

SOUTH CAROLINA CONSERVATION BANK
Grants Review Committee
Meeting Minutes

Friday September 15, 2023 - 10:00 am
First Floor Conference Room, 2711 Middleburg Drive
Columbia, SC 29204

1) WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

A meeting of the Grants Review Committee (GRC) was called to order by Committee Chairman Mike McShane at 10:00 am on September 15, 2023. Chairman McShane stated that a notice of the date, time and place of the meeting was posted in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

2) ROLL CALL

Committee members present included Chairman Mike McShane, Charles Lane, Tommy Lavender, Curtis Spencer (via phone conference), and Russell Hubright for Walter McPhail. Member absent was Brent McLaurin.

3) PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman McShane opened the floor to anyone interested in making public comments. There being no one, the Committee moved to the next agenda item.

4) ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Chairman McShane stated the GRC was given a draft copy of the 03/08/2023, 03/21/2023, and the 05/24/2023 GRC meeting minutes to review. The Chairman asked for any additions, deletions, or corrections to the minutes. There being none, Chairman McShane asked for a motion to adopt the minutes of all three meetings as distributed. Mr. Lane made the motion, Mr. Lavender seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

5) MAPPING

Mr. Lane presented the updated priority mapping report and priority map and briefly described the priority mapping model and the role the annually updated priority map plays in the application review and ranking process.

6) PROJECT UPDATES

Chairman McShane asked Amber Larck, Project Director, to distribute a list of closed and outstanding projects for FY24 year-to-date. Ms. Larck stated that the respective applicants will provide an update at the next Board meeting and will be prepared to answer questions. Director West stated that all the projects are expected to close and its just a manner of when the closing will occur. Many of the outstanding projects are tied up in the federal grant application process.

7) FINANCIAL REPORT

Director West distributed the financial update and pointed out that the Bank has a total of just over \$39 million dollars available for grants. The Bank also has expected reimbursements of \$4 million dollars.

8) EXECUTIVE SESSION (*PROPOSED CONTRACTUAL MATTERS*)

The Chairman called for a motion to enter Executive Session for the purposes of discussing proposed contractual matters in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act *Section 30-4-70 (a) (2)*. Mr. Lane

made the motion with the request for any committee members to recuse themselves as appropriate, Mr. Lavender seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

At the conclusion of Executive Session, Mr. Lavender made the motion to return to regular session. Mr. Lane seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. Once in open session, Mr. Lane made a motion to approve the recommendations of Bank staff and subject to the availability of funding by the Board with the following exceptions:

Prior Application Updates:

George Aull Clemson Forest: Increase the prior approved funding level of the George Aull Clemson Forest Project from \$800,000 to \$1,200,000; with the additional \$400,000 issued as a reimbursable grant. Due to a potential conflict of interest, Mr. Lavender recused himself from discussion or voting on this project.

Hazelwood Farm 2: Forward applicant transfer request to Board with no recommendation at this time.

New Applications:

Item 1 (Catawba - Nisbet Tract): Recommend adding a reimbursement of up to \$1,900,000;

Item 3 (Andrews Black River Park): Due to a potential conflict of interest, Charles Lane recused himself from discussion or voting on this project. GRC to forward application information to SCOR for their consideration;

Item 5 (Shaws Creek Preserve): Include “the approval of this grant is contingent on JBRC approval”;

Item 7 (Joanna Park Tract): Disclose that previous property owner has a potential conflict of interest;

Item 9 (Gin Branch Farms): Curtis Spencer disclosed that he knows the owner of the property;

Item 16 (Logger Court): Increase funding amount to \$290,000 conditioned upon inclusion of the full acreage and removal of existing structure on the property unless SCDNR determines the structure is useful;

Item 23 (Willow Oak): Reduce funding amount to \$830,000, conditioned on placing a conservation easement on the adjacent Simmons Creek property;

Item 24 (Limehouse): Recommend deferring the application subject to a review of the existing appraisal or evaluation of a new appraisal subject to Director West’s discretion by the December Board meeting;

Item 26 (Blue Branch Farms): Recommend a funding level of \$400,000;

Item 25 (Betsy Kerrison Nature Trail Phase 2): Recommend a funding level of \$250,000;

Item 27 (Betsy Kerrison Nature Trail Phase 3): Recommend a funding level of \$145,000;

Item 28 (Beefield Community Park): Recommend a funding level of \$150,000 conditioned on Lowcountry Land Trust remaining the owner of the property;

Mr. Lavender seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously. Chairman McShane stated that the Grants Review Committee will make these recommendations to the full Board at the next scheduled Board meeting.

9) MATCH AGREEMENT

Director West informed the committee that the Match Agreement is not working as intended and asked for a review. Mr. McShane instructed the chairman of Technical Advisory Committee to review the Match Agreement; determine the appropriateness in our application process; and report back to the full Board at the September Board meeting.

10) ADJOURN

The Chairman called for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Lavender made the motion, Mr. Lane seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.