



MINUTES CONSERVATION BANK BOARD

March 5, 2019

Oconee County Administrative Offices, Council Chambers
415 S. Pine Street, Walhalla, SC 29691

MEMBERS

Mr. Andrew Smith, Chairman, District II
Ms. Frances Rundlett, Vice Chairman, At Large
Ms. Emily Hitchcock, Secretary, At Large
Mr. Frank Ables, Treasurer, District V

Mr. Ryan Keese, District III
Mr. Marvin Prater, District IV
VACANT, District I
Ms. Katie D. Smith, Staff Liaison

The Oconee County Conservation Bank Board [OCCB] met at 9:00 a.m. in Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC with all members present [except Mr. Marvin Prater] and Katie D. Smith, Clerk to Council acting as staff liaison.

STAFF PRESENT: Phil Shirley / Parks, Recreation, & Tourism Director

Press: Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, notice of the meeting, date, time, place of meeting and agenda were posted on the bulletin board at the County Administrative Offices, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC, and the County Council website [www.oconeesc.com/council]. In addition it was made available [*upon request*] to the newspapers, radio stations, television stations and concerned citizens.

No members of the media were present.

Call to Order

Mr. Ables called the meeting to order at 9:24 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Smith made a motion, seconded by Mr. Keese, approved 5 – 0, to approve the minutes from October 9, 2018 meeting as presented.

Treasurer's Report

Mr. Ables noted the Treasurer's Reports as presented are accurate. He further noted the balance on all reports is \$613,735.46. Ms. Rundlett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Smith, approved 5 – 0, to accept as presented the Treasurer's Reports for October, November, and December 2018 and January 2019.

Election of Officers

Ms. Hitchcock nominated Mr. Andrew Smith as Chairperson, seconded by Mr. Keese, approved 5 – 0.

Mr. Ables nominated Ms. Frances Rundlett as Vice-Chair, seconded by Ms. Hitchcock, approved 5 – 0.

Ms. Rundlett nominated Ms. Emily Hitchcock as Secretary, seconded by Mr. Ables, approved 5 – 0.

Mr. Smith nominated Mr. Frank Ables as Treasurer, seconded by Ms. Hitchcock, approved 5 – 0.

A video recording of this meeting is available at www.oconeesc.com. Meetings have been live-streamed beginning January 17, 2017. Brought to you by Your Oconee.

2019 Meeting Schedule Establishment

Mr. Ables made a motion, seconded by Ms. Rundlett, to approve the 2019 meeting schedule as presented [copy filed with these minutes].

Discussion continued to include:

- May need to move the August meeting date due to conflicts in schedule with some members
- Quorum
- Meetings can be added or changed throughout the year as needed

Regarding the previous motion made by Mr. Ables, seconded by Ms. Rundlett, it was approved 5 – 0, to approve the 2019 meeting schedule as presented.

Discussion Items

Lengthy discussion followed regarding the topics indicated below, with various opinions expressed, to include but not limited to:

Continued Discussion regarding Alternate Funding Sources

- Signed letters of support
- Seek further funding from Duke Energy

Mr. Shea Airey addressed the Board highlighting the following:

- Bank was funded through a grant from Duke Energy as part of the relicensing process
- Long term focus of the Board has been raising long term financial support
- Signed letters of support have not been presented yet due to not making a formal proposition to the County asking for funding; present to the County to seek funding if there is going to be long term viability
- Discussed tying funding to any increase in the recycling revenues
- Portion should go back to the OCCB if the OCCB helps with increases in recycling
- Ask for some level of fixed funding
- State Conservation Bank Board is governed by a statute which the OCCB mirrors
- Endowment
- Primary non-profit partners are Upstate Forever and Oconee Soil and Water Conservation District
- Do not release funds until landowner/eligible partner sends signed closing documents, easement paperwork, etc.
- Presentations

Mr. Smith wrapped up the discussion with the following:

- Create a target list that all members contribute to that Mr. Keese will start
- Work on how to tell the story of the OCCB
- Additional ideas for County funding with the goal of having one or two ideas to present to the County in a formal way and use letters of support that were from citizens of Oconee County
- Goal is to have an endowment

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Discussion and/or action regarding Moore property

- Members of the Board walk the property
- Statement of Interest was approved
- Full application has not been submitted

Discussion and/or action regarding William Lyles Estate

- Statement of Interest was approved
- Full application has not been submitted
- Upstate Forever is the eligible partner

Update regarding Naturaland Trust

- Funds were approved but are awaiting closing documents to release funds

Discussion regarding types of accounts available to generate interest

Mr. Smith updated the Board highlighting the following:

- Spoke with representatives from Duke Energy
- Duke Energy has no prohibition for OCCB to invest funds in an interest-bearing account
- Spoke with Greg Nowell, Oconee County Treasurer regarding State pool of funds

Letter to Community 1st Bank regarding signers on account

- Letter [copy filed with these minutes] sent to Community 1st Bank regarding signers on the account, which is the Chairman and the Secretary
- Chairman and Secretary sign checks for grants that are awarded

Mr. Ables left the meeting after discussion regarding letter to Community 1st Bank.

New Business:

Mr. Phil Shirley, Parks, Recreation, & Tourism Director addressed the Board utilizing a handout [copy filed with these minutes] highlighting the following:

- Landowner has property adjacent to Chau Ram County Park
- Put in an option to purchase the property
- Naturaland Trust
- Grant application through the State Conservation Bank
- Will not have an easement on the property
- Goal is to [1] purchase property through Naturaland Trust and they deed the property back to the County for the purpose of expanding Chau Ram Park or [2] raise enough funds to purchase the property with the purpose of expansion
- 218 acres with about a mile of the Chauga River that extends South of the park
- Double the size of Chau Ram Park

Old Business

None at this meeting.

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Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be held at 9:00 a.m., Tuesday, April 9, 2019 at the Oconee County Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC 29691.

Adjourn:

Ms. Rundlett made a motion, approved unanimously, to adjourn the meeting at 10:51 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Katie D. Smith
Clerk to Council & Staff Liaison

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