

# MINUTES

## SOUTH CAROLINA CONSERVATION BANK

Wednesday, September 22, 2021 - 10:00 am  
2711 Middleburg Drive, Suite 113  
Columbia, SC 29204

The South Carolina Conservation Bank Board (SCCB) held its quarterly meeting on Wednesday, September 22, 2021 at 10:00 am at 2711 Middleburg Drive, Suite 113, Columbia, SC 29204. 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, Elliott Close, Geordy Johnson, Charles Lane, Pamela S. Porter (via teleconference), Curtis Spencer, Richmond Wilhoit, Jr., Keith Williamson, Larry Yonce; and Ex-Officio members Russell Hubright for Dr. Walt McPhail, SC Forestry Commission Chairman; and Norman F. Pulliam, Chairman SCDNR. Board Members absent were Dr. Brent McLaurin and Duane Parrish, Director SCPRT.

### 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 10 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 stated that the applicant and Board members would have a chance to comment on each individual project as they were presented.

### 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 06/02/2021 Quarterly 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 meeting minutes. There being none, Mr. Spencer made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Lavender seconded, and the motion unanimously passed.

### 6) NEW BUSINESS

#### a) Director's Update

Director Raleigh West stated that the Bank has recently worked with DNR to hire a GIS position that would substantially increase mapping capabilities that would coincide with the online application which is in its final stages.

#### b) Financial Report

Director Raleigh West reported that the Bank currently has \$15,010,000 to spend on grants and that he expected returns from three reimbursable grants this year which would increase that figure.

#### c) Grants Review Committee Recommendations

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:

**Slater Tract**

Due to a potential conflict of interest, Mr. Lane and Mr. Spencer recused themselves from discussion or voting on this application. SCDNR submitted an application for \$1,000,000 to acquire 3,507.45 acres in fee simple in Jasper County. Ken Prosser of SCDNR and Mr. Pulliam spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #1 and a funding level of \$1,000,000 for this project. The Board unanimously accepted the Grants Review Committee's recommendation.

**Slater Duck Ponds**

Due to a potential conflict of interest, Mr. Lane and Mr. Spencer recused themselves from discussion or voting on this application. Open Space Institute (OSI) submitted an application for \$1,680,000 to acquire 335.62 acres in fee simple in Jasper County. Maria Whitehead of OSI spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #2 and a funding level of \$1,680,000 for this project. The Board unanimously accepted the Grants Review Committee's recommendation.

**Black River State Park – Phase III (RMS South Tract)**

Open Space Institute (OSI) submitted an application for \$450,000 to acquire 703 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 #3 and a funding level of \$450,000 for this project. The Board unanimously accepted the Grants Review Committee's recommendation.

**Great Santee Swamp**

Due to a potential conflict of interest, Mr. Spencer recused himself from discussion or voting on this application. Open Space Institute (OSI) submitted an application for \$649,000 to acquire 2,115 acres in fee simple in Georgetown County. Maria Whitehead of OSI spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #4 and a funding level of \$649,000 for this project. The Board unanimously accepted the Grants Review Committee's recommendation.

**Santee River – Dawhoo and Wadmacon Creek Tract**

Due to a potential conflict of interest, Mr. Spencer recused himself from discussion or voting on this application. The Nature Conservancy (TNC) submitted an application for \$645,000 to acquire 1,742 acres in fee simple in Georgetown County. Katherine McWilliams of TNC spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #5 and a funding level of \$645,000. The Board unanimously accepted the Grants Review Committee's recommendation.

**Santee Island (Santee Delta WMA Addition)**

SCDNR submitted an application for \$1,000,000 to acquire 1,964 acres in fee simple in Georgetown County. Ken Prosser of DNR spoke in favor of the project. Mr. Prosser mentioned that DNR has agreed to contribute an additional \$150,000 towards this project and reduced the grant request to \$850,000. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #6 and a funding level of \$750,000 for this project. Chairman McShane recommended amending the Grants Review Committee's recommendation to \$850,000 to meet SCDNR's request. Mr. Lane made the motion, Mr. Wilhoit seconded, and the motion unanimously passed. The Board unanimously accepted the Grants Review Committee's recommendation.

**Historic Crawford Mill Property**

The Foothills Farmstead submitted an application for \$270,000 to acquire 40.09 acres in fee simple in Oconee County. The Oconee County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) would hold an easement on the property. Eddie Martin of Oconee County SWCD spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #7 and a funding level of \$250,000 for this project. Mr. Martin stated that Upstate Forever was going to help raise the remaining funds and Scott Park with

Upstate Forever confirmed. The Board unanimously accepted the Grants Review Committee's recommendation.

**River Falls**

Naturaland Trust submitted an application for \$650,000 to acquire 150 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 #8 and a funding level of \$650,000 for this project. The Board unanimously accepted the Grants Review Committee's recommendation.

**Cedar Mountain**

Naturaland Trust submitted an application for \$500,000 to acquire 141 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 #9 and a funding level of \$500,000 for this project. The Board unanimously accepted the Grants Review Committee's recommendation.

**Bobwhite Hills**

Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever submitted an application for \$850,000 to acquire 790.79 acres in fee simple in Lee/Sumter County. Kenny Barker of Quail Forever and Ken Prosser of SCDNR spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #10 and a funding level of \$850,000 for this project. The Board unanimously accepted the Grants Review Committee's recommendation.

**Tyger River Confluence**

Due to a potential conflict of interest, Mr. Johnson recused himself from discussion or voting on this application. Upstate Forever submitted an application for \$157,500 for a conservation easement on 200.78 acres in Spartanburg County. Richard Carr of Upstate Forever spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #11 and a funding level of \$157,500 for this project. The Board unanimously accepted the Grants Review Committee's recommendation.

**Piney Mountain**

Naturaland Trust submitted an application for \$130,000 to acquire 40.79 acres in fee simple in Pickens County. Mac Stone of Naturaland Trust spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #12 and a funding level of \$130,000 for this project. The Board unanimously accepted the Grants Review Committee's recommendation.

**Altamont Ridge**

Naturaland Trust submitted an application for \$90,000 to acquire 9.5 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 #13 and a funding level of \$90,000 for this project. The Board unanimously accepted the Grants Review Committee's recommendation.

**Oakville/Burden Creek**

Due to a potential conflict of interest, Chairman McShane recused himself from discussion or voting on this application. Lowcountry Land Trust submitted an application for \$500,000 for a conservation easement on 94.1 acres in Charleston County. Ashley Demosthenes of Lowcountry Land Trust spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #14 and a funding level of \$500,000 for this project. Mr. Lavender voted no. The Board accepted the Grants Review Committee's recommendation.

**Graham Family Tract**

Spartanburg Area Conservancy (SPACE) submitted an application for \$242,000 to acquire 20.7 acres in fee simple in Spartanburg County. Belle Montgomery of SPACE spoke in favor of the project. Ms. Montgomery explained that SPACE is also requesting approval of a driveway to go through the adjacent property previously protected with Bank funding known as the Chinquapin Greenway. The Grants Review

Committee recommended a rank of #15 and no recommendation for funding level. Mr. Lavender noted that the GRC had concerns regarding the precedent that allowing the driveway to go through previously protected property sets and what the driveway would look like from the road. Mr. Pulliam and Mr. Johnson spoke in favor of the project. Mr. Lane made a motion to approve the grant at \$242,000 with the condition to reimburse the Bank for any right of way granted through the Chinquapin Tract which will be calculated by a ratio of acreage consumed by the right of way relative to the total acres of the original project applied to the original grant amount. Chairman McShane stated that this motion should include the authority for Director West to bring the management plan that will show the size and location of said right of way back to the Board. Mr. Lane amended his motion to allow Director West to bring the final management plan to the Grants Review Committee for their approval. Mr. Williamson seconded, Mr. Lavender abstained, and the motion passed.

#### **Gobblers Roost**

Upstate Forever submitted an application for \$430,000 for a conservation easement on 1,112.05 acres Laurens/Newberry County. Chairman McShane disclosed that the landowner sits on SCDNR's Board. Scott Park of Upstate Forever spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #16 and a funding level of \$430,000 for this project. The Board unanimously accepted the Grants Review Committee's recommendation.

#### **Woodsend Park and Open Space**

Due to a potential conflict of interest, Mr. Close recused himself from discussion or voting on this application. Nation Ford Land Trust submitted an application for \$1,500,000 to acquire 86.32 acres in fee simple in York County. Steve Hamilton of Nation Ford Land Trust and Allison Love of York County spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #17 and a funding level of \$1,000,000 for this project. Chairman McShane mentioned that the GRC's lesser recommendation does not reflect the value of the project. The Board unanimously accepted the Grants Review Committee's recommendation.

#### **River Swamp Tract**

Beaufort County Open Land Trust (BCOLT) submitted an application for \$345,000 for a conservation easement on 1,017.5 acres in Colleton County. Kate Schaefer of BCOLT spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #18 and a funding level of \$345,000 for this project. The Board unanimously accepted the Grants Review Committee's recommendation.

#### **Combahee Scott**

Beaufort County Open Land Trust (BCOLT) submitted an application for \$79,620 for a conservation easement on 209 acres in Colleton County. Kate Schaefer of BCOLT spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #19 and a funding level of \$79,620 for this project. The Board unanimously accepted the Grants Review Committee's recommendation.

#### **Battle of Hobkirk's Hills – Liberty Trail (Noskwith)**

Battleground Preservation Trust submitted an application for \$148,500 to acquire 5.12 acres in fee simple in Kershaw County. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #20 and a funding level of \$148,500 for this project. The Board unanimously accepted the Grants Review Committee's recommendation.

#### **Watson Farm**

Due to a potential conflict of interest, Mr. Williamson recused himself from discussion or voting on this application during this meeting. Pee Dee Land Trust submitted an application for \$235,000 for a conservation easement on 701.75 acres in Williamsburg County. Lyles Cooper of Pee Dee Land Trust spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #21 and a funding level of \$235,000 for this project. The Board unanimously accepted the Grants Review Committee's recommendation.

**Green Creek on Scenic 11**

Naturaland Trust submitted an application for \$90,000 to acquire 16.22 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 #22 and a funding level of \$90,000 for this project. The Board unanimously accepted the Grants Review Committee's recommendation.

**Mays-Epworth Conservation Area (Turner)**

Upper Savannah Land Trust submitted an application for \$90,000 for a conservation easement on 225 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 #23 and a funding level of \$90,000 for this project. The Board unanimously accepted the Grants Review Committee's recommendation.

**ILASI Property**

Due to a potential conflict of interest, Mr. Williamson recused himself from discussion or voting on this application. Pee Dee Land Trust submitted an application for \$150,000 for a conservation easement on 307 acres in Chesterfield County. Lyles Cooper of Pee Dee Land Trust spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #24 and a funding level of \$150,000 for this project. The Board unanimously accepted the Grants Review Committee's recommendation.

**Whetstone Hill**

Upstate Forever submitted an application for \$34,500 for a conservation easement on 38.1 acres in Oconee County. Scott Park of Upstate Forever spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #25 and a funding level of \$34,500 for this project. The Board unanimously accepted the Grants Review Committee's recommendation.

**Calico Vineyard**

Upstate Forever submitted an application for \$241,500 for a conservation easement on 112.54 acres in Greenville County. Caitlyn Gendusa of Upstate Forever spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #26 and a funding level of \$225,000 for this project. The Board unanimously accepted the Grants Review Committee's recommendation.

**Stillwell Homeplace Farm**

Due to a potential conflict of interest, Mr. Williamson recused himself from discussion or voting on this application. Pee Dee Land Trust submitted an application for \$85,000 for a conservation easement on 268.45 acres in Marlboro County. Lyles Cooper of Pee Dee Land Trust spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #27 and a funding level of \$85,000 for this project. The Board unanimously accepted the Grants Review Committee's recommendation.

**Stillwell – Tatum Farm**

Due to a potential conflict of interest, Mr. Williamson recused himself from discussion or voting on this application. Pee Dee Land Trust submitted an application for \$110,000 for a conservation easement on 436.6 acres in Marlboro County. Lyles Cooper of Pee Dee Land Trust spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #28 and a funding level of \$110,000 for this project. The Board unanimously accepted the Grants Review Committee's recommendation.

**Stillwell – Cannery Farm**

Due to a potential conflict of interest, Mr. Williamson recused himself from discussion or voting on this application. Pee Dee Land Trust submitted an application for \$250,000 for a conservation easement on 797.5 acres in Marlboro County. Lyles Cooper of Pee Dee Land Trust spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #29 and a funding level of \$250,000 for this project. The Board unanimously accepted the Grants Review Committee's recommendation.

**Turkey Creek**

Upper Savannah Land Trust submitted an application for \$64,000 for a conservation easement on 256 acres in Edgefield County. Director West notified the Board that this application had been withdrawn.

**Wall Farm**

Lord Berkeley Conservation Trust submitted an application for \$29,169 for a conservation easement on 97.23 acres in Florence/Williamsburg County. Chris Vaughn of Lord Berkeley Conservation Trust spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #31 and a funding level of \$29,169 for this project. The Board unanimously accepted the Grants Review Committee’s recommendation.

**Toner Tract**

Lord Berkeley Conservation Trust submitted an application for \$84,068 for a conservation easement on 336.27 acres in Clarendon County. Chris Vaughn of Lord Berkeley Conservation Trust spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #32 and a funding level of \$84,068 for this project. The Board unanimously accepted the Grants Review Committee’s recommendation.

**North Fork Edisto Tract**

Congaree Land Trust submitted an application for \$49,950 for a conservation easement on 36.71 acres in Lexington County. Mary Crockett of Congaree Land Trust spoke in favor of the project. The Grants Review Committee recommended a rank of #33 and a funding level of \$49,950 for this project. The Board unanimously accepted the Grants Review Committee’s recommendation.

**Gramling Farm**

Congaree Land Trust submitted a letter of support request for the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) through NRCS. The Grants Review Committee recommended authorizing Director West to send a support letter on behalf of the Board. The Board unanimously accepted the Grants Review Committee’s recommendation.

**8) BOARD MEMBER OPEN DISCUSSION**

Chairman McShane gave a report on the status of the FY 2023 budget requests as well as informed the Board on other legislative items. Chairman McShane mentioned that elections for the Board’s leadership positions were due at the next meeting. All members thanked the Board and Staff for a great meeting and applauded the land trusts for their efforts. Director West and Chairman McShane presented an option for the Bank’s new logo. The Board provided some feedback and asked the staff to continue working on this project.

**9) TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Chairman stated that the next Board meeting will be on Wednesday, December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021. 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.