready for

implementation. Epps reported RCCC is making recommendations regarding community investment projects such as greenways and bikeways for the Penny 2 program.

RSWCD Programs: Epps reviewed the provided RSWCD Program Report. He asked attendees to volunteer for the Ag + Art Tour booth at Soda City on June 1 and the Ag + Art Tour on June 8 and 9. He encouraged attendees to register for the Ag + Art Tour Launch Party on June 2.

Conservation Items Before County Council: Epps referenced updates regarding the Cemetery Ordinance and Forestry Stewardship Plan. Epps also reported budget hearings are coming up and he does not anticipate any issues.

Commissioner Advocacy: Hendrix sent a thank you note to Councilmember Chakisse Newton. Laney spoke with Councilmember Don Weaver about funding for the Ag + Art Tour. Weaver was unable to contribute his hospitality tax funds to the tour but did donate personal funds. Weaver is still supportive of the tour and intends to contribute next year.

Old Business: N/A

New Business

RSWCD Personnel: Morris reported her last day as Administrative Assistant of the Conservation Division is Friday, May 17. Epps said the position will be posted as soon as possible.

The Working Agricultural Lands Preservation Act: Mancke announced Mike Cox with the COLUMBIA STAR wrote an article on the Working Agricultural Lands Preservation Act and she encouraged attendees to read it.

Cottle Farm: Mancke shared a news update about Cottle Farm. Governor Henry McMaster signed the Working Agricultural Lands Preservation Act at Cottle Farm in April. At the event, Joy Cottle discussed how developers approached her and her son, Hunter Bulloch, to sell the land shortly after they acquired it. Cottle and Bulloch decided to keep the property to develop agritourism in South Carolina.

Cutler Jewish Day School: Mancke shared that after determining three strains of E. coli in a nearby stream, Cutler Jewish Day School students marched through Forest Acres and put flyers in mailboxes to raise awareness and petition people to save the stream.

Executive Session: N/A

Public Input: Mullis referenced the upcoming events listed on the agenda.

Next Meeting: The next board meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 10 at 6 pm. The location is to be determined. Laney proposed moving the next board meeting to Lizard's Thicket at 711-1 University Village Drive, Blythewood, SC 29016. All were in favor and Mullis proposed meeting at the Blythewood location within the next three months.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 7:08 pm.