



MINUTES CONSERVATION BANK BOARD

December 15, 2020

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

MEMBERS

Mr. Andrew Smith, Chair, District II
Ms. Emily Hitchcock, Vice Chairman, At Large
Mr. Ryan Keese, Secretary, District, III
Ms. Laura Havran, Treasurer, District I

Mr. Marvin Prater, District IV
VACANT, District V
VACANT, At Large
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 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 9:04 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Keese made a motion, seconded by Ms. Havran, approved 5 – 0, to approve the minutes from November 17, 2020 meeting as presented.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Havran read the Treasurer's Reports for Community First Bank and the Local Government Investment Pool [State Pool] and noted they are accurate as presented. She further noted the balances on the reports are as follows:

Community First Bank for November 2020 is \$4,255.00;

Local Government Investment Pool [State Pool] for November 2020 is \$410,292.56.

Ms. Hitchcock made a motion, seconded by Mr. Prater, approved 5 – 0, to accept as presented the Treasurer's Report for both Community First Bank and the Local Government Investment Pool [State Pool] for November 2020.

Fundraising & Public Relations Reports

Ms. Havran updated the Board regarding the press release procedures for the County. She further noted she was going to update the PowerPoint presentation and will present to a group on what the conservation bank board does.

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.

Ms. Hitchcock noted the Board Policies are in the process of being added to the Oconee County website and when the new procedures for the Board are approved, the documents will need to be added to the website as well.

Mr. Smith made a motion, seconded by Ms. Havran, approved 5 – 0, for Mr. Keese to work on providing an article by the end of the year.

Discussion Items

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

Discussion from the OCCB Procedures Committee

Mr. Smith noted the Procedures Committee has been working on revising the application, criteria worksheet, evaluation worksheet, etc. and sent out drafts of these documents to the eligible recipients that OCCB has worked with that include Upstate Forever, Naturaland Trust, and Oconee Soil & Water Conservation District. He noted he has received comments from these organizations. The Procedures Committee is reviewing these comments and making changes to the drafts. Once completed, the final drafts will be sent to the remaining members of the Board for input and potentially have the documents ready for approval at the February 2021 meeting.

Discussion and/or action regarding Whetstone Creek Preserve [William Lyles estate]

The ratification agreement [copy filed with backup materials] is to change the plans for the permanent conservation of the property and to approve the transfer of the property without the requirement that Upstate Forever, Naturaland Trust, and/or the Estate of William D. Lyles place a conservation easement on the property.

Ms. Hitchcock made a motion, seconded by Mr. Keese, approved 4 – 0 [Mr. Prater recused himself; copy of recusal filed with these minutes], to approve Mr. Smith, Chair of OCCB, to sign the ratification agreement and bring to full Council for approval and signature.

Discussion and/or action regarding Peggy Moore

Discussion regarding the Criteria Worksheet and scoring of the Peggy Moore property continued to include but not limited to:

Conservation Criteria	Maximum Points	Received
Environmental Sensitivity	35	10
Percentage of Property Sharing a Boundary with Protected Land	10	0
Historical / Cultural Features	5	0
Prime / Statewide Important Soil Types	10	3
Actively Farmed	5	5
Public Visibility of Property	5	5
Scenic View from Property	5	3
Public Access	10	0
Threat of Development	5	5
Size of Protected Property	10	5
Total Points Received		36

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Financial	Scoring of Financial Criteria					Score
	None	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	
	0	2	3	4	5	
Funding Percentage Requested					✓	5
Matching or Other Monetary Contributions from Other Agencies or Groups					✓	5
Low Cost for Value Received					✓	5
Other Financial Benefit	✓					0
Other Incentives	✓					0
Total Points Received						15
Total OCCB Scoring Index (OSI)						51

Ms. Hitchcock made a motion, seconded by Mr. Smith, approved 4 – 0 [Mr. Keese recused himself; copy of recusal form filed with minutes] to accept the conservation criteria and financial criteria scoring worksheets for a total OCCB scoring index of 51 points on Peggy Moore.

Mr. Smith made a motion, seconded by Ms. Havran, approved 4 – 0 [Mr. Keese recused himself; copy of recusal form filed with minutes], for Ms. Hitchcock to complete the “404 Findings” worksheet for the Peggy Moore property that will be provided to County Council.

Ms. Havran made a motion, seconded by Ms. Hitchcock, approved 4 – 0 [Mr. Keese recused himself; copy of recusal form filed with minutes], to approve the application of the Oconee Soil & Water Conservation District in the amount of \$10,000.00 in funding for the Peggy Moore conservation easement.

Discussion and/or action regarding Naturaland Trust

Mr. Smith noted at the previous meeting the OCCB received an application in the November cycle for funding to reimburse Naturaland Trust. He noted that Naturaland Trust already owns the piece of property that they were submitting an application on. He further noted that funds are granted to acquire interest in land that the Board cannot accept the application and that Naturaland Trust has been informed of this.

No action taken.

Update regarding Elaine Morris project

Mr. Smith noted he has been in contact with Ms. Ann Sullivan, attorney with McLaurin Law Firm and the closing attorney, as well as Scott Park, Land Conservation Director with Upstate Forever, regarding the Elaine Morris project. He noted they have sent the closing documents to the landowner and the landowner will be signing the documents and sending back. He further noted himself and Mr. Keese signed for a \$12,500.00 cashier’s check that was given to the closing attorney and put into the escrow account and will be dispersed as part of the closing.

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Update regarding Duke Energy report

Mr. Smith noted the Duke Energy report was sent on November 25, 2020 and noted the funds came through the re-licensing process for the power plant. He further noted a representative with Duke Energy informed him there will not be any other funds coming from the re-licensing and suggested the habitat protection incentive program. Further discussion continued.

Mr. Smith made a motion, seconded by Ms. Hitchcock, approved 5 – 0, to create a fundraising committee to include OCCB members Mr. Keese, Ms. Havran, and Mr. Smith.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be held at 9:00 a.m., Tuesday, February 9, 2021 at the Oconee County Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC 29691.

Adjourn:

Ms. Havran made a motion, approved unanimously, to adjourn the meeting at 9:59 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: Marvin Prater
[Please Print]

OCCB Member Signature: Mr. Prater's signature below

Meeting Date: 12.15.2010

Item for Discussion/Note: Discussion and/or action regarding
Whetstone Creek Preserve

Reason for Recusal - Motion to approve Mr. Smith, Chair of OCCB,
to sign the ratification agreement & bring to
Full Council for approval & signature.
I was not present for original meeting/discussion

I have a personal/familial interest in the issue.

Other: Business ties to
Lyles family
Marvin Prater

Katie D. Smith
Katie Smith
Clerk to Council



OCONEE CONSERVATION
BANK BOARD RECUSAL
FORM

OCCB Member Name: Ryan Keese
(Please Print)

OCCB Member Signature: W.R.K.

Meeting Date: 12.15.2020

Item for Discussion/Note: Discussion and/or action regarding Peggy Moore

Motion to Accept the conservation criteria & financial criteria scoring worksheets for a total OCCB scoring index of 51 points on Peggy Moore.

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



OCONEE CONSERVATION
BANK BOARD RECUSAL
FORM

OCCB Member Name: Ryan Keese
(Please Print)

OCCB Member Signature: *R. Keese*

Meeting Date: 12.15.2020

Item for Discussion/Note: Discussion and/or action regarding Peggy Moore
Motion to approve MS. Hitcock to complete
the "40A Findings" Worksheet for the Peggy
Moore property that will be provided to
County Council.

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



OCONEE CONSERVATION
BANK BOARD RECUSAL
FORM

OCCB Member Name: Ryan Keese
(Please Print)

OCCB Member Signature: W.R.K.

Meeting Date: 12.15.2020

Item for Discussion/Note: Peggy Moore - Discussion and/or action
regarding Peggy Moore.

Reason for Recusal Motion to approve the application of the
Oconee Soil & Water Conservation District in the amount
of \$10,000 in funding for the Peggy Moore conservation
easement.
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