

BEAUFORT COUNTY RURAL AND CRITICAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD

The Beaufort County Rural and Critical Land Preservation Board meeting (hereafter known as the R&C Board) was held on April 14, 2016, at the Beaufort Jasper Water and Sewer Authority Board Room a 3:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Mike Mathews (Chairman)
Mr. Bob Bender
Ms. Gail O’Kane
Mr. Ed Riley

Ms. Dorothy Scanlin
Ms. Denise Sullivan
Mr. Richard Walls

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mr. Mark Baker (Vice-Chairman)
Ms. Susie Fripp-Gordon
Mr. York Glover
Ms. Norma Stewart

STAFF PRESENT:

Mr. Tony Criscitiello, Beaufort County Planning Director
Ms. Amanda Flake, Beaufort County Natural Resources Planner
Ms. Lisa Lord, Beaufort County Open Land Trust

GUESTS PRESENT:

Ms. Allison Coppage, Beaufort County Assistant Attorney
Ms. Alice Howard, Beaufort County Councilwoman
Ms. Cindy Baysden, Executive Director BCOLT
Ms. Kate Schaeffer, Coastal Conservation League

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Mike Mathews called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m.

REVIEW OF AGENDA

Chairman Mathews asked if there were any changes to the Agenda and there were none.

REVIEW OF MINUTES

Chairman Mathews asked if there were any changes to the Minutes from the March 10, 2016 Board meeting and there were two minor changes. Ms. O’Kane made a motion and Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion to accept the Minutes with corrections from the March 10, 2016 Board meeting. **The motion was carried unanimously to accept the minutes with corrections from the March 10, 2016, Board meeting (FOR: Mathews, Bender, O’Kane, Riley, Scanlin, Sullivan, Walls).**

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Financial Update

Ms. Amanda Flake gave a financial update of the Rural and Critical Land Preservation Program (R&C Program). As of January 31, 2016 there was a total amount of \$6.18 million in funds. These numbers do not include the \$20 million referendum that was approved in November 2014.

Board Information

Chairman Mike Mathews would like to thank all the Board members who had supplied their biographies and pictures. He requested for Ms. Lisa Lord to see if this information could be added to the R&C Program website. Chairman Mathews would still like suggestions from the Board members about education topics.

Passive Park Update

Mr. Tony Criscitiello stated that County Council approved the contract for Beaufort Construction to build Crystal Lake Park for \$802,637.00 which was below the engineer's estimate. Hopefully work will begin soon. Fort Fremont is in the last stages of the archeological investigation. The next step would be to apply for permits and then send the project to bid. Okatie Preserve is involved in meetings with the architect and engineer and will soon go to the Town of Bluffton for approval.

National Estuary Program

Mr. Bob Bender is leading an effort to get the Port Royal Sound Estuary into a federal program that could provide federal funding for this area. It is a non-regulatory program and does not require any funding to apply but it does require partnerships from Beaufort County and the surrounding municipalities. There are 28 members of the National Estuary Association with 17 million dollars split between them to be used within their respective areas. A group tried to get the Port Royal Sound Estuary into the program in 2007 but failed. This program is now willing to accept new members and if the Port Royal Sound Estuary is accepted this area could receive up to \$600,000.00 in grant money. If selected, an organization for the Port Royal Sound Estuary would have to be formed with Board members to determine how the money would be spent. Mr. Bender would like to see commitment from the R&C Board to support this effort to nominate the Port Royal Sound Estuary for induction into the National Estuary Program. Other groups who have committed support for this idea are the Port Royal Sound Foundation, Dr. Chris Marsh with Lowcountry Institute, and the Town of Port Royal. The R&C Board approved their support for this effort.

Executive Session Presentation

Ms. Allison Coppage delivered a power point presentation about proper procedures to follow when in executive session. She described the reasons of why a board would call an executive session, how to properly enter into executive session, how to make motions, and how to take a vote. She explained that conversations within executive session must be limited to the purpose delineated on the agenda and that these conversations are privileged and should not be shared with the public. A recently passed law makes it mandatory that the agenda has to outline what will be discussed in executive session, but it does not have to detail specifics about the project.

Public Survey Update/ Park Program Report Update

Ms. Lord stated that the public survey conducted by Clemson was finished and that a report had been distributed to staff for review. She and Mr. Ken Driggers had also completed their report on a parks program and it is in the final stages of review. Both of these reports will come forward to the R&C Board members soon.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairman Mathews entertained a motion by Ms. Sullivan, seconded by Ms. O’Kane, to adjourn the Open Session at 4:21 p.m. and convened Executive Session for the purpose of discussing matters associated with property acquisitions. **The motion was carried unanimously to enter into Executive Session** (FOR: Mathews, Bender, O’Kane, Riley, Scanlin, Sullivan, Walls).

Chairman Mathews adjourned Executive Session and convened Open Session at 4:56 p.m.

Mr. Bender made a motion; seconded by Mr. Riley, to recommend to the Natural Resources Committee of County Council to pursue Project M under the terms and conditions as recommended by Beaufort County Open Land Trust, as discussed in Executive Session. **The motion was carried unanimously to recommend to the Natural Resources Committee of County Council to pursue Project M under the terms and conditions as recommended by Beaufort County Open Land Trust, as discussed in Executive Session.** (FOR: Mathews, Bender, O’Kane, Riley, Scanlin, Sullivan, Walls).

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Chairman Mathews entertained a motion at 4:57 p.m. from Ms. Sullivan, seconded by Ms. O’Kane, to adjourn the meeting. **The motion was approved unanimously** (FOR: Mathews, Bender, O’Kane, Riley, Scanlin, Sullivan, Walls).

Submitted by: Amanda Flake, Natural Resources Planner

Approved: Mike Mathews
Mike Mathews, Chairman,
Beaufort County Rural and Critical Land Preservation Board

Date: 5/12/16