

MINUTES

SOUTH CAROLINA CONSERVATION BANK

Wednesday, September 30, 2020 10:00 am

Via WebEx

The South Carolina Conservation Bank Board (SCCB) held its quarterly meeting on Wednesday, September 30, 2020 at 10:00 am via WebEx . Notice of the date, time and place of the meeting was posted and mailed to the news media in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act. Chairman Michael McShane presided at the meeting and members present included Thomas Lavender, Vice-Chairman, Andrea Clark, Elliott Close, Geordy Johnson, Charles Lane, Curtis Spencer, Richmond Wilhoit, Jr., Keith Williamson, Larry Yonce; and Ex-Officio members Dr. Walt McPhail, SC Forestry Commission Chairman; and Norman F. Pulliam, Chairman SCDNR, and Justin Hancock for Duane Parrish, Director for SCPRT. Board Member absent was Brent McLaurin.

1) WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

Chairman McShane called the meeting to order, welcomed everyone and thanked everyone for their attendance.

2) ROLL CALL

Chairman McShane called roll and a quorum was established with 9 Board Members and 2 Ex-Officio members in attendance. Chairman McShane stated that proper public notice had been given for the meeting.

3) CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Chairman McShane commended SCDNR's Annual Migratory Waterfowl Stamp which is celebrating its 40th and final year. He also highlighted the recent Naturaland Trust book release of *Renaissance Man: The Life of Tommy Wyche* by Lynne Lucas, began his comments with a thank you to SCCB staff for an excellent job on the Annual Report. He encouraged Board Members and those in attendance to investigate both the duck stamp program and the new book.

4) PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. McShane opened the floor to anyone who would like to address to the Board. There being no public comments, Mr. McShane called for the next agenda item.

5) ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Mr. McShane stated the Board was sent a draft copy of the 05/20/2020 Quarterly Meeting and 06/10/2020 Special Purpose Meeting minutes prior to the meeting for their review and that copies were within the Board Member meeting materials. The Chairman asked for any additions, deletions, or corrections to the 05/20/2020 meeting minutes. There being none, Ms. Clark made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Lane seconded, and the motion unanimously passed. Next, the Chairman asked for any additions, deletions or corrections to the 06/10/2020 meeting minutes. There being none, Ms. Clark made a motion to approve the minutes, Mr. Lane seconded, and the motion unanimously passed.

6) NEW BUSINESS

a) Director's Update

Director Raleigh West began his comments with an update the fiscal year budget. He reminded the Board that the Bank is operating under a Continuing Resolution, with a total of \$5,607,442.55 available for grant awards (as always, subject to the availability of funding). Chairman McShane confirmed this figure and stated that the Board will reserve roughly \$500,000 (10% of CR budget) to insure against any potential budget decreases when the General Assembly returns in January 2021. Next, Mr. West informed the Board that work is continuing with SC.Gov on the online application with a target test date in early 2021. He also

stated that the Bank will continue to follow the Governor's COVID-19 protocols with regard to Bank staffing and face-to-face meeting guidelines for social distancing.

b) Review of Pending Applications

Chairman McShane yielded the floor to the Chairman of the Grants Review Committee Chairman, Tommy Lavender, for a review of pending applications. Mr. Lavender then began the review of applications for the current cycle:

Black River State Park – Phase II

Open Space Institute (OSI) submitted an application for \$435,000 to acquire 841 acres in fee simple in Williamsburg County. Maria Whitehead of OSI spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #1 and a funding level of \$435,000 for this project.

Meyer Lake

Due to a potential conflict of interest, Ms. Clark and Mr. Johnson recused themselves from discussion or voting on this application. Ms. Clark also recused herself during the GRC meeting.

Lowcountry Land Trust submitted an application for \$1,050,000 to acquire 974 acres in fee simple in Jasper County. Josh Bell of Lowcountry Land Trust spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #2 and a funding level of \$1,000,000 for this project.

Landsford Addition Tract

SCDNR submitted an application for \$400,000 to acquire 385.35 acres in fee simple in Chester County. Ken Prosser of SCDNR spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #3 and a funding level of \$400,000 for this project.

River Oaks Plantation

Due to a potential conflict of interest, Chairman McShane recused himself from discussion or voting on this application in this meeting as well as during the GRC meeting.

Ducks Unlimited submitted an application for \$982,290 to acquire 980.39 acres in fee simple in Horry County. Diana Iriarte of Ducks Unlimited spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #4 and a funding level of \$975,000 for this project.

Good Hope Landing Tract

Due to a potential conflict of interest, Mr. Lavender and Mr. Lane recused themselves from discussion or voting on this application during this meeting as well as during the GRC meeting. Chairman McShane presented the Good Hope Landing Tract application.

SCDNR submitted an application for \$170,000 to acquire 148 acres in fee simple in Colleton County. Ken Prosser of SCDNR spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #5 and a funding level of \$170,000.

Oaks Plantation

Open Space Institute submitted an application for \$300,000 to acquire 194 acres in fee simple in Charleston County. Maria Whitehead of Open Space Institute spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #6 and a funding level of \$290,000 for this project.

Spring Park

Upstate Forever submitted an application for \$350,000 to acquire 20.55 acres in a hybrid fee simple project in Greenville County. Scott Park of Upstate Forever spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #7 and a funding level of \$300,000 for this project, subject to the following conditions: subject to the following conditions: (1) fee simple title will be vested in the Society, subject only to the life estate reserved by the grantors, after which it will it will expire, (2) the Society will guarantee full public access, and (3) the existing dwelling will be further restricted to prohibit the alteration of its façade other than for maintenance.

Willtown (Knox) – ACE Basin

Due to a potential conflict of interest, Mr. Lane recused himself from discussion or voting on this application during this meeting as well as during the GRC meeting.

The Nature Conservancy submitted an application for \$300,000 for a conservation easement on 2000 acres in Charleston County. Katy Malloy of The Nature Conservancy spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #8 and a funding level of \$250,000 for this project.

White Plains Tract

SCDNR submitted an application for \$275,000 to acquire 121.58 acres in fee simple in Laurens County. Ken Prosser and Emily Cope of SCDNR spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #9 and a funding level of \$275,000 for this project.

Smith Ford Farm

Nation Ford Land Trust submitted an application for \$375,000 for a conservation easement on 458.16 acres in York County. Steve Hamilton of Nation Ford Land Trust spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #10 and a funding level of \$330,000 for this project.

Bramlett Bottoms

Naturaland Trust submitted an application for \$110,000 to acquire 37 acres in fee simple in Greenville County. Mac Stone of Naturaland Trust spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #11 and a funding level of \$100,000 for this project.

Old Santee Canal

Due to a potential conflict of interest, Mr. Spencer recused himself from discussion or voting on this application during this meeting as well as during the GRC meeting.

Lord Berkeley Conservation Trust submitted an application for \$290,250 for a conservation easement on 644.94 acres in Berkeley County. Chris Vaughan of Lord Berkeley Land Trust spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #12 and a funding level of \$270,000 for this project.

Blackwell Farm

Upstate Forever submitted an application for \$137,500 for a conservation easement on 50.20 acres in Greenville County. Scott Park of Upstate Forever spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended and rank of #13 and a funding level of \$137,500 for this project.

Stone's Throw Farm

Upstate Forever submitted an application for \$67,500 for a conservation easement on 75.47 acres in Greenville County. Scott Park of Upstate Forever spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #14 and a funding level of \$67,500 for this project.

Battle of Parker's Ferry – Liberty Trail

Due to a potential conflict of interest, Mr. Lane recused himself from discussion or voting on this application during this meeting as well as during the GRC meeting.

Battleground Preservation Trust submitted an application for \$55,180 to acquire 31 acres in fee simple in Colleton County. Doug Bostick of Battleground Preservation Trust spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #15 and a funding level of \$55,180 for this project.

Mays – Epworth Conservation Area (Adams)

Upper Savannah Land Trust submitted an application for \$252,000 for a conservation easement on 1,342 acres Greenwood County. Wade Harrison of Upper Savannah Land Trust spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #16 and a funding level of \$225,000 for this project.

Mays – Epworth Conservation Area (Turner)

Upper Savannah Land Trust submitted an application for \$90,000 for a conservation easement on 230 acres in Greenwood County. Wade Harrison of Upper Savannah Land Trust spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #17 and a funding level of \$90,000 for this project.

Millgrove Plantation

Lowcountry Land Trust submitted an application for \$169,600 for a conservation easement on 440 acres in Georgetown County. Ashton Lamb of Lowcountry Land Trust spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #18 and a funding level of \$165,000 for this project.

Moore Property

Oconee County Soil and Water District (OCSWD) submitted an application for \$36,625 for a conservation easement on 58.6 acres in Oconee County. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #19 and a funding level of \$31,625 for this project.

JRJ Farms

Due to a potential conflict of interest, Chairman McShane recused himself from discussion or voting on this application during this meeting as well as during the GRC meeting.

Ducks Unlimited submitted an application for \$45,500 for a conservation easement on 117.82 acres in Orangeburg County. Diana Iriarte of Ducks Unlimited spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #20 and a funding level of \$40,000 for this project.

Morrow Creek Timbers

Upstate Forever submitted an application for \$162,720 for a conservation easement on 428.3 acres in Abbeville County. Scott Park of Upstate Forever spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #21 and a funding level of \$150,000 for this project.

Gill Creek Preserve

Upstate Forever submitted an application for \$91,245 for a conservation easement on 236.9 acres in Abbeville County. Scott Park of Upstate Forever spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #21 and a funding level of \$82,500 for this project.

Burns Bunched Arrowhead Preserve

Naturaland Trust submitted an application for \$70,000 to acquire 6.7 acres in fee simple in Greenville County. The Grants Review Committee recommended declining this application as submitted with an invitation to resubmit.

Battle of Tulifinny (Phase I) – Liberty Trail

Battleground Preservation Trust submitted an application for \$105,750 to acquire 2.2 acres in fee simple in Jasper County. The Grants Review Committee recommended declining this application as submitted with an invitation to resubmit.

Following the presentation, the Grants Review Committee made a motion that the recommendations pertaining to the Project Scoring Sheet, and amendments thereto, if any, be accepted by the Board. Chairman McShane called for a vote, and the motion passed unanimously. Next, the Grants Review Committee made a motion to authorize staff to fund grant awards to projects ranked 1-20, based on the scoring recommendations previously adopted, up to the annual appropriations approved by the General Assembly. The Chairman called for a vote and after a brief discussion the motion passed, with one Board member abstaining. The Chairman noted that the Bank did not have sufficient funding at the time to fund projects #21 and #22 but agreed to reconsider the projects at such time when funds became available.

8) BOARD MEMBER OPEN DISCUSSION

Chairman McShane announced that, according to the state statute establishing the Bank, the Grants Review Committee membership changes each year. The new composition of the Grants Review Committee will be effective January 1, 2021, and will include Mr. Lavender as Chair, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Wilhoit, Mr. Yonce, an ex-officio Board member. Additionally, Mr. Lane expressed appreciation to the applicants for submitting exceptional, high quality projects.

9) TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

The Chairman stated that the next Board meeting will be on Wednesday, December 9th, 2020. Time and place to be announced at a later date.

10) ADJOURN

The Chairman called for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Lavender made the motion, Mr. Lane seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.