



MINUTES CONSERVATION BANK BOARD

August 27, 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
Ms. Laura Havran, 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 Ms. Frances Rundlett, Mr. Prater and Ms. Hitchcock] and Katie D. Smith, Clerk to Council acting as staff liaison.

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. Smith called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Smith noted there were a couple of corrections that needed to be made to the minutes. The Clerk noted they would be corrected prior to the minutes being filed.

Mr. Ables made a motion, seconded by Ms. Havran, approved 4 – 0, to approve the amended minutes from June 11, 2019 meeting.

Treasurer's Report

Mr. Ables noted the Treasurer's Reports for Community First Bank and the Local Government Investment Pool [State Pool] as presented are accurate. He further noted the balances on the reports are as follows:

Community First Bank for May, June, & July 2019 are \$14,980.00

Local Government Investment Pool [State Pool] for May is \$589,168.13; June is \$590,789.73; and July is \$592,002.88.

Mr. Smith made a motion, seconded by Mr. Keese, approved 4 – 0, to accept as presented the Treasurer's Report for both Community First Bank and the Local Government Investment Pool [State Pool] for May, June, & July 2019.

Discussion Items

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

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.

Continued Discussion regarding Alternate Funding Sources

Ms. Havran addressed the Committee utilizing a PowerPoint presentation entitled “Oconee County Conservation Bank” and gave a brief presentation.

Ms. Havran asked the Clerk to send a PDF version of the PowerPoint to the OCCB members.

Mr. Keese noted he attended a Sertoma Club meeting and the speaker for the meeting was a gentleman from Keowee Key. He noted they have started a way for residents in Keowee Key to give funds to local charitable groups, such as Ripple of One. Further, he noted the OCCB should consider to be added to the group because the reason citizens move here is to have natural areas. Discussion continued to include donations to the OCCB from different organizations. Mr. Smith asked the Clerk about donations to the OCCB. The Clerk handed out a brochure [copy filed with backup materials] entitled “Oconee County Conservation Bank General Information & Donation Form” to Mr. Smith.

Mr. Smith noted they would be discussing the Moore Property, William Lyles Estate, and the Worthington Hyde Partners property and further noted there would not be any decisions made at this meeting but rather point questions to the applicants.

Continued Discussion and/or Action Regarding Moore property

Mr. Keese recused himself [copy of recusal filed with these minutes] from the discussion and/or action regarding the Moore property.

Per Mr. Smith, Mr. Eddie Martin, Oconee Soil and Water Conservation District, addressed the Board highlighting the following:

- Representatives from the SC Conservation Bank visited all three properties
- Property will be reviewed by the SC Conservation on September 4, 2019
- Land Management plan
- Mortgage
- Conservation Easement
- Asking for \$40,805 from OCCB and the grant cap is \$25,000
- September 17th meeting will be the first decision made regarding funding for this property
- Notice as given for a conservation easement for this property

Additionally, Mr. Martin addressed the Board on a different matter and noted the following:

- Currently working on a historic property in Tamassee
- Bridge funding allows the entity, which is Battlefield Preservation Trust, to have enough time to get their monetary aspect together to purchase the property
- Flexibility to loan funds for an eight to nine month period until the bridge funding was taken care of and then OCCB would be reimbursed
- OCCB grants can be used for closing costs to buy interests in land

Mr. Smith noted the OCCB would conduct research and develop an idea on this matter and bring to the September 17, 2019 meeting for discussion and vote.

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Continued Discussion and/or Action Regarding William Lyles Estate

Mr. Chris Starker, Land Conservation Manager with Upstate Forever, addressed the Board highlighting the following:

- Request of \$85,000 and grant cap is \$25,000; deficit of \$60,000 and Upstate Forever is working on bridging gap
- Landowner and Upstate Forever may consider to contribute some funds
- Reconsider the \$25,000 grant cap because there is a lot of potential to protect lands in this area

Mr. Smith asked for Mr. Starker to submit an affidavit that adjacent landowners were notified and a “Schedule F” to demonstrate that the land has an agriculture return. He further noted an inspection authorization form was not signed in application. Mr. Starker noted there was an affidavit in the application [copy filed with backup materials].

Discussion Regarding Presentations for 2019

Mr. Smith asked if anyone had any thoughts for presentations for the remainder of the 2019 year. Members of the OCCB did not have any suggestions.

Discussion regarding the proposed budget

- Challenge the OCCB is faced with is receiving more funds; could go through the funds we have very quickly
- Sustain a balance
- Handicap ourselves and others that depend on us by limiting the grant amount
- Present to Council and get their input on how to spend the funds
- Consider amending budget at the next meeting

Mr. Mac Stone, Executive Director of Naturaland Trust, addressed the Board and highlighted the following:

- In terms of fundraising, Naturaland Trust looks at percentages, not a cap amount
- SC Conservation Bank would like to see a 25% match for fee-simple, which is 100% public access and would also like to see 25% to 30% coming from other areas
- When looking at how to use funds, look at it terms of a percent that is coming in from other sources

New Business:

Statement of Interest & Application from Worthington Hyde Partners / TMS: 039-00-01-014

Mr. Stone addressed the Board and highlighted the following:

- Naturaland Trust is based in Greenville and only works in the Upstate
- Seek local, state, & federal grants
- Greenville & Pickens County do not have a Conservation Bank Board
- Land Management Plan
- Spoke with SC DNR and they would like to put this within their Heritage Trust Preserve
- Naturaland Trust would own the property and would donate to PRT or DNR or hold it and put it in a WMA program for hiking, hunting, fishing, etc.
- Depends upon the fundraising efforts as to what the final management plan will be

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- Surrounded by an easement held by the Army Corps

Old Business

None at this meeting.

Mr. Starker noted he has a signed land owner consent agreement from Mr. Lyles for his property [copy filed in backup materials].

Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be held at 9:00 a.m., Tuesday, September 17, 2019 at the Oconee County Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC 29691.

Adjourn:

Mr. Keese made a motion, approved unanimously, to adjourn the meeting at 10:35 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Katie D. Smith
Clerk to Council & Staff Liaison

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OCONEE CONSERVATION
BANK BOARD RECUSAL
FORM

OCCB Member Name:

Ryan Keese

[Please Print]

OCCB Member Signature:

Ryan Keese

Meeting Date:

08.27.2019

Item for Discussion/Note:

Continued discussion ^{and/or action} regarding
Moore Property

Reason for Recusal

I was not present for original meeting/discussion

I have a personal/familial interest in the issue.

Other:

Katie D. Smith

Katie Smith
Clerk to Council