



# MINUTES CONSERVATION BANK BOARD

March 14, 2023

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

## **MEMBERS**

Mr. Andrew Smith, Chair, District II  
Ms. Emelyn Jones, At Large  
Mr. Ryan Keese, Secretary, District, III  
Gordon Becker, District I

Mr. Taylor Howard, District IV  
Mr. Scuddy Walker, Vice Chairman, District V  
Mr. Scott McCurry, 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 [Mr. McCurry absent] 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. Walker called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

## **Election of Board Chair**

Mr. Walker nominated Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Keese, approved 6 – 0, to serve as Chair of the Oconee County Conservation Bank Board.

The meeting was then turned over to Mr. Smith preside as Chair.

## **Executive Session**

Mr. Becker made a motion, seconded by Mr. Walker, approved 6 – 0, to enter into Executive Sessions for the following purposes, as allowed for § 30-4-70(a) of the South Carolina Code of Laws:

- *Discuss and receive legal advice related to the request to transfer Whetstone Hill property to the United States Forest Service*

The Board entered into Executive Session at 9:03 a.m.

The Board returned from Executive Session at 9:48 a.m. on a motion made by Mr. Howard, seconded by Mr. Becker, approved 6 – 0.

**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.**

## **Discussion Items**

### **Discussion and/or action regarding request to transfer Whetstone Hill property from Naturaland Trust to the United States Forest Service**

Ms. Jones made a motion, seconded by Mr. Keese, to approve the request from Naturaland Trust to transfer the Whetstone Hill property to the United States Forest Service [USFS] and allow Naturaland Trust to reimburse OCCB the previously awarded grant money.

Mr. Frank Holleman, President Naturaland Trust, addressed the Board with an update on the Whetstone Hill [William Lyles Estate] property, noting their intention to transfer the property to the USFS.

Mr. Holleman informed the Board that the USFS will not accept this property with a conservation easement, therefore Naturaland Trust wishes to reimburse the OCCB the \$66,100.00 so that they can transfer the property without a conservation easement.

Lengthy discussion followed between the Board, Mr. Holleman, Mr. Mac Stone, Executive Director Naturaland Trust, and County Attorney, Mr. David Root, related to the above request.

Motion approved 6 – 0.

## **Adjourn:**

Mr. Keese made a motion approved unanimously, to adjourn the meeting at 10:15 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

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Jennifer C. Adams  
Clerk to Council & Staff Liaison

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