

BEAUFORT COUNTY RURAL AND CRITICAL LANDS PRESERVATION BOARD

The Beaufort County Rural and Critical Lands Preservation Board (hereafter known as the Board) meeting was held Thursday, February 14, 2019, at the Beaufort Jasper Water and Sewer Authority Conference Room, 3:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Mike Mathews (Chairman)
Mr. Bob Bender
Mr. Terry Hill
Mr. Beekman Webb
Mr. Walter Mack

Ms. Gail O’Kane
Ms. Dorothy Scanlin
Mr. Richard Walls (Vice Chairman)
Mr. Douglas Koop

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

STAFF PRESENT:

Mr. Eric Greenway, Beaufort County Community Development Director
Ms. Amanda Flake, Beaufort County Natural Resources Planner
Ms. Barbara Holmes, Beaufort County Open Land Trust
Ms. Diane McMaster, Beaufort County Community Development Admin Assistant

GUESTS PRESENT:

Ms. Stefanie Nagid, Beaufort County Passive Parks Manager
Ms. Melissa Peagler, Beaufort County Long Range Planner
Ms. Alice Howard, Beaufort County Council
Mr. Chris Inglese, Beaufort County Staff Attorney
Mr. Ed Pappas, Beaufort County Planning Commission
Ms. Jennifer Combs, City of Hardeeville
Ms. Neil Parsons, City of Hardeeville
Ms. Kate Schaefer, Coastal Conservation League
Ms. Kristin Williams, Beaufort County Open Land Trust
Ms. Rikki Parker, Coastal Conservation League
Mr. Chuck Newton, Sea Island Corridor Coalition
Mr. Wayne Smith
Mr. Dean Moss
Ms. Wendy Zara
Ms. Jessie White
Mr. Robert Sample

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

Chairman Mike Mathews called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m. He noted there were six (6) R&C Board members up for reappointment in 2019. All members received reappointments (Bender, Hill, Webb, Mathews, O'Kane, Scanlin).

Ms. Barbara Holmes informed everyone regarding a presentation occurring February 25, 2019, 9:00 a.m., Port Royal Sound Maritime Center - watershed mapping effort/water preservation.

REVIEW OF AGENDA

Chairman Mathews asked if there were any changes to the Agenda. Ms. Stefanie Nagid requested one additional item be added to the Agenda regarding a possible land donation to Beaufort County. Ms. Gail O'Kane made a motion to approve the Agenda as presented, noting the one requested addition, and Mr. Richard Walls seconded the motion. **The motion carried unanimously** (FOR: Mathews, Bender, Hill, Webb, Mack, O'Kane, Scanlin, Walls, Koop).

CITIZEN COMMENTS There were none.

REVIEW OF MINUTES

Chairman Mathews asked if there were any additional changes to the amended Minutes from the August 9, 2018, Board meeting. Hearing none, Ms. Gail O'Kane made a motion to accept the minutes as amended, and Mr. Richard Walls seconded the motion. **The motion carried** (FOR: Mathews, Bender, Hill, Mack, O'Kane, Scanlin, Walls, Koop and ONE ABSTAINED: Webb).

Chairman Mathews asked if there were any changes to the Minutes from the January 10, 2019, Board meeting. Hearing none, Mr. Richard Walls made a motion to accept the minutes as written, and Mr. Walter Mack seconded the motion. **The motion carried unanimously** (FOR: Mathews, Bender, Hill, Webb, Mack, O'Kane, Scanlin, Walls, Koop).

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN 2019

Chairman Mathews requested nominations for R&C Chairman and Vice Chairman for 2019. Mr. Richard Walls nominated Mr. Mike Mathews for Chairman. There was unanimous support for Mr. Mathews as Chairman. Ms. Gail O'Kane nominated Mr. Richard Walls for Vice Chairman, and he shared concern due to family commitments in 2019. Therefore, Mr. Richard Walls nominated Mr. Beekman Webb for Vice Chairman, and there was sufficient support for Mr. Webb's nomination.

REGULAR MEETING

Chairman Mathews discussed the Board's efforts to update the Greenprint in 2019. This will require input from many sources and requires a review of the Board's evaluation processes and ranking criteria. An 11-question Public Input Questionnaire has been circulated in an attempt to acquire suggestions and opinions from members of the public and our stakeholders / partners.

Mr. Eric Greenway, Community Development Director, emphasized the importance of transparency during all decision making processes and stated that recommendations/feedback

from all input and the recent Land Preservation Project Criteria and Program Process Questionnaire would be presented at the Board's Retreat scheduled for Friday, March 8, 2019, 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., Bluffton Library.

PUBLIC INPUT SESSION

Mr. Ed Pappas, Beaufort County Planning Commission, stated that he did submit a completed Questionnaire and wanted to touch on four areas of importance before the Board today: improving the property selection process; creating a better public understanding for land preservation and economic benefits; leveraging funds through partnerships; and developing a solid strategic plan.

Mr. Chuck Newton, Sea Island Corridor Coalition, stressed the importance of transparency and effective communication regarding growth and development decisions. He also stated that the public supported the recent Bond Referendum for land preservation/protection purposes, not general revenue funding.

Ms. Wendy Zara feels the public is willing to spend money specifically earmarked for land protection. The property ranking process needs to be more objective, and the public should have a better understanding of this process. She also commented that all fee simple property should have a conservation easement.

Mr. Robert Sample expressed his desire for more diversity in the R&C Board, BCOLT Board, other local organizations, and outreach programs. He questioned the legality of properties acquired with R&C funds supporting office space.

Ms. Kate Schaefer, Director of Programs Coastal Conservation League, stated that ongoing land conservation is a critical tool for managing growth, protecting water quality, and enhancing quality of life. This organized protection also extends to our wetland systems, wildlife habitat, and the rural greenbelt. She also gave suggestions for program improvement: expand eligible applicants working in coordination with BCOLT; create an application process that allows for competition and transparency; improve valuation criteria; suggest a greater funding priority on protecting rural lands via conservation easement or purchase of development rights; and improve Board configuration with focus on background rather than district address.

ROBERT'S RULES AND MEETING PROCEDURES

Mr. Chris Inglese, Beaufort County Staff Attorney, discussed basic meeting protocol and provided a summary sheet addressing the most common meeting procedures. He commented on the following FOIA guidelines: publication of meeting agenda; notice of meeting via media outlet; meeting open to the public; and importance of conducting business only after notice, not at an informal gathering.

The use of motions during a meeting can help ensure productivity, civility, and structure. An amendment to an existing agenda is voted on separately and requires a 2/3 vote. Approval of the agenda as written requires a majority vote.

Executive Session - A motion is required to begin an Executive Session. It is used to discuss contractual negotiations or the proposed sale of property and otherwise, carries a narrow scope for discussion in general. No voting or expression of opinions amongst board members is allowed during Executive Session. Accurate wording is important when listing the Executive Session on the applicable meeting agenda. No motion is required to end an Executive Session. The appointed secretary reports the group out of Session at a particular time. The group is then free to make a motion voting on the matter discussed during Session.

2019 R&C BOARD RETREAT

Consideration of proposed changes to the Ranking Sheets' criteria will be the key objective during the Retreat. It was noted that all recommendations being considered will undergo legal review prior to acceptance by the Board. Board members were encouraged to review R&C policies and procedures, Ordinance, Greenprint summary, and ranking sheet criteria prior to the Retreat.

HAMPTON LAKE PROPERTY DONATION


Ms. Stefanie Nagid reported on a proposed property donation from Sandlapper, LLC. The 53.4 acre tract is located near Hampton Lake in Bluffton and is slated for development by the County as an active park.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Chairman Mathews entertained a motion at 4:35 p.m.; seconded by Ms. Dorothy Scanlin, to adjourn the meeting. **The motion was approved unanimously** (FOR: Mathews, Bender, Hill, Webb, Mack, O'Kane, Scanlin, Walls, Koop).

Submitted by: Diane McMaster, Beaufort County Community Development
Senior Administrative Specialist

Approved:


Mike Mathews, Chairman,
Beaufort County Rural and Critical Lands Preservation Board

Date: 3/8/19