



# MINUTES CONSERVATION BANK BOARD

February 8, 2022

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. Nicholas Gambrell, District IV  
Mr. Scuddy Walker, District V  
Mr. Charles VanOver, At Large  
Ms. Jennifer C. Adams, 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. Nick Gambrell] and Jennifer C. Adams, 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](http://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 9:03 a.m.

## **Approval of Minutes**

Mr. VanOver made a motion, seconded by Mr. Keese, approved 5 – 0, to approve the December 14, 2021 meeting minutes as presented.

## **Election of Officers**

Mr. Smith explained the procedure of election of new officers to the board.

Ms. Hitchcock nominated Mr. Smith as Chair, Mr. Walker as Vice-Chair, Ms. Havran as Treasurer, and Mr. Keese as Secretary.

Mr. Smith seconded these nominations, approved 5-0.

Mr. VanOver announced that he will be resigning from the Oconee County Conservation Bank board, stating that this will be his last meeting.

Mr. Smith instructed Mr. VanOver to send over his resignation letter for the record.

**A video recording of this meeting is available at [www.oconeesc.com](http://www.oconeesc.com). Meetings have been live-streamed beginning January 17, 2017. Brought to you by Your Oconee.**

## **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 2021 is \$5,740.00, December 2021 is \$5,940.00, January 2022 is \$1,941.00; Local Government Investment Pool [State Pool] for December 2021 is \$305,144.85 and for January 2022 is \$279,181.16.

Mr. Keese made a motion, seconded by Mr. VanOver, approved 5 – 0, to accept as presented the Treasurer's Report for Community First Bank for November and December 2021, as well as, January 2022 and the Local Government Investment Pool [State Pool] for December 2021 and January 2022.

## **Fundraising & Public Relations Reports**

Mr. Smith made note of an article that was published (copy in backup) by The Journal on Wednesday, February 2, 2022, relating to the Oconee County Conservation Bank Board.

Ms. Havran noted that she would have liked the article in The Journal to have included information on how to make donations to the Oconee County Conservation Bank Board.

Mr. Keese suggested that the board send a short description on how to make donations to the Oconee County Conservation Bank Board for publication in the "Letter to the Editor" section of The Journal.

Mr. Smith agreed to send the donation information to The Journal.

Mr. Smith discussed the recent forming of Greenville County's Conservation Bank and how they acquire their funding.

Mr. Smith also discussed possible funding options for Oconee County Conservation Bank in the future.

Short discussion followed by board members regarding different types of funding for Oconee County Conservation Bank in the future.

## **Discussion Items**

### **Discussion and/or action regarding OCCB Revised Policy 0003**

Mr. Smith gives the lead to Ms. Hitchcock on this matter.

Ms. Hitchcock noted to the board changes that were made to Policy 0003 with the Application for Funding attachment.

Ms. Hitchcock made a motion, seconded by Mr. Smith, approved 5 – 0, to approve the revisions to Policy 0003 and the Application for Funding attachment.

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### Discussion and/or action regarding 2022 OCCB Meeting Schedule

Mr. Smith, along with the board, discussed possible meeting dates for the OCCB for 2022.

A meeting schedule was set by the board.

Mr. Smith made a motion, seconded by Ms. Havran, approved 5 – 0, to approve the 2022 OCCB meeting schedule as discussed.

Ms. Hitchcock noted, after the vote, that consideration for the staff liaisons, Jennifer C. Adams, schedule needed to be taken into consideration.

Ms. Adams assisted the board with date changes.

Mr. Smith made a motion, seconded by Mr. Keese, approved 5 – 0, to vacate the first approved 2022 OCCB meeting schedule.

Mr. Smith then made a motion, seconded by Ms. Hitchcock, approved 5 – 0, to accept the revised 2022 OCCB meeting dates. (copy filed in backup)

### Discussion and/or action regarding OCCB Policy 0005

Ms. Hitchcock notes this is the policy relates to the Transfer of Property Interest and offers further details to the board concerning Policy 005.

Mr. Smith requested to delay voting on OCCB Policy 0005 until the next meeting, so that he could have further time to review the policy.

### Update on revisions to OCCB Ordinance

Ms. Emily Hitchcock presented to the board the revisions she and Mr. Root, County Attorney, made to the OCCB Ordinance.

Ms. Hitchcock stated that before a vote on the revisions to the OCCB Ordinance, she wishes to discuss the revisions with Mr. Smith, OCCB Chair, and Mr. Root, County Attorney.

Ms. Hitchcock reminds the board that the primary purpose for the revisions is to permit an endowment.

Ms. Hitchcock reminds the board that there seems to be a general consensus by the OCCB, that when it came to the Fee Simple purchases that OCCB should require a Conservation Easement as well.

Ms. Hitchcock asked the board to continue thinking about the suggested revisions and be prepared to discuss at future meetings.

Mr. Keese expressed his opinion that there needs to be a Conservation Easement at the time of Fee Simple transfers.

Short discussion followed by board members related to Conservation Easements and Fee Simple transfers.

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**Update on approved projects**

Mr. Smith emailed staff liaison, Jennifer C. Adams, during the meeting with an updated chart on approved projects. (copy of chart in backup)

Ms. Adams displayed the chart on screen for board members.

Mr. Smith updated the board on current approved projects.

Short discussion concerning approved projects followed by board members.

**Next Meeting:**

The next meeting will be held at 9:00 a.m., Tuesday, April 12, 2022, at the Oconee County Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC 29691.

**Adjourn:**

Ms. Hitchcock made a motion, approved unanimously, to adjourn the meeting at 10:02 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

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Jennifer C. Adams  
Clerk to Council & Staff Liaison

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